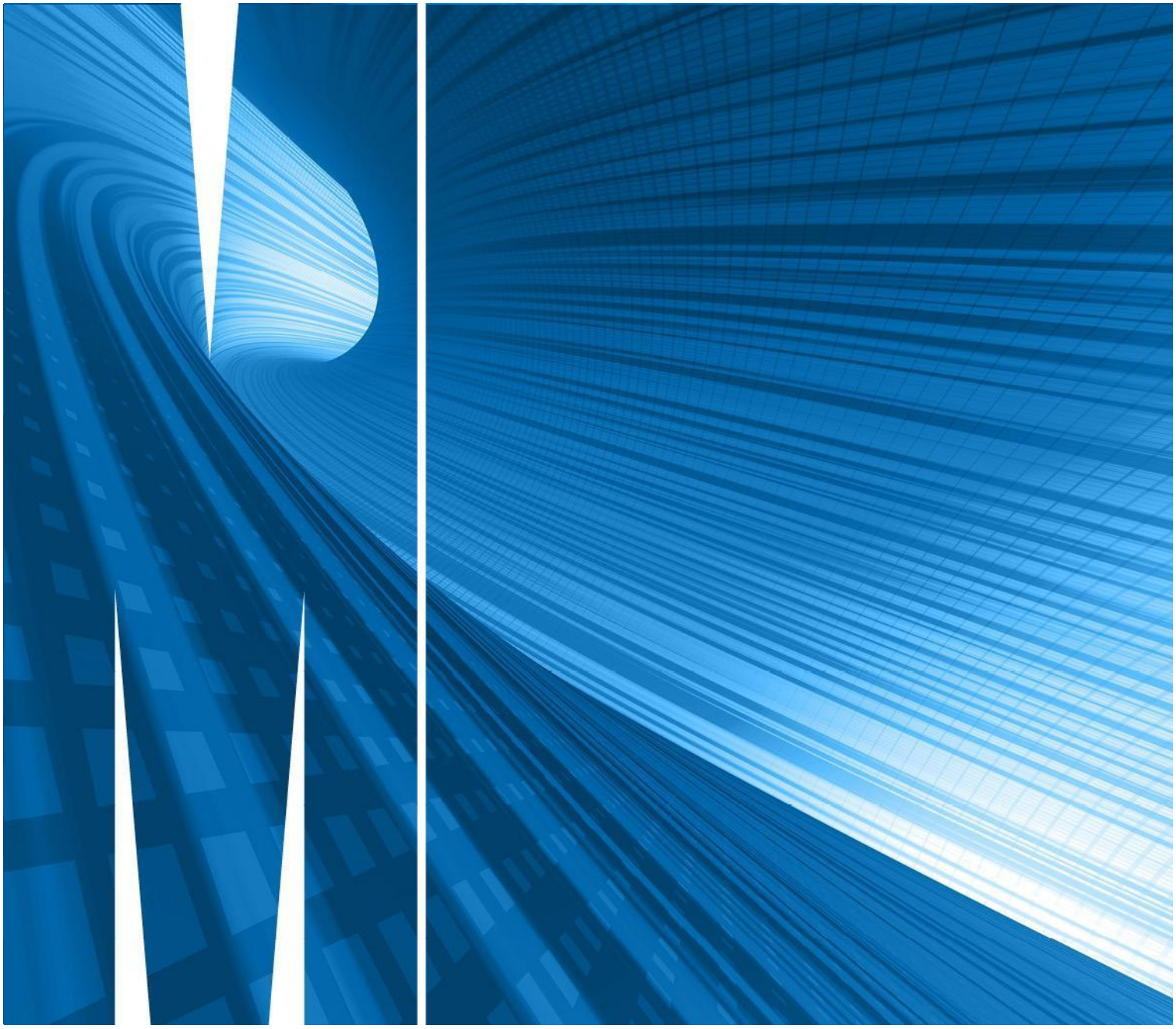
MONASH University

HOW DOES THE TEACHING EXCELLENCE PROGRAM IMPROVE STUDENT OUTCOMES?

A CASE STUDY OF THE HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION COHORT (2025): FINAL REPORT



MONASH University

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

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RESEARCH TEAM

The core research team consisted of Chief Investigators (CIs) Laura Alfrey (Associate Professor, Monash University), Carla Luguetti (Senior Lecturer, University of Melbourne), and Luiza Gonçalves (Senior Lecturer, Federation University). CIs Alfrey, Luguetti and Gonçalves developed the research methodology and completed all data collection and reporting.

CIs Alfrey, Luguetti, Gonçalves also worked in collaboration with two teacher-researchers - Danielle Speranza and Mark Smith - both of whom are Health and Physical Education (HPE) teachers who graduated from the Teaching Excellence Program (TEP) in 2023 (HPE cohort). The teacher-researchers supported the development of the workshops and helped the CIs ensure that the research was responsive to the complexity of teachers' lives.

Suggested citation: Alfrey, L., Luguetti, C. N., & Gonçalves, L.L. (2026). How does the Teaching Excellence Program Improve student outcomes? A Case Study of the Health and Physical Education cohort (2025). Final Report. Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership, Melbourne.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

One of the core objectives of The Academy, and teacher professional learning (TPL) more broadly, is to improve student outcomes. Due to the complexity of teaching and learning (Livingston, 2017), however, limited research explores how, and to what extent, TPL influences student outcomes.

Our previous evaluation of the Health and Physical Education (HPE) cohort of the Teaching Excellence Program (TEP) - referred to hereafter as 'TEP (HPE)' - highlighted features of the TEP that the participants felt most positively impacted their TPL (Alfrey, Luguetti, Hudson & Brown, 2026). For the participants, the TEP:

- created space for knowledge construction and sharing within and across disciplines, sectors, and regions;
- was an attractive space created specifically for teachers;
- provided context and permission for year-long, purposeful TPL;
- allowed for engagement with other experts;
- positioned teachers as active learners in context;
- embedded practitioner inquiry; and
- focused on developing teacher 'dispositions' that supported reflection and guided learning.

At the same time, however, the participating teachers experienced difficulties in evidencing student outcomes and felt that they would have benefited from more support and capacity-building related to practitioner inquiry (Luguetti, Alfrey, Hudson & Brown, 2025). In response to these findings, this current research project embedded a Teacher Support and Capacity Building intervention (referred to hereafter as 'the intervention'). This was designed specifically to support the teachers in evidencing student outcomes in their Individual Practitioner Inquiry (IPI).

METHODOLOGY

This research responded to the question: How does the Teaching Excellence Program improve student outcomes? An exploratory case study methodology was used to centre and capture teacher voice, whilst at the same time capturing the complex and nuanced relationship between TPL and student outcomes. Informed by constructivist and collaborative design principles, this research positioned teachers as co-constructors of professional knowledge and acknowledged that the impacts of TPL unfold within specific social, cultural, institutional and political contexts. Two teacher-researchers, who were graduates of the TEP (2023), supported all phases of the research, offering practical guidance, shaping workshop design, and assisting participants with their TEP IPIs.

Ten teachers participated in the study, engaging in the intervention which provided access to: i) two online workshops; ii) a learning community; and iii) individualised and multi-modal support. Data were collected across two phases and included workshop artefacts, researcher field notes, semi-structured interviews, and teacher-provided IPI documents, enabling an understanding of participants' experiences and evidence of student outcomes. Thematic analysis of interviews was used to inductively identify themes and insights.

KEY FINDINGS

This research responded to the question: how does the TEP improve student outcomes? In some respects, the response to this question is quite predictable, and aligns with the traditional models of teacher change (e.g. Guskey, 2002; Clarke and Hollingsworth, 2002). That is to say, the TEP (HPE) participants in 2025 engaged in meaningful and integrated professional learning over one year, which prompted shifts in knowledge and practice, and ultimately improved student outcomes related to learning, engagement and/or wellbeing (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: How the TEP improves student outcomes

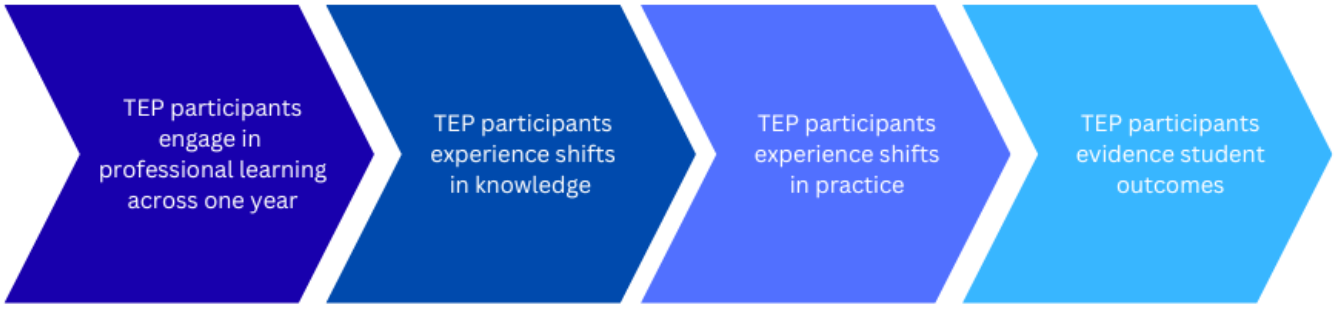


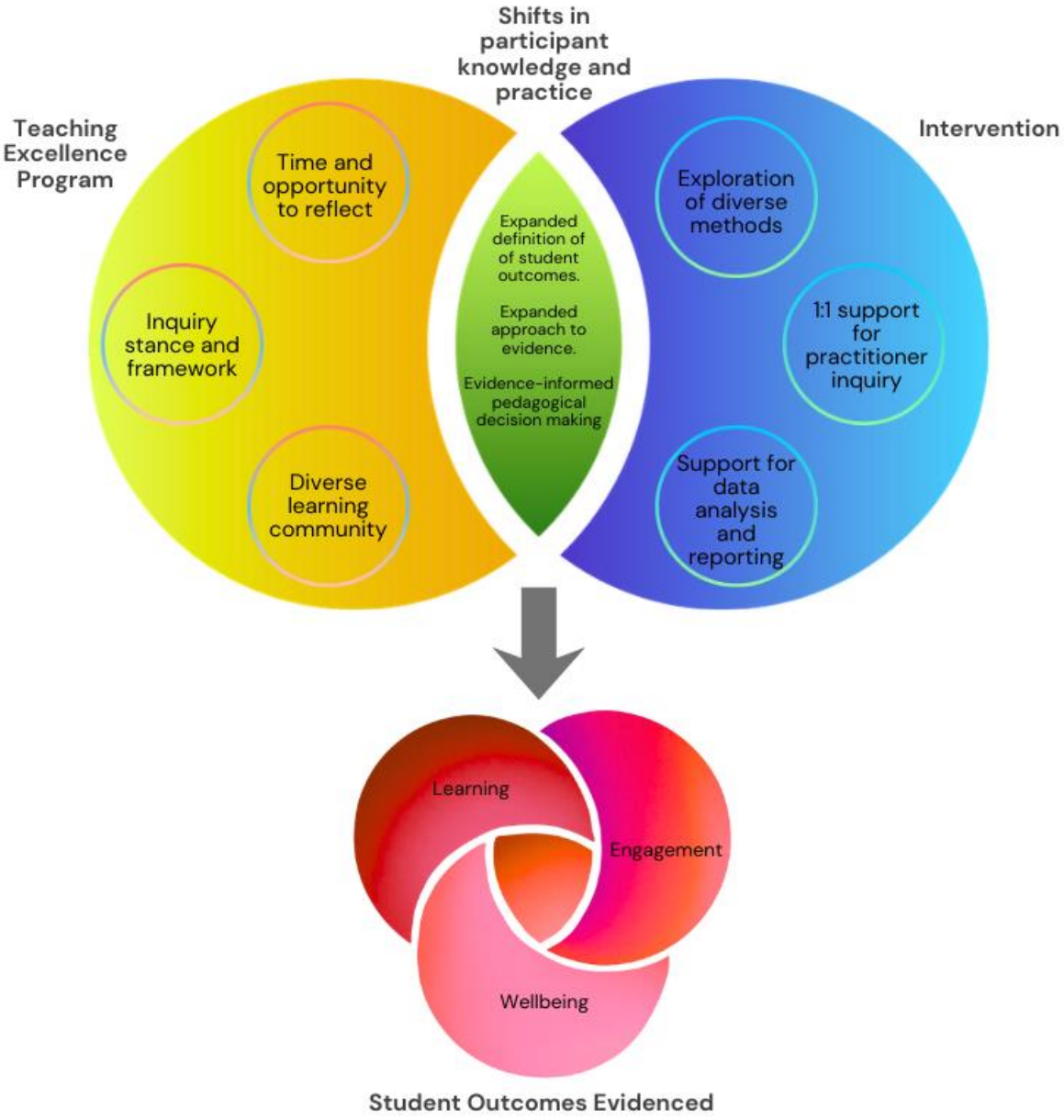
Figure 2 (overleaf) identifies the features of the TEP and the intervention that participants felt most strongly supported their capacity to impact and evidence student outcomes. These features combined to prompt shifts in participants' knowledge and practice. The most prevalent shifts related to participants:

- expanded definition of student outcomes;
- expanded approach to 'evidence' and data collection;
- capacity to draw on evidence and student voice to inform pedagogical decision-making.

These shifts enhanced the participants' capacity to evidence the relationship between their new pedagogical practice and subsequent student outcomes. The participants understood student outcomes as belonging largely, but not always solely, to three interrelated categories: learning (e.g. ability to apply theory to real-world contexts); engagement (e.g. focus and metacognition); and wellbeing (e.g. sense of belonging).

Student outcomes were evidenced via multiple methods, which allowed for participants to triangulate data and generate complex analyses and statements of impact. All participants suggested that drawing on a broader range of evidence, including qualitative and quantitative methods, allowed for the collection of rich and relevant evidence that could capture the complexity of both their inquiry and the student outcomes from that inquiry.

Figure 2: Features of the TEP and the intervention that supported the evidencing of student outcomes



CONCLUSION

The TEP (HPE) participants who engaged with this research were able to clearly articulate and evidence how participating in the TEP had developed their capacity to impact and evidence student outcomes related to learning, engagement and/or wellbeing.

This report identifies the features of the TEP and the intervention that participants felt most strongly supported their capacity to impact and evidence student outcomes. These features and their impacts - such as an expanded approach to 'evidence' and data collection - are outlined in this report and have informed the recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are grounded in the data generated through this research and reflect the participants' perspectives.

Recommendation 1: Consider extending a single IPI across two semesters/terms. Such an extension would respond to the main challenge that participants faced: time. Participants felt that there was not enough time to plan, enact and report the IPI. There was also some concern from the participants about allowing enough time for student outcomes to eventuate.

Recommendation 2: Strengthen and diversify the support and capacity-building related to practitioner inquiry. This recommendation is further divided into 3 sub-recommendations that call for participants to be supported in:

> **2a: planning an achievable IPI.** Participants tended to plan for very large samples in the first instance. Encouraging participants to work with a small sample of students (e.g. one class or group) would enable richer data collection, analysis and reporting within the constraints of teacher workloads and TEP timelines.
>
> **2b: collecting data pre- and post- their pedagogical intervention.** Participants rarely planned to capture baseline or pre-intervention data. Explicitly encouraging participants to do so would help them evidence the impact of their pedagogical intervention on student outcomes.
>
> **2c: data analysis.** Adopting an expanded approach to 'evidence' and data collection can allow for richer and more student-centred inquiry but, consequently, TEP participants may require support with data analysis. This could include explicit guidance in analysis and coding to enable evidence-informed decision-making and clearer articulation of the impact of pedagogical interventions.

Recommendation 3. Provide individualised and multi-modal support for IPI and evidencing student outcomes. This would support TEP participants at key points - including planning their inquiry and data analysis - as well as helping them maintain focus once they return to their demanding school context.

> **3a. Partner with universities and researchers.** This could support the provision of individualised and multi-modal support for IPI and evidencing student outcomes.

Recommendation 4. Consider the title and focus of Step 4 of the TEP inquiry cycle. This step requires TEP participants to 'Examine evidence of learning'. A focus on learning is of course vital, but the data from this research suggests that the participants' most pressing problems of practice related to engagement and wellbeing, and it thus might be helpful to expand the focus to include these, alongside learning.

BACKGROUND

One of the core objectives of The Academy, and teacher professional learning (TPL) more broadly, is to improve student outcomes. Due to the complexity of teaching and learning (Livingston, 2017), however, limited research explores how, and to what extent, TPL influences student outcomes.

Our previous evaluation of the Health and Physical Education (HPE) cohort of the Teaching Excellence Program (TEP) - referred to hereafter as 'TEP (HPE)' - highlighted features of the TEP that the participants felt most positively impacted their TPL (Alfrey, Luguetti, Hudson & Brown, 2026). For the participants, the TEP:

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At the same time, however, the participating teachers experienced difficulties in evidencing student outcomes and felt that they would have benefited from more support and capacity-building related to practitioner inquiry (Luguetti, Alfrey, Hudson & Brown, 2025). In response to these findings, this current research project embedded a Teacher Support and Capacity Building intervention (referred to hereafter as 'the intervention'). This was designed specifically to support the teachers in evidencing student outcomes in their Individual Practitioner Inquiry (IPI).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

TPL is key to pedagogical advancement. Although TPL can prompt a range of benefits for teachers, its ultimate purpose is to positively impact student outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). There have been many attempts to conceptualise (e.g. Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Guskey, 2002) and evidence (e.g. Audisio et al., 2024) the impact of TPL on student outcomes. The former is relatively simple, whereas the latter is an inherently complex and challenging task (Devlin & Saffin, 2025).

WHAT IS MEANT BY 'STUDENT OUTCOMES'?

There is no singular definition of 'student outcomes'. Research and policy documents tend to use the term 'student outcomes' to refer to growth in student:

- learning and academic achievement (e.g. Audisio et al., 2024; DET, 2024); and/or
- wellbeing (e.g. DET, 2024).

Research exploring the relationship between TPL and student outcomes has tended to focus on English, numeracy and science (Basma & Savage, 2018; Didion et al., 2020). Only a few studies have explored the relationship between TPL and student outcomes in HPE. These include, for example, Lantino et al. (2024) - who traced a link between TPL and students'

fitness outcomes - and Hunuk, Ince and Tannehill (2013) who reported students' health-related content knowledge because of TPL.

HOW ARE STUDENT OUTCOMES MEASURED?

Most studies examining the impact of TPL on student outcomes have employed experimental designs, including randomised controlled trials (e.g., Sum et al., 2018) and quasi-experimental approaches (e.g. Audisio et al., 2024). These studies typically assess student learning outcomes using standardised tests pre- and post-professional development, rather than evaluating the broader impact of sustained TPL (e.g., Beddoes,

2021; Simoncini et al., 2021). The TEP provides a uniquely rich site for investigating student outcomes, as it is a year-long process that supports ongoing TPL, reflection, and practice. This research therefore offers insight into how the TEP can shape student outcomes over time.

CHALLENGES FACED WHEN EVIDENCING STUDENT OUTCOMES

As previously mentioned, measuring the impact of TPL on student outcomes is complex. Indeed, Devlin and Saffin (2025) identify some key challenges associated with capturing the relationship between TPL and student outcomes. These include challenges related to:

i) determining which student outcomes to measure;

ii) measuring at scale;

iii) isolating the impacts of professional learning, including the confounding factors of selection bias;

iv) effects on student performance and maturation;

v) determining appropriate timelines for measurement of impact; and

vi) determining the most appropriate methodology to measure.

With such challenges and complexity in mind, the current project sought to utilise a methodological approach capable of embracing contextual nuance, teacher agency, and the dynamic nature of teaching and learning.

PRACTITIONER INQUIRY AND STUDENT OUTCOMES

Practitioner inquiry (PI) is a central feature of the TEP and offers a generative approach to capturing student outcomes in ways that move beyond standardised and decontextualised measures. Because PI is embedded within teachers' everyday practice, it enables the identification of outcomes that are meaningful within specific disciplinary, pedagogical, and contextual settings (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Mockler & Sachs, 2021). Through cycles of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting, teachers can attend to nuanced changes in student learning, engagement, and participation.

Importantly, PI also creates the conditions for making student outcomes visible over time, rather than as discrete or isolated moments of assessment (Beddoes, 2021; Simoncini et al., 2021). By positioning teachers as knowledge producers, PI supports the use of multiple and complementary data sources to trace learning trajectories and pedagogical impact (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Mockler & Sachs, 2021). This plurality of evidence is particularly valuable in complex learning areas such as HPE, where student outcomes

extend beyond cognitive achievement to include affective, social, and embodied dimensions of learning (Luguetti, Alfrey, Hudson & Brown, 2025).

Whilst the challenges identified by Devlin and Saffin (2025) are particularly salient for large-scale evaluations of TPL, the challenges associated with using PI to capture student outcomes can vary. Rather than issues of scale, attribution, and standardisation, PI foregrounds challenges related to the legitimacy of teacher-generated evidence across diverse contexts (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). These challenges include supporting teachers to identify outcomes that are simultaneously meaningful and analytically robust, ensuring sufficient time and capability for systematic documentation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

An exploratory case study methodology was used to centre and capture teacher voice, whilst at the same time capturing the complex and nuanced nature of teaching and learning. In this instance, the 'case' being studied was the HPE cohort within the TEP. Informed by constructivist and collaborative design principles (O'Sullivan, 2012; Rodríguez-Campos & Rincones-Gómez, 2013), this research positioned teachers as co-constructors of professional knowledge and acknowledged that the impact of TPL unfolds within specific social, cultural, institutional and political contexts.

TEACHER-RESEARCHERS

Teacher researchers were an important part of this research. We recruited two HPE teachers who had graduated from the TEP in 2023 and were thus able to bring expertise and lived experience to the project. They helped us ensure that the project was teacher-centred and were influential in guiding the timing and structure of the workshops. For example, we had originally planned for one 2-hour workshop but heeded the advice of the teacher-researchers and divided the workshop into 2 1-hour workshops. Logistically, this was beneficial for the teachers, but it also created time for the research team to refine Workshop 2 and ensure it was responsive to the participants' learning needs. The teacher-researchers were involved in all phases of the project, also offering support for TEP participants during their IPI.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants were teachers enrolled in the HPE cohort of the TEP in 2025. All TEP (HPE) participants were invited to participate in the research. 10 participants (6 females and 4 males) were involved in all phases of the research. These are listed below (see Table 1).

Table 1. Description of the participants

	PSEUDONYM	SECTOR	REGIONS (DET)	LEVEL	YEARS OF EXPERIENCE
1	Hannah	Catholic	Inner Eastern Melbourne	Secondary	20 years
2	Ethan	Government	Ovens Murray	Primary	29 years
3	Colin	Government	Western Melbourne	Primary	20 years
4	Daniel	Catholic	Western Melbourne	Secondary	21 years
5	Elise	Government	Inner Eastern Melbourne	Secondary	5 years
6	Sophie	Government	Inner Eastern Melbourne	Secondary	6 years
7	Rachel	Independent	Southern Melbourne	Primary & Secondary	14 years

8	Chloe	Government	Bayside Peninsula	Secondary	6 years
9	Sara	Government	Bayside Peninsula	Secondary	9 years
10	Luke	Government	Western Melbourne	Primary & Secondary	4 years

INTERVENTION - TEACHER SUPPORT AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

For this research to examine how the TEP improved student outcomes, it was important that the TEP participants felt confident and equipped to collect, analyse and report relevant data. We knew from previous research (Luguetti, Alfrey, Hudson & Brown, 2025) that the participants would likely need support in this regard, so Phase 1 was designed specifically to support them in building capacity to evidence student outcomes. This occurred via a multi-pronged intervention consisting of:

- online workshops;
- learning communities;
- individualised support.

Each of these elements of the intervention are explored in turn below.

ONLINE WORKSHOPS

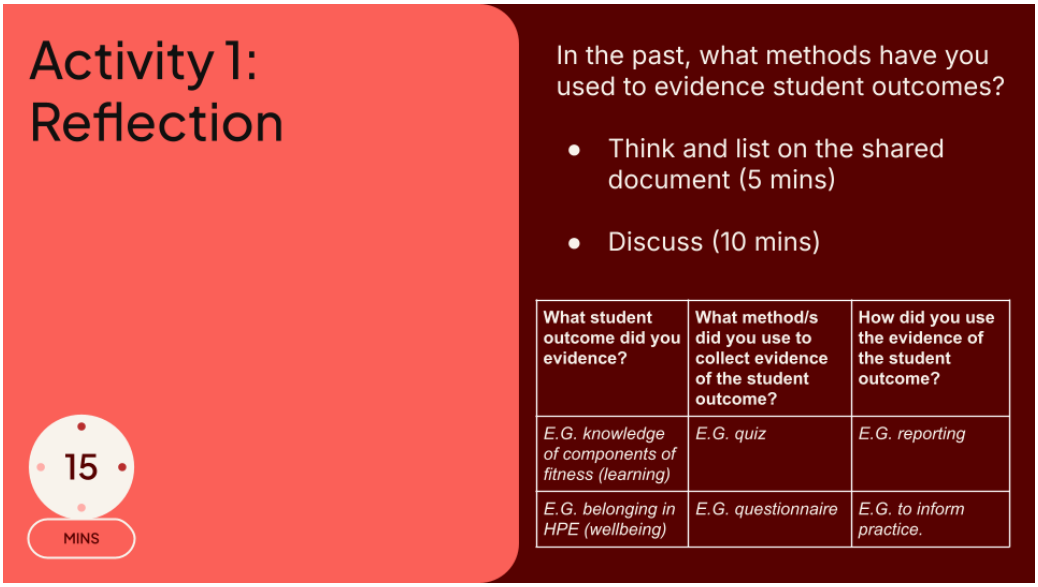
Two online workshops occurred one week apart. They supported participants in planning their IPI and prompted them to: i) reflect on how they have evidenced student outcomes in the past; and ii) plan how they will evidence relationships between their participation in the TEP, their professional learning and student outcomes.

Workshop 1 - The aim of this workshop was twofold:

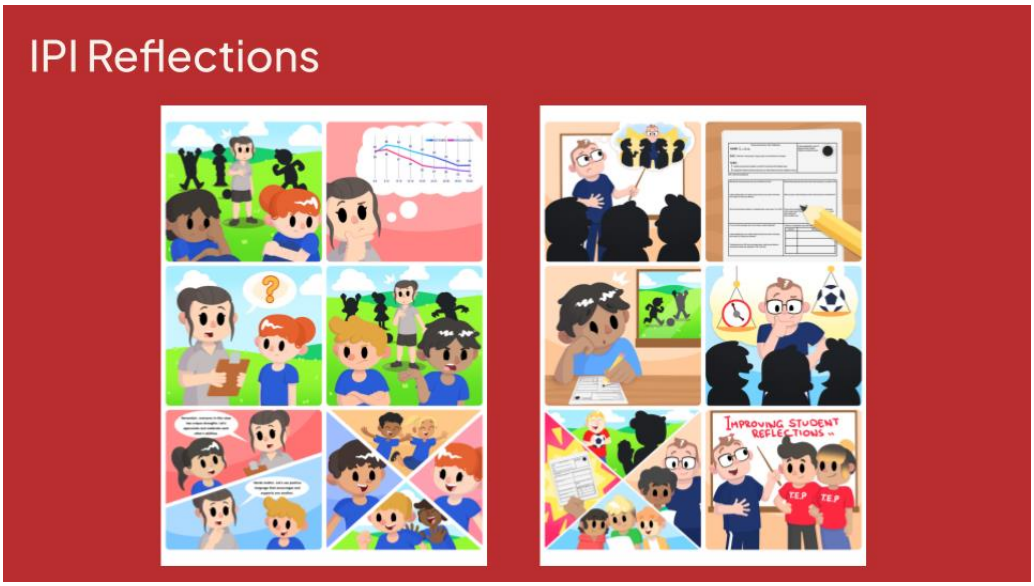
1. to develop a deeper understanding of how and for what purposes the TEP participants have previously evidenced student outcomes; and
2. to support TEP participants in identifying the specific student outcomes they aimed to impact and evidence through their IPI.

The workshop also served as an entry point for building dialogue and targeted support between the TEP participants and the research team. This collaborative process was facilitated through a shared Google Doc, which functioned as both a live workshop tool and an evolving space for asynchronous engagement and ongoing feedback. Data from Workshop 1 consisted of activity responses recorded in the Google Doc and researcher field notes capturing interactions and emerging insights. The workshop consisted of:

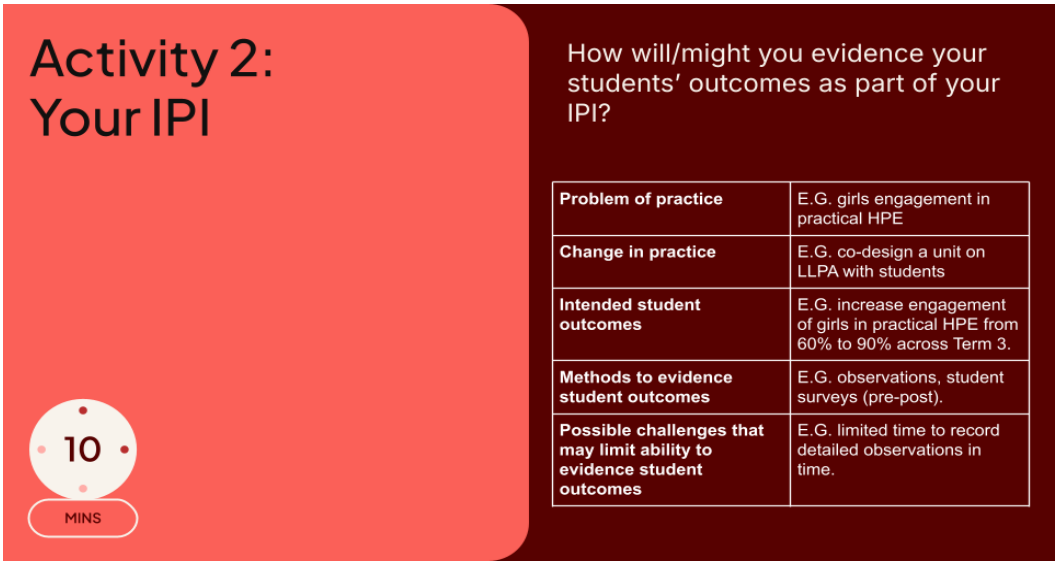
Activity 1: Reflection - this was a diagnostic task to help the research team ascertain existing knowledge and practices related to evidencing student outcomes.



Teacher-Researcher reflections on their IPI - this illuminated for the TEP participants whilst also providing an opportunity for them to benefit from the Teacher-Researchers' learnings. To facilitate these reflections, the Teacher-Researchers utilised cartoons that were produced through previous research with TEP participants (Luguetti, Alfrey & Giglia, 2023).



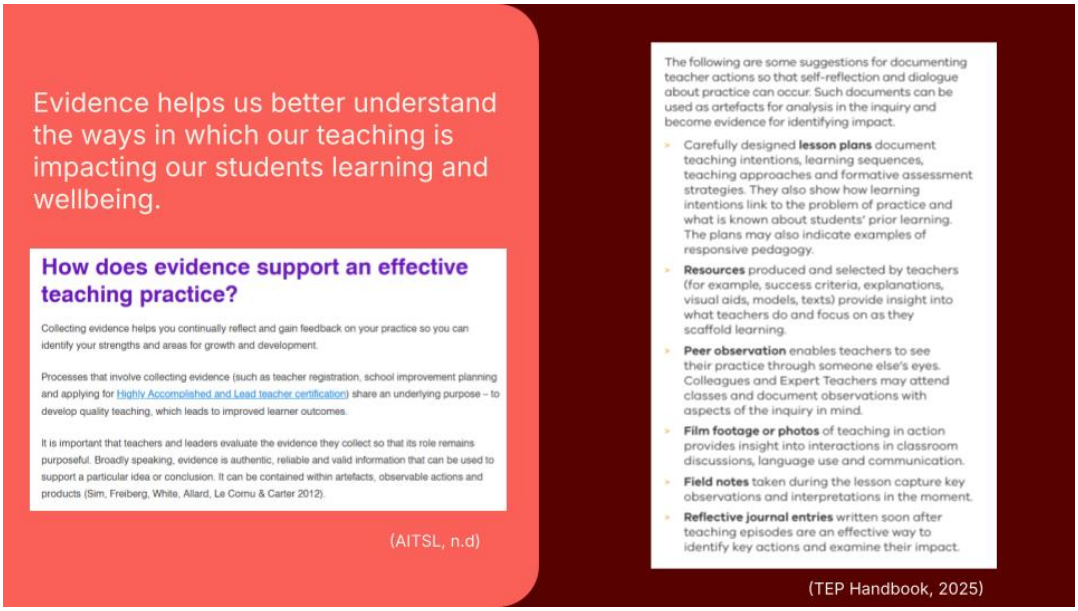
Activity 2: Your IPI - this activity created an opportunity for the research team to develop an indication of the TEP participants' plans for their IPI, and evidencing student outcomes. It was designed to simultaneously support the participants in articulating the link/s between their Problem of Practice, intended changes in practice, and related student outcomes. Once they could articulate their intentions, they were then able to start thinking about the research methods that could be used to evidence student outcomes in their IPI.



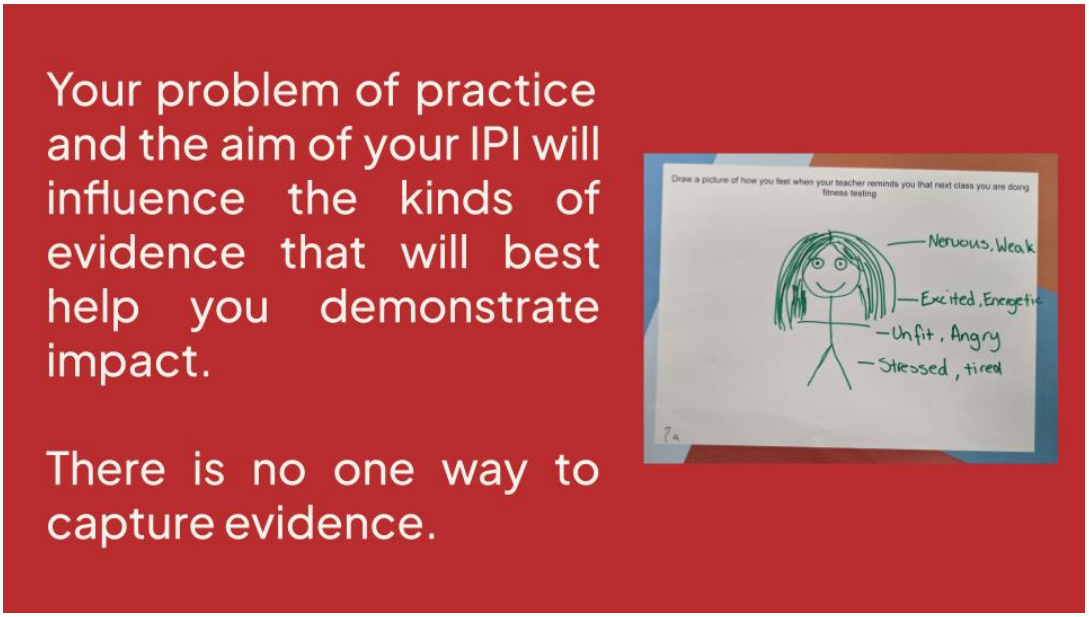
Workshop 2 - this workshop built directly on the outcomes of Workshop 1, with a focus on supporting TEP participants in designing and refining the data collection component of their IPIs. As you can see below, this workshop was explicitly grounded in the TEP inquiry cycle.



The workshop began with a collaborative discussion about evidence, drawing on diverse perspectives and examples from the TEP Handbook and elsewhere (e.g. AITSL).



It was highlighted through the workshop there was no one or 'correct' way to evidence student outcomes, though some methods will be more appropriate than others, depending on the Problem of Practice. Examples of different ways to evidence student outcomes - for example, Alfrey (2024) and Luguetti, Giglia and Spaaij (2024) - were shared to illustrate particular points.



Participants explored a range of possible data collection methods, including pre- and post-surveys, student artefacts (such as formative assessments, exit tickets, and task sheets), interviews, photovoice, and digital storytelling.

Method	Usefulness for Student Outcomes	Pros	Cons
Pre-Post Survey or Quiz (online, paper)	Explore students' learning (quiz) or wellbeing (survey) outcomes. Using different types of questions (e.g. multiple choice, short answer, long answer) can help develop a richer insight into student outcomes.	Quick; Encourages self-awareness and metacognition; reveals changes in student learning and/or wellbeing; relatively easy to compare pre-post.	Need to allow time in class (ideally).
Student artefacts (formative assessments, exit tickets, task sheets)	Provide evidence of student learning progress, understanding, and skill development over time.	Easily accessible; grounded in authentic classroom tasks.	Can be difficult to interpret without clear criteria.
Interviews (individual)	Explore students' perspectives on their learning experiences and outcomes in depth.	Provides rich, detailed insights into student experiences and perceived learning gains.	Time-intensive to conduct and analyse.

LEARNING COMMUNITIES

As part of the intervention and to provide more targeted support, TEP participants were divided into learning communities based on the student outcome/s they sought to impact. Participants were divided into three learning communities that focused largely on either student learning, engagement or wellbeing. Each community, composed of one researcher, one teacher-researcher, and three to five participants, worked both individually and collaboratively to refine their plans for evidencing student outcomes within their IPIs.

INDIVIDUALISED SUPPORT

The final component of the intervention was individualised support, which was available throughout and responsive to TEP participants' needs. The support was deliberately multi-modal, to allow the TEP participants to choose the mode of support best suited to them. TEP participants could choose from verbal (e.g. face-to-face or Zoom meetings and phone calls) or textual support (e.g. emails or via a shared, live document), and the purpose was to support them in planning how they would evidence student outcomes.

DATA COLLECTION

Data was collected across the two phases (see Table 2).

Table 2. Data collection overview

	Data
Phase 1: Intervention	• Workshop artefacts (Google Doc) • Researcher field notes
Phase 2: Interviews	• Interview transcripts • Interview artefacts (IPI documents shared by the teachers). • Researcher field notes

Together, these multiple data sources enabled a comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences, practices, and evidence of student outcomes.

The main purpose of the semi-structured interviews was to examine the TEP participants' perspectives on their IPI and the subsequent student outcomes that they were able to evidence. The interviews with TEP participants were divided into four parts:

- the TEP (e.g. *Why did you enrol in the TEP? What is the most significant thing you have learned through the TEP?*);
- the intervention (e.g. *Could you share some of the positive outcomes or insights you gained from working with the research team?*);
- IPI and evidencing student outcomes (e.g. *Can you describe the main student outcomes you were able to evidence in your IPI? Can you share some of the evidence you collected and analysed?*);
- TEP and how it supported the evidencing student outcomes (e.g. *In what ways did the TEP support you to impact and evidence student outcomes?*).

As part of this process, the TEP participants shared details of their IPI, including data and analysis. On average, the interviews lasted approximately one hour and were conducted with one member of the research team (CI Alfrey, Luguetti or Gonçalves). They were recorded and transcribed automatically via Zoom or MS Teams programs.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data were analysed inductively. Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019) was carried out on the interview transcripts. First, the core research team (Alfrey, Luguetti, Gonçalves) read all of the interview transcripts and engaged in an individual process of preliminary coding. Preliminary codes were then discussed by the core research team, and a draft coding structure was developed collaboratively. The coding structure was then used to thematically analyse the data. Codes and themes were refined as the data was read and re-read over time.

After the interviews transcripts were analysed and coded, additional data - as outlined in Table 2 - were included to strengthen the analysis.

FINDINGS

This research responds to the question: How does the Teaching Excellence Program (TEP) improve student outcomes? To answer this question we have drawn on and extended previous research. As mentioned earlier, previous research on the TEP (HPE) (Luguetti, Alfrey & Giglia, 2023) concluded that the TEP was a unique and extremely valuable professional learning experience for all participants. The TEP:

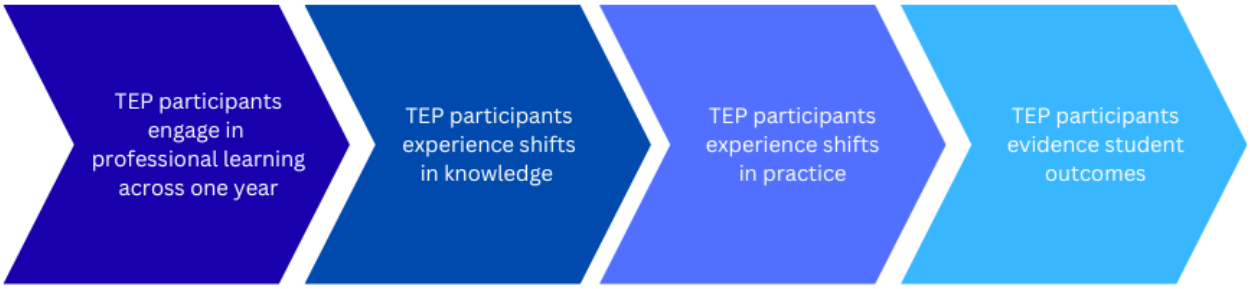
- created space for knowledge construction and sharing within and across disciplines, sectors, and regions;
- was an attractive space created specifically for teachers;
- provided context and permission for year-long, purposeful TPL;
- allowed for engagement with other experts;
- positioned teachers as active learners in context;
- embedded practitioner inquiry; and

- focused on developing teacher 'dispositions' that supported reflection and guided learning.

All that said, the TEP (HPE) participants, in 2023, experienced difficulties in evidencing student outcomes. This was not due to a lack of student outcomes, but rather because the participants did not demonstrate their capacity to collect, analyse, and report evidence related to those outcomes (Luguetti et al., 2025).

Returning focus to this present study, and the question: How does the Teaching Excellence Program (TEP) improve student outcomes? In some respects, the response to this question is quite predictable, and aligns with the traditional models of teacher change (e.g. Guskey, 2002; Clarke and Hollingsworth, 2002). That is to say, the TEP (HPE) participants in 2025 engaged in meaningful and integrated professional learning over one year, which prompted shifts in knowledge and practice, and ultimately improved student outcomes related to learning, engagement and/or wellbeing (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: How the TEP improves student outcomes



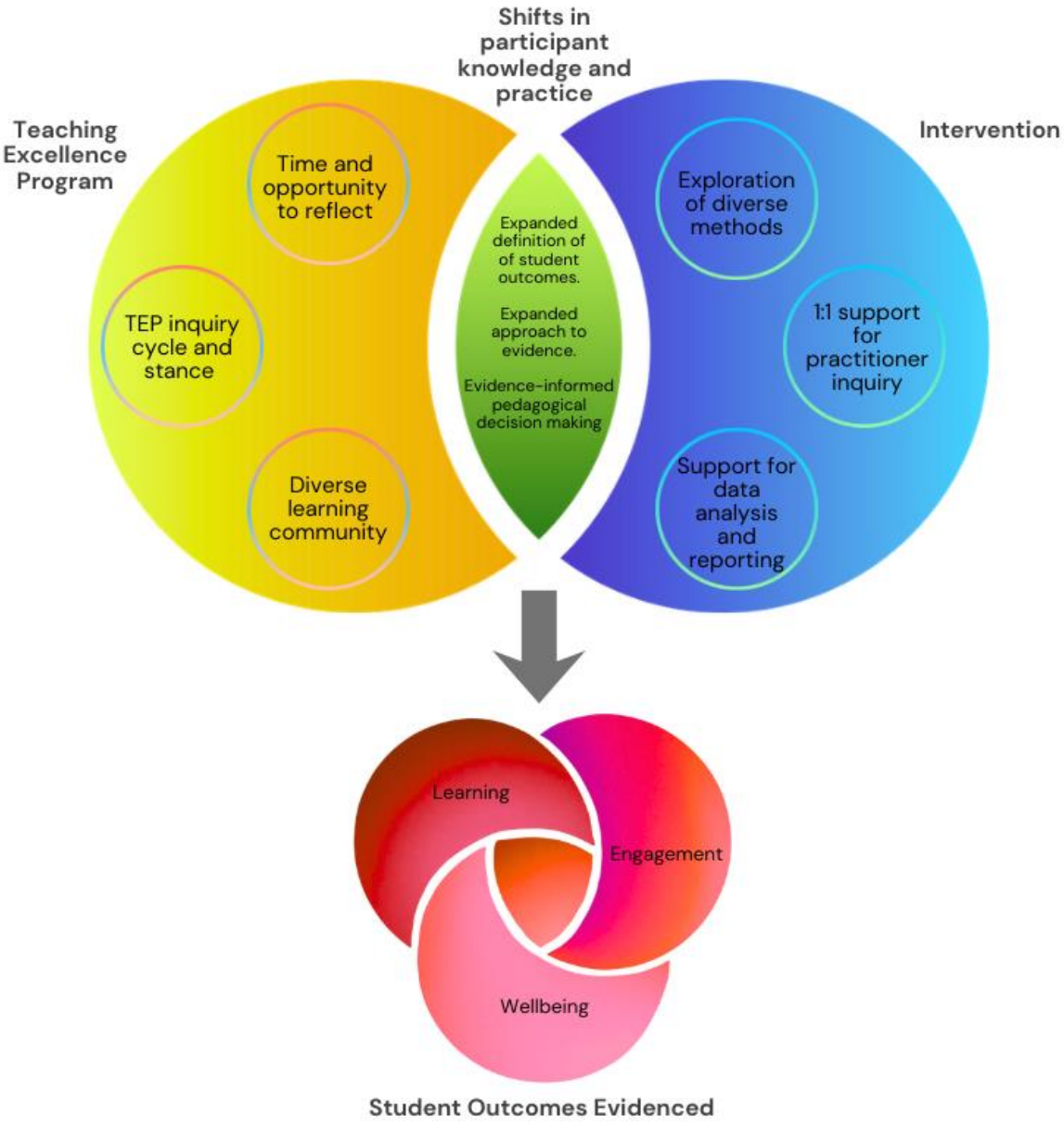
Whilst this model is linear and relatively simplistic, the process itself is incredibly complex, with each stage of the process reflecting this inherent complexity. This research focussed on the final stage of this process (TEP participants evidence student outcomes), but all stages were examined to better understand how the participants experienced the process, and ultimately were able to evidence and articulate the relationship between their professional learning and student outcomes. The findings suggest that the TEP participants could clearly identify features of the TEP and intervention that had strengthened their capacity to impact and evidence student outcomes (see Figure 2 overleaf). Importantly, the participants were able to demonstrate their capacity to collect, analyse, and report evidence of the relationship between their professional learning and student outcomes.

With Figure 2 in mind, the remainder of the findings are organised into four sections:

1. features of the TEP that participants felt most strongly supported their capacity to impact and evidence student outcomes;
2. features of the intervention that participants felt most strongly supported their capacity to impact and evidence student outcomes;
3. how the combination of TEP and the intervention prompted shifts in participant knowledge and practice;
4. student outcomes impacted and evidenced.

The report concludes by proposing recommendations to inform the future evolution of the TEP, paying particular attention to supporting participants to evidence student outcomes.

Figure 2: Features of the TEP and the intervention that enhanced capacity to impact and evidence student outcomes



1 - FEATURES OF THE TEP THAT PARTICIPANTS FELT MOST STRONGLY SUPPORTED THEIR CAPACITY TO IMPACT AND EVIDENCE STUDENT OUTCOMES

The data suggest that the features of the TEP that participants felt most strongly supported their capacity to impact and evidence student outcomes were the:

- time and opportunity to reflect on their knowledge, practice and student outcomes;
- TEP inquiry cycle and inquiry stance;
- diverse learning community that participants engaged with across the TEP.

These features are represented in Figure 2 (in yellow) above and are now discussed in greater detail. Challenges faced by the participants are also identified.

TIME AND OPPORTUNITY TO REFLECT ON KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICE AND STUDENT OUTCOMES

The findings suggest that the TEP participants greatly valued dedicated time and structured opportunities to reflect on their practice broadly, and student outcomes in particular. Colin, for example, shared that the opportunity to reflect on his practice had been the most valuable part of the TEP experience for him. He commented that:

> *This TEP experience has really **allowed me to become much more reflective**—that's the biggest thing I've taken from it. Over the past few years, I've been more focused on how my team is going rather than on myself. The practitioner inquiry process really highlighted that for me and showed how important it is to take time to reflect on my own practice as well. **It's been transformative** in that sense. I've realised that while I often think about supporting my team and their development, I also need to look inward and consider my own growth and practice.*

Colin described the TEP experience as *"transformative"*, highlighting that the practitioner inquiry process prompted him to pay greater attention to his own professional growth and practice.

Whilst the participants valued the TEP as an opportunity to reflect on their practice broadly, they also valued the opportunity to reflect specifically on student outcomes. Importantly, the focus on student outcomes throughout the TEP had encouraged participants to consider in greater detail the relationship between their pedagogical practice and student outcomes. Chloe suggested that because of the TEP she was:

> *now looking more closely at what's going on in the classroom, lesson by lesson, whereas before, I think I wasn't doing that. I think I'm more intentional about doing that now, and thinking "Well, am I scanning the room? Am I measuring?"...And now, instead of just thinking about, "okay, can they answer this question by the end of the lesson?", it's also, "okay, during the lesson, how is their engagement? What's their focus like?" And I think that's shifted because I'm paying attention to a range of student outcomes.*

As the quotes above suggest, the TEP participants greatly valued the opportunity for deep and thoughtful reflection on practice and student outcomes. This shift, it seems, was accompanied by a move toward more process-oriented understandings of *"a range of student outcomes"* (Chloe), rather than a sole focus on the summative assessment of academic attainment.

TEP INQUIRY CYCLE AND INQUIRY STANCE

The participants valued the ways in which the TEP encouraged them to develop and adopt an inquiry stance as part of their professional practice. The TEP inquiry cycle, along with guidance from Expert Teachers and their broader TEP Teaching Excellence Learning Community (TELC), enabled participants to direct their learning, tailor their inquiries to their specific contexts, and ensure their work was meaningful for both them and their students. It also helped them maintain a research-informed and student-centred approach. Participants consistently described the TEP inquiry cycle as offering clarity and direction without limiting their agency.

Together, the focus on inquiry within the TEP achieved the intended aim of strengthening teachers' knowledge, capability, and confidence in their practice. Rachel identified the inquiry cycle as a necessary and highly valued component of the TEP. She commented:

> *The inquiry cycle was what was needed for the inquiry...The space to inquire, the space to step into that realm, you know? It's very easy to rinse and repeat our lessons during the years but TEP encourages you to stop and think and make things better rather than just roll through the motions.*

Rachel also felt that the TEP encouraged her to consider how critical scrutiny and exploring diverse perspectives could strengthen her practice and its impact on student outcomes. In this sense, the cycle fostered an inquiry stance that was reflective, deliberate, and improvement-oriented. Like Rachel, Daniel also valued the inquiry cycle and stance. He suggested that the clarity of the expected process was crucial in supporting his changes in practice and evidencing student outcomes:

> *The TEP provided a really clear process for changing practice. It ensured that I had a clear goal, was aware of and informed by research, and had multiple ways to use artefacts to evidence changes in practice. Overall, I feel the cycle was thorough and provided a clear process, including what we were asked to present at the end.*

In summary, the explicit focus within the TEP on evidencing and evaluating impact (through the TEP inquiry cycle) helped the participants collect, analyse, and report evidence of student outcomes.

DIVERSE LEARNING COMMUNITY

Participants highlighted that the TEP functioned as a supportive and intellectually rich professional learning community which enhanced their professional practice and confidence. Unlike their school-based professional learning communities, the TEP TELC was more diverse and consisted of teachers, industry experts and researchers. The participants felt that discussing their IPI with different members of their TEP TELC was a key source of support. Sophie shared a detailed and representative example:

> *If I think about the most obvious example of the TEP supporting my practice and student outcomes, it would be the opportunity to speak with Shane Pill. That conversation allowed me to explore the research and theoretical benefits of alternative models of physical education and to consider how those approaches could translate into my own context, which has several constraints.*
>
> *From there, I implemented a project that was successful in giving students the opportunity to experience different forms of PE - approaches that are just as important and beneficial as the traditional model. Moving away from that traditional experience had a clear impact on the outcomes I measured, particularly in terms of student engagement and their growing appreciation of practical PE environments. It also deepened their understanding of the broader learning goals in PE. Students began to see that it's not just about performing a skill. They learned how to modify activities, teach and support others, provide feedback, and contribute in a range of meaningful ways. Those stages of development are probably the key outcomes I was looking for.*

This quote demonstrates how speaking with Shane Pill (researcher) supported Sophie's shift in knowledge (*"research and theoretical benefits of alternative models of physical education"*) and practice (*"giving students the opportunity to experience different forms of PE"*). This shift, as she articulates, helped students learn *"how to modify activities, teach and support others, provide feedback, and contribute in a range of meaningful ways"* (student outcomes).

This example was reflected across the data and suggests that the TEP offered participants a unique opportunity to engage in a diverse TELC, which allowed unprecedented access to teachers, industry experts and researchers. This, the data suggest, supported participants in their inquiry and enhanced their capacity to impact and evidence student outcomes.

CHALLENGES

Participants identified some challenges, related to the TEP, that influenced their capacity to evidence the impact of their professional learning and practice on student outcomes. The most frequently mentioned challenges were: i) time and; ii) confidence.

i) Time - Time constraints were consistently reported as the most significant barrier to evidencing student outcomes within the TEP inquiry process. Participants suggested that the short timeframe limited the potential for the inquiry, and for evidencing student outcomes in particular. Hannah explained:

> *I just wish we had more time to make it [IPI and evidencing student outcomes] more meaningful […] I felt like part of it was ticking a box, like, let's get this artefact, and let's get that done.*

Similarly, Sara commented that:

> *I think the timeframe was very small […] so I felt quite rushed in terms of collecting my data.*

Participants discussed the time constraints whilst simultaneously acknowledging that careful analysis of evidence required sustained attention. As Ethan highlighted:

> *When you're really unpacking your artefacts […] you've got to give it time.*

Because of this challenge, participants frequently recommended that more time was needed to plan and enact the IPI.

ii) Confidence - the data suggest that the TEP participants felt that their capacity to impact and evidence student outcomes was limited at the outset by their self-confidence. When asked what has limited her capacity to impact and evidence student outcomes, Hannah stated:

> *Maybe not knowing whether it [evidencing student outcomes] was going to work. Confidence in myself.*

Despite lacking confidence at the outset - as one might expect in this context - all participants were ultimately able to evidence student outcomes through their IPI. This could signal that the participants were working in a zone of proximal development. That is to say, they were

navigating an optimal level of challenge whilst simultaneously receiving systemic support to achieve their objective.

Having outlined the ways in which the TEP supported and challenged participants' capacity to evidence of student outcomes, the focus now turns to the intervention.

2 - FEATURES OF THE INTERVENTION THAT PARTICIPANTS FELT MOST STRONGLY SUPPORTED THEIR CAPACITY TO IMPACT AND EVIDENCE STUDENT OUTCOMES

The participants generally viewed the intervention (teacher support and capacity building) as positive and essential for improving their IPI. The features of the intervention that participants felt most supported them in evidencing student outcomes were the:

- exploration of diverse methods for data collection;
- individualised support for practitioner inquiry;
- support for data analysis and reporting.

These features are represented in Figure 2 (in blue) and are now discussed in greater detail. Challenges faced by the participants are also identified.

EXPLORATION OF DIVERSE METHODS FOR DATA COLLECTION

The intervention created structured opportunities for participants to actively explore a broad range of methods for evidencing student outcomes. In line with the Academy's broad approach to evidence, the two workshops served to expand the methodological repertoire available to participants by foregrounding multiple forms of data collection, including both qualitative and quantitative approaches. From Chloe's perspective:

> *The way that you guys [research team] all shared different ways that you could collect artefacts was a little bit different from what we'd been through on the TELC days. In the TELC days, we had some examples, and then you guys brought in some different examples. So I think it just opened our eyes to maybe what it's [data collection] like a little bit more...So that was nice, to just see different ways of doing things. And one of the takeaways for me, and we talk a lot about data at school at the moment, every school's really data-driven, and obviously it's very important, but I think we do a lot of numbers and targets and measurements and AIPs [Annual Implementation Plans], and I think the biggest takeaway from those workshops for me was that data can be really anything, and it could be field notes, student work samples… I think I've probably thought data as really big and really scary, but you can collect data so easily…we forget that we have so many little accessible ways to collect data, it's not just big numbers. So I really learned a lot. I actually talked about that in a school meeting, I spoke about that recently.*

Chloe reflected on the intervention workshops suggesting that they demonstrated that teachers were not confined to quantitative measures to evidence student outcomes. Indeed, for the participants, the workshops introduced creative and participatory methodologies as legitimate and rigorous ways of evidencing the relationship between their professional learning and student outcomes. Hannah, for example, shared that:

> *It was very useful in being able to talk to you [research team]. When we talked about podcasting, you and I, you thought that was a good idea, so it was really good to have that affirmative support to try new things, because I would never have thought of podcasting …And I wanted to use data meaningfully, and understand how to use it,*

> *and that's where I think I gained the most out of that process with you guys [intervention]. That was the best. I think the method I used in this inquiry to get genuine data, you know, the Padlet…I wanted to use public forums [as data] where they were forced to be anonymous and honest, and I wanted to use private forums like an MS form, and I wanted to use my own planning [as data], and also I wanted to use them being frank and honest with each other [as data].*

Hannah emphasised how dialogue and collaboration with the research team supported experimentation with innovative methods. Through discussion with the research team and peers, she explored approaches such as podcasting, anonymous public forums, private MS Forms. She did this to provide opportunities for students to actively contribute to the production of evidence, positioning them not merely as subjects of assessment but as participants in the process. Importantly, she deliberately combined public and private platforms to enhance honesty and reduce social pressures, demonstrating a sophisticated understanding of how methodological choices shape the data produced.

Participants suggested that the intervention encouraged them to draw on multiple, complementary data sources to collect, analyse and report rich evidence of student outcomes. Coupled with the legitimatising of qualitative data, the intervention helped participants feel more confident and able to evidence student outcomes.

INDIVIDUALISED SUPPORT FOR PRACTITIONER INQUIRY

Participants highlighted the value of the intervention in providing responsive, needs-based and individualised support to plan their practitioner inquiry. This support was multi-modal and included emails, Zoom and face-to-face meetings, phone calls, and shared live documents. It enabled participants to gain confidence, maintain focus and direction, whilst also ensuring the inquiry was manageable. Ultimately, the support helped participants ensure that they would be able to articulate and evidence the relationships between their participation in the TEP, their professional learning and student outcomes.

Participants reported that without this responsive, personalised support, they would not have engaged as deeply in planning and evidencing student outcomes. For example, Sophie noted that:

> *You know the emails and the contacts and the conversations that we've had. Because when you're in the city and you're in the fancy Academy rooms, it's all very lovely. And you spend your whole day there and it's like, "yes, this is my focus". Fantastic. As soon as you step back into a school that just zips away from you straight away, you get your list of things to do. And this year, I'm a coordinator of year eight students…So I think it just gave me a little bit more focus…and the constant mentoring and conversations was incredibly helpful, especially when I was developing the evaluation of the impact statement at the end, and the of annotations I'd done with the artefacts too.*

Similarly, Rachel reflected:

> *I think for me, having someone to bounce ideas and concepts off was really beneficial, knowing that I could talk things through with someone and a group of people that knew what they were talking about, and were interested in the specific topics as well. I think that was great.*

Overall, the findings demonstrated the value of responsive, needs-based and individualised support when building capacity for practitioner inquiry and the evidencing of student outcomes as part of that process.

SUPPORT FOR DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

The findings highlighted how the participants particularly valued the support and guidance related to data analysis and reporting. The participants' responses to questions raised in the workshops suggested that they lacked experience and confidence in data analysis and reporting. Several participants reported having diverse evidence (e.g., surveys, student artefacts, and observations) but struggled to analyse or synthesise to provide meaningful insights into student outcomes. Some participants required support in thematic analysis, coding, and interpretation, which enabled them to identify and explain student outcomes as part of their inquiry. Hannah, for example, shared that:

> *Particularly you [Carla] helping me code data and understand where I was having wins and where I was needing to improve...I think, ultimately, that then led to some informed decisions around my practice, and you can see in the final piece that the students actually saw the change as well. I think the insights were largely data-related, how to use data effectively to acknowledge gaps or find areas for improvement, and to then inform change. [...] then you would learn better ways of collecting data and analysing it. Like, I never really thought about the time that it would take to analyse, like, a podcast, for example, and you guiding me was fantastic.*

Hannah described how working with the research team enabled her to uncover and report the interplay between her pedagogical practice and student outcomes, commenting that *"the data really showed that change in students"*:

In summary, the intervention played a critical role in helping participants analyse and report qualitative data related to student outcomes.

CHALLENGES

As with the TEP, participants identified time constraints as a key challenge. Whilst the workshops provided valuable and dedicated time to consider their practitioner inquiry and the evidencing of student outcomes, it was challenging to maintain a focus on this once the workshop finished. Daniel noted it felt like *"jumping straight into a sprinting marathon"* after the sessions. Participants also reported having limited time to engage with readings and explore theoretical frameworks, with Chloe commenting she *"would have really liked to investigate things a bit more."*

3 - SHIFTS IN PARTICIPANT KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE

The data suggest that TEP and the intervention combined to enrich the participants' knowledge and practice related to evidencing student outcomes. More specifically, the findings suggest that the main shifts related to participants:

- expanded definition of student outcomes;
- expanded approach to 'evidence' and data collection;
- capacity to draw on evidence and student voice to inform pedagogical decision-making.

Each of these shifts in participant knowledge and practice, that served to support their evidencing of student outcomes, are now discussed in greater detail.

EXPANDED DEFINITION OF STUDENT OUTCOMES

Data from Workshop 1 indicated that participants tended to understand student outcomes largely in terms of VCE assessment tasks. During the final interviews, however, most participants signalled that they had expanded their definition of student outcomes to include not only academic attainment but also engagement and wellbeing. Chloe, for example, reflected on how her understanding of student outcomes had shifted and expanded over the course of the TEP:

> *Before the TEP, outcomes for me were really about exams, SAC kind of performance, or GAT performance, like that formative end of…end of a topic, end of a unit, how are kids performing? And I think it was very academic…But now I think it's not just about the academic outcomes, it's about student attendance, engagement, motivation…you can have outcomes in lots of different ways, so I think I've changed my thinking a lot this year.*

Although most participants reported shifts like Chloe, two participants noted that their view of student outcomes remained primarily academic. For Daniel in particular, being challenged to consider student outcomes in expanded ways caused tension. He described his perspective as "very VCE-centric" shaped by leadership responsibilities and a school culture prioritising standardised testing:

> *For me, student outcomes usually mean how students perform on assessment tasks. I probably have a very VCE-centric perspective…Schools are often highly focused on improving results through standardised testing… I can't escape the reality that, as a VCE Year 12 teacher, there's a responsibility to provide students with strong quantitative outcomes. We can survey students and gather qualitative feedback on engagement, but ultimately, there's still a focus on test results.*

Overall, the findings suggest that when the participants expanded their definition of student outcomes they created opportunities for, in the first instance, new ways of approaching 'evidence' and data collection.

EXPANDED APPROACHES TO EVIDENCE AND DATA COLLECTION

Over the course of the TEP, participants were supported in broadening their understanding of, and approaches to evidence and data collection. Rather than relying solely on quantitative data, participants were encouraged by the Academy and through the intervention to consider diverse evidence, including student artefacts, reflections, observations, surveys, and creative methodologies. This allowed for the gathering of rich qualitative data and provided teachers with greater agency to collect evidence relevant to their unique context and problem of practice.

Through his practitioner inquiry, Daniel - for example - began to explore alternative ways to evidence student outcomes while still respecting the accountability demands of his context. He commented that:

> *The TEP has opened my eyes to other ways of collecting evidence, particularly through artefacts…We have a program where teachers pick a focus and work*

> *throughout the year to show evidence of how they've improved their practice. Previously, that involved collecting quantitative data, but now I'm thinking about proposing to our principal that we could focus on a range of artefacts instead. This has broadened my perspective on evidencing changes in practice. Of course, I can't escape the reality that, as a VCE Year 12 teacher, there's a responsibility to provide students with strong quantitative outcomes. We can survey students and gather qualitative feedback on engagement, but ultimately, there's still a focus on test results. Education is more than scores, but in this context, students and parents rely on teachers to deliver those measurable results.*

Important here is the relatively unique nature of HPE. It is a multi-dimensional curriculum area where students will learn knowledge and skills that cannot be best captured via objective, quantitative or standardised measures. Expanding approaches to evidence and data collection allowed some participants to evidence student outcomes that went beyond academic attainment. Rachel, for example, shared that:

> *I struggled to show impact with just my surface-level teacher's observations. It's quite easy for a teacher to say, "Oh, they're playing this game really well, they're all engaging, everyone's happy", you know. Teacher observations are still very important, but diving a little deeper and using more evidence, collecting data from the students confirmed that what the students are feeling is what I'm seeing. I was able to capture an accurate reflection of the actual engagement that the students are having themselves.*

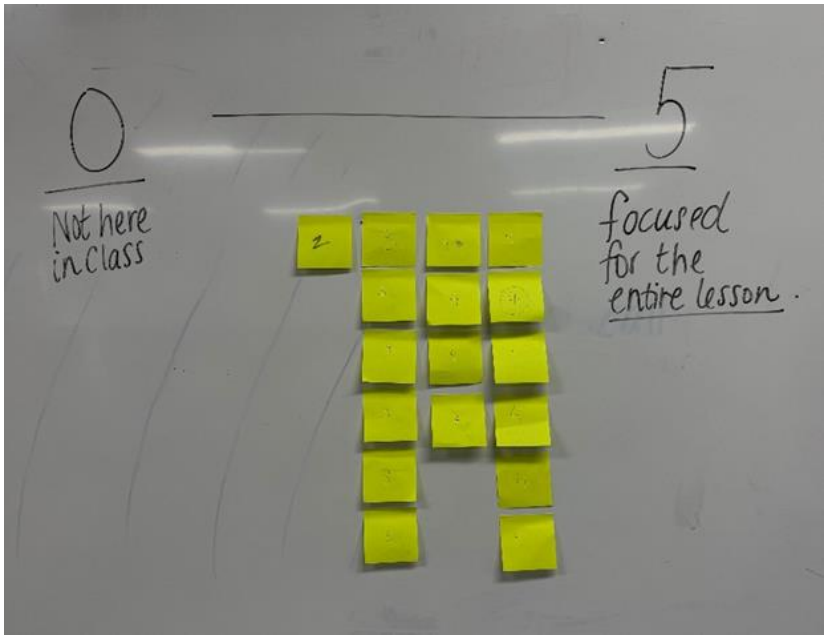
Participants employed a diverse range of methods to evidence student outcomes. For example:

- Chloe used a 5-point sticky-note scale to track shifts in focus and engagement, capturing pre- and post-intervention changes in attention and participation (see Figure 3).
- Colin implemented a four-week observational checklist to monitor skill development in students using assistive technology, combining stage-based technique assessments with video feedback (see Figure 4).
- Hannah engaged students via Padlet, collecting anonymous reflections that were analysed for themes such as inclusion, feedback, encouragement, and respect for diverse abilities (see Figure 5).

These examples highlight how the TEP participants were supported in expanding the range of evidence collected to demonstrate their impact on student outcomes. By legitimising creative and participatory methods, teachers were able to move beyond conventional metrics, capturing previously unacknowledged student outcomes. Artefacts such as sticky-note scales, observational checklists provided rigorous, contextually relevant evidence, thus demonstrating the impacts of pedagogical interventions and practitioner inquiry.

Figure 3: 5-point scale used pre- and post-intervention to evidence improved focus and engagement during class (Chloe)

Artefact 1
Student 5-point scale - sticky note reflections
Pre and Post Intervention



Pre-Intervention

Scale	# of students
0	-
1	-
2	1
3	10
4	6
5	-

Post-Intervention

Scale	# of students
0	-
1	-
2	1
3	5
4	9
5	3

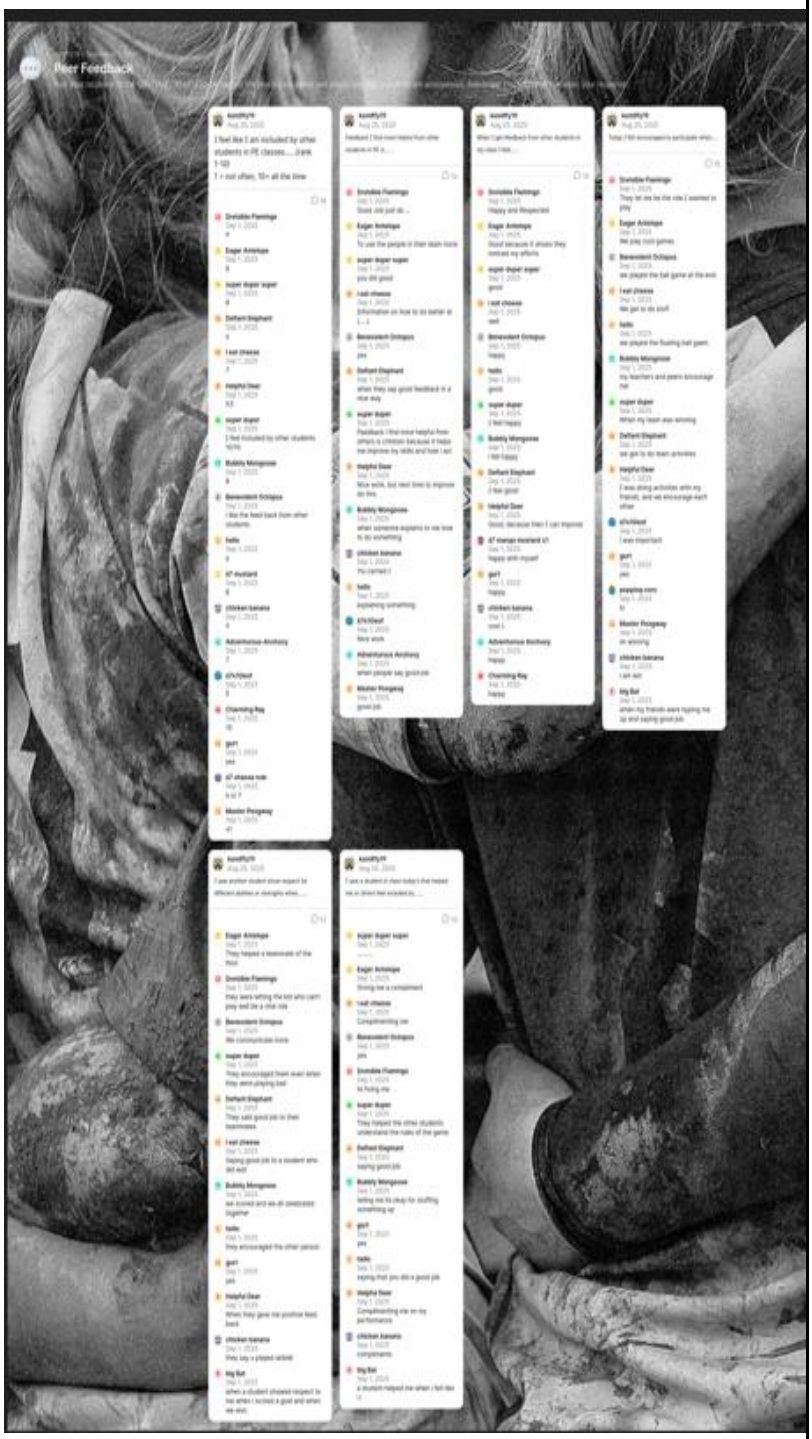
Figure 4: Checklist to demonstrate the extent to which assistive technology improved FMS learning for student with disability (Colin)

Two-Hand Side Arm Strike – 4 Week Checklist

This checklist is designed to track student development over 4 weeks in the Fundamental Motor Skill of the Two-Hand Side Arm Strike. It is aligned with the skill development stages: Initial, Elementary, and Mature. Each week's observation includes key components of the skill for formative assessment.

Week	Stage Observed	Preparation: Side-On Stance	Swing: Arm Extension & Shoulder Rotation	Contact: Strikes Object with Flat Bat/Paddle	Follow Through: Across Body	Notes
1	✓Initial ☐Elementary ☐ Mature	✓ Side-on stance	☐ Arm extends ☐ Shoulder rotates	✓ Flat bat/paddle ☐ Clean contact	☐ Full follow-through	The student was assessed at the initial stage because the striking action did not extend the arms, and the contact was not clean and also lacked shoulder rotation.
2	✓ Initial ☐Elementary ☐ Mature	✓ Side-on stance	✓ Arm extends ☐ Shoulder rotates	✓ Flat bat/paddle ☐ Clean contact	☐ Full follow-through	Similar to last week, however, there was arm extension upon striking the ball off the tee. Working on clean contact with the use of the iPad.
3	☐ Initial ✓Elementary ☐ Mature	✓ Side-on stance	✓ Arm extends ☐ Shoulder rotates	☐ Flat bat/paddle ✓ Clean contact	☐ Full follow-through	Made clean contact with the ball off the tee for the first time which the student was very happy with! Aiming for a full follow-through to extend the distance of the strike.
4	☐ Initial ✓Elementary ☐ Mature	✓ Side-on stance	✓ Arm extends ✓Shoulder rotates	☐ Flat bat/paddle ✓ Clean contact	✓ Full follow-through	Assessed at Elementary. Was able to strike with a full follow-through and was excited when they saw this on video. Included a shoulder rotation for greater range of movement in the strike.

Figure 5: Padlet used to capture student voice, and accompanying analysis (Hannah).



Themes from Student Comments

Using keyword frequency analysis, the top themes for each post are as follows:

Post 1: Inclusion in classes

- **Average rating: 9.84**
  This suggests a strong sense of inclusion among students
- Indicates students generally feel included, with many rating themselves highly.

Post 2: Helpful Feedback

- Common words: good, do, how, nice, job, feedback
- Students value constructive feedback, especially when it's positive and actionable.

Post 3: Feelings About Feedback

- Dominant emotions: happy, good, feel
- Feedback makes students feel recognized, respected, and motivated.

Post 4: Encouragement to Participate

- Frequent words: we, my, team, do, activities
- Encouragement often comes from team-based games, peer support, and teacher involvement.

Post 5: Respect for Abilities

- Key terms: they, encouraged, scored, res pect
- Respect is shown through celebration of achievements and support for diverse abilities.

Post 6: Inclusion by Others

- Common phrases: complimenting, helped, sayi ng good job
- Inclusion is fostered through positive reinforcement, helpfulness, and empathy.

CAPACITY TO DRAW ON EVIDENCE AND STUDENT VOICE TO INFORM PEDAGOGICAL DECISION-MAKING.

The findings suggest that the TEP's focus on student outcomes prompted participants to pay more attention to the student experience. In doing so, participants expanded their pedagogical repertoire to include mechanisms to capture evidence via student voice that went on to inform their pedagogical decision-making. Rachel, for example, shared an experience from her practitioner inquiry that illustrated this interplay between student voice, pedagogical decision-making and student outcomes:

> *Through my IPI I was able to get a bit more confidence to try different styles of teaching. Really listening to my students and understanding what they needed from me as their teacher. And I think that moment, all those moments, really instilled that they [students] needed someone to see them. A busy PE environment wasn't for every kid. And I needed to see that and adjust or adapt the lessons for them. So I guess you know, being inclusive, being understanding, and kids then knowing that they could come to PE knowing that I've got their back…I think inviting their perspectives was really powerful for the kids. I saw in them that they were more confident coming to class. They could just be themselves.*

As this quote suggests, Rachael was able to articulate how drawing on student voice to inform pedagogical decision-making had positively impacted student outcomes related to engagement and wellbeing. Elise was similarly able to clearly articulate the ways in which paying greater attention to student voice - and collecting data via multiple methods - had informed her pedagogical decision-making, and subsequently impacted student outcomes related to engagement:

> *Student survey slips, completed at the beginning of the cycle, highlighted two key factors influencing participation: the desire to be grouped with friends and the ability to choose which activities were completed. In response, I implemented a range of inclusive strategies designed to prioritise choice and collaboration. A student star rating indicated an overall increase in enjoyment and fewer requests to sit out as the cycle progressed. My own observations provided further insight into how students adapted to these strategies...After analysing survey data and reviewing professional readings, I adjusted my action plan to reinforce strategies that emphasised student choice, opportunities to work with friends, and recognition of effort.*

Another example of drawing on student voice to inform pedagogical decision-making was provided by Rachel. Her lesson plan (Figure 6) clearly illustrates via red text how Rachel adjusted her lesson plan after collecting and analysing evidence related to student enjoyment in HPE.

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Figure 6: Annotated lesson plan with adjustments (highlighted) after capturing student voice (Rachel)

Original Lesson Plan (before data collection)	Adjusted Lesson Plan to improve engagement (after data collection and pedagogical decision making) Adjustments highlighted.
Lesson 3 – Positioning, Rules and Game Play **Learning Intention:** • To understand basic rules and positioning in doubles pickleball. **Success Criteria:** • I can move into good positions on the court. • I can follow the basic rules of pickleball. • I can communicate with my partner. **Warm-Up (10 min):** *"Corners"* – Players move to labelled corners of the court (serve, volley, baseline, net) when called out — quick reaction game to learn court zones. **Skill Focus (15 min):** *Positioning & Communication* • Demonstrate where to stand when serving/receiving. • Practise calling "Mine!" or "Yours!" during a game of 'keep-it-up'. **Game Application (25 min):** *Mini Doubles Matches* • 2v2 games on half courts. • Rotate partners each round to promote inclusion. • Focus on following serve/return sequence and scoring. • Provide "court helpers" who assist with scoring or umpiring. **Reflection (5 min):** • "What made teamwork easier or harder?" • "What did you notice about where you needed to stand?"	**Lesson 3 – Positioning, Rules and Game Play and use of our happiness bucket* Learning Intention:** • To understand basic rules and positioning in doubles pickleball. • To understand my words and actions have power and consequences. **Success Criteria:** • I can move into good positions on the court. • I can follow the basic rules of pickleball. • I can communicate with my partner. • I can reflect on what I say and do and what others say and do and how it makes me feel. **Introduction: An explanation of the happiness bucket* for our lesson** **Warm-Up (10 min):** *"Corners"* – Players move to labelled corners of the court (serve, volley, baseline, net) when called out — quick reaction game to learn court zones. **Skill Focus (15 min):** *Positioning & Communication* • Demonstrate where to stand when serving/receiving. • Practise calling "Mine!" or "Yours!" during a game of 'keep-it-up'. **Game Application (25 min):** Partners take it in turns to act as "court helpers" who assist with scoring or umpiring. **3 types of a games** 1) 2 square without net drop serve with a bounce if needed and aiming to get as many consecutive dinks as possible with your partner. 2) Singles games with net implementing a drop serve with bounce if needed, adjusted serving distance, flexibility with number of bounces before returning and no scoring. 3) Doubles games with net implementing correct drop serve, 1 bounce rule, kitchen rule and scoring. **Reflection (5 min):** • "What made teamwork easier or harder?" • "What did you notice about where you needed to stand?" • Count the markers in and out of the bucket and reflect as a class on the result • " Did it make a difference with us consciously thinking about our words and actions?" **Exit Ticket** If you could rate your level of enjoyment on a scale of 1-5,what would it be? Show me as you line up to leave class.

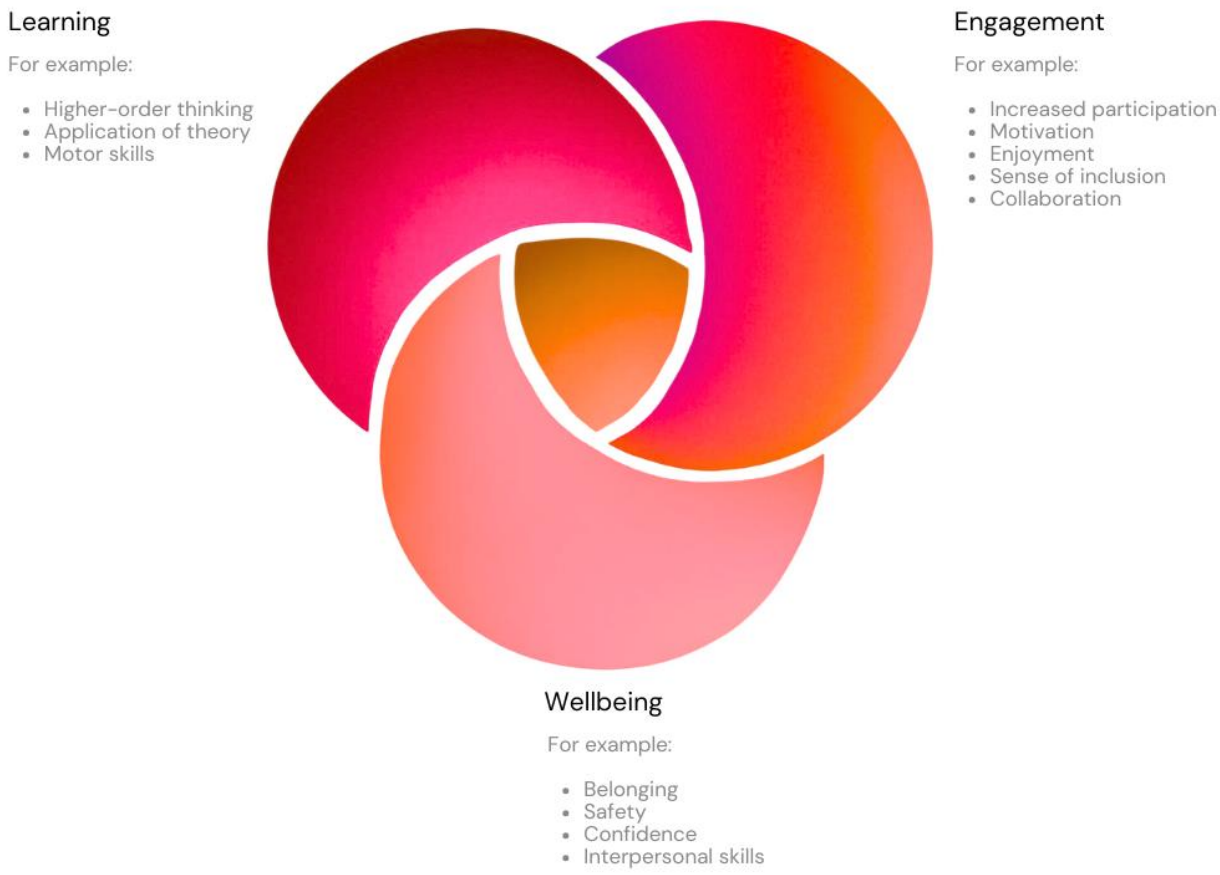
The TEP and intervention created a feedback loop: reflective and evidence-informed pedagogical adjustments enhanced student experiences, while the collection and analysis of data from these adjustments informed ongoing teaching decisions. As a result, participants were able to design learning experiences that met students' needs, captured meaningful evidence of outcomes, and supported more holistic, student-centred learning.

4 - STUDENT OUTCOMES IMPACTED AND EVIDENCED

Participants were able to evidence a range of student outcomes through their IPI. These outcomes are summarised in Figure 7. This section shares findings related to the:

- student outcomes impacted by the participants' shifts in knowledge and practice;
- evidence used to demonstrate impact.

Figure 7. Student outcomes impacted by the participants' shifts in practice



As mentioned earlier, the TEP participants understood student outcomes as belonging largely, but not always solely, to three interrelated categories:

- **Learning Outcomes:** When asked about student outcomes related to learning, participants commonly referred to performance on assessment tasks, skill development, and knowledge acquisition.
- **Engagement Outcomes:** Engagement was viewed as a pre-requisite for learning, and when discussing outcomes related to engagement, participants referred to, for

example, increased motivation, participation, attendance, and enjoyment, and was frequently positioned not only as a contributor to learning but as a meaningful outcome in its own right.

- **Wellbeing Outcomes:** For the participants, wellbeing outcomes were associated with physical, social, and emotional development. IPIs concerned with enhancing student wellbeing would focus on constructs such as confidence, self-esteem, and positive relationships.

Table 2 summarises participants' IPIs and the specific student outcomes evidenced. As you can see from this table, the Problems of Practice that each participant sought to explore, examine, and ultimately 'solve' were typically sophisticated. One participant (Daniel) had a sole focus on academic attainment, and others evidenced outcomes related to learning and academic attainment (e.g. Chloe evidenced her student's enhanced multi-structural knowledge with some progress towards relational thinking). Most participants, however, chose to focus on outcomes related to engagement and wellbeing (e.g. Hannah evidenced enhanced belonging, and Sara evidenced a growth in student confidence).

Table 2: Summary of participants IPI and student outcomes

	PSEUDONYM	Problem of practice	Year level	Evidence of student outcomes	Main student outcomes evidenced via IPI
1	Hannah	How might I respond to the influence of ableism and healthism on student engagement in an all-boys Year 7 PE classes, to foster an inclusive learning environment that actively disrupts these social injustice barriers?	7	• Survey • Padlet • Podcast • Lesson plans	Positive emotions and a sense of belonging. Increased collaboration and empathy amongst students.
2	Ethan	How can I apply critical reflection to my own pedagogical practices to ensure that my teaching of Respectful Relationships education supports equity and inclusion, while being respectful of diverse student backgrounds and worldviews?	4-6	• Survey • Self-Audit of his pedagogical practices • Students' artefacts • Teacher journal	Improvement in behaviour partners. More collaboration and group work. Interpersonal skills (e.g. respect). Students with disabilities feel more connected and safer.
3	Colin	How will I use assistive technologies in Physical Education lessons for enabling students to achieve better learning outcomes?	3	• Lesson plans • Student participation and engagement chart • Two-Hand Side Arm Strike checklist • Pre and post interview with a student	Improvement in students' understanding of the use of technology to assist learning. Fundamental Movement Skills demonstrated steady improvement in the two-hand side arm strike. Increased confidence and involvement, especially for low-engagement students.
4	Daniel	What evidence-informed group work strategies can I leverage in my Year 12 Outdoor & Environmental Studies class to facilitate less teacher centred learning so that my classroom is engaging and academically rigorous, while helping my	12	• Survey • Students' reflections • Students' artefacts • Teacher's observations	Strong improvement in engagement, confidence, and the ability to apply theory to real-world contexts.

		students apply theory to case study outdoor environments?		• Interviews	Students progressed from surface-level discussion to a deeper understanding.
5	Elise	How might I implement a variety of strategies in my year 7 Physical Education classes, to improve student participation and have the whole class actively involved during practical activities?	7	• Survey • Teacher's observations • Star rating system • Parent email correspondence	Overall improvement in enjoyment and fewer requests to sit out. Focus Students C and D continued to present challenges, but small gains in connection were made rather than immediate physical participation.
6	Sophie	How might I use video game design principles to enable students to create their own games, for increased engagement and student voice in practical PE, in order to promote deeper learning across the broader curriculum focus areas?	7	• Surveys • Students' reflections • Student artefacts	Increased engagement, personal and social skills developed (e.g. problem-solving, collaboration, group negotiation).
7	Rachel	How can I support and engage students in my Year 5 and Year 6 PE classes to foster the positive attitudes needed to actively engage in meaningful physical education?	5-6	• Pre-post survey (perceptions in PE and engagement) • Lesson plans • Students' interviews • Students' exit ticket (first to five concepts on engagement)	Increased participation of less confident students and self-regulation when faced with challenges. Increased awareness of what makes HPE meaningful and enjoyable. Improvement in students' perception of inclusion.
8	Chloe	To what extent does offering students a choice in task complexity improve their ability to maintain focus during a lesson?	11	• Pre-post survey with 4 students • 5-point scale (understand their focus) • Student reflection	Positive shift in student focus and metacognition. Students demonstrated multi-structural knowledge with some progress towards relational thinking.
9	Sara	How can I design classroom strategies to improve Year 12 Outdoor and Environmental Studies students' ability to interpret and respond to command terms and exam questions?	12	• Pre- and post-inquiry • Samples of student SAC/exam-style responses before and after intervention • Teacher lesson plans and instructional materials • Student self-reflection surveys	Overall growth in student confidence and understanding, particularly with higher-order command terms that had previously been identified as an area of weakness.
10	Luke	How might I increase student participation and engagement in PE lessons?	6	• Pre-post survey (perspectives in PE) • teacher observations • teacher planning	Increased participation and engagement during practical lessons.

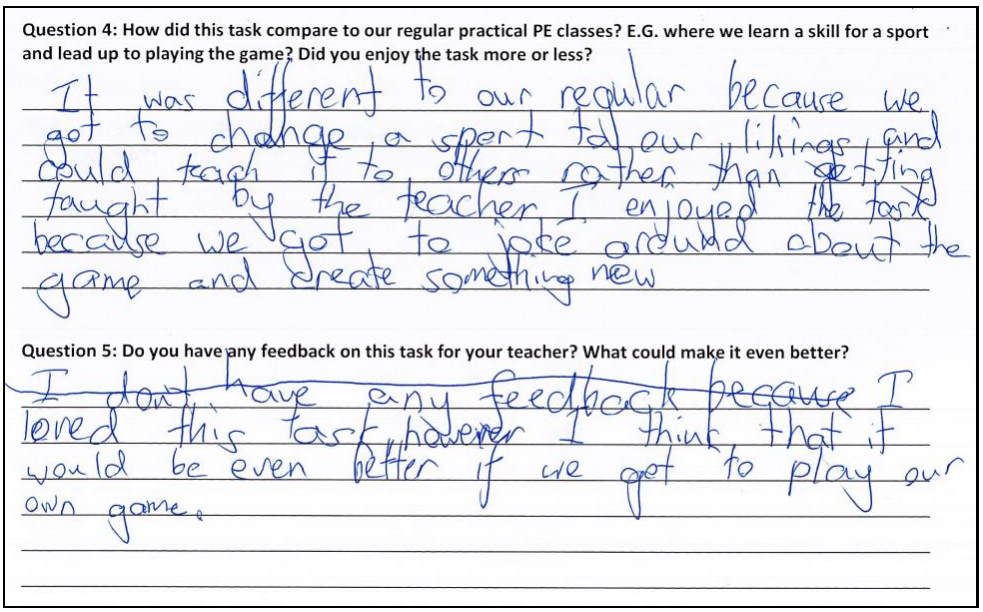
Having identified what student outcomes were evidenced by the participants, now some detail is shared about how they evidenced those outcomes.

EVIDENCE USED TO DEMONSTRATE IMPACT

We previously shared findings that demonstrated how, over the course of the TEP, participants began to draw on new ways of collecting evidence to inform pedagogical decision-making. The data shared in this section also relates to the participants' expanded approaches to 'evidence' and data collection but here we focus on the evidence they chose to use to demonstrate impact on student outcomes. As outlined in Table 2, participants used a range of evidence to demonstrate the impact of their practice on student outcomes (e.g. student reflections, observations, school assessed coursework data, attendance records).

The findings suggest that the participants collected and analysed a range of evidence to demonstrate the impact of their practice on student outcomes. They began to complement more traditional and necessary quantitative evidence (e.g. standardised assessment) with more qualitative evidence (e.g. student reflections). For example, some participants used anonymous surveys administered through MS Forms or hard copies to enable students to offer honest feedback while maintaining anonymity (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: Sophie's example of a post-intervention survey.


Question 4: How did this task compare to our regular practical PE classes? E.G. where we learn a skill for a sport and lead up to playing the game? Did you enjoy the task more or less?

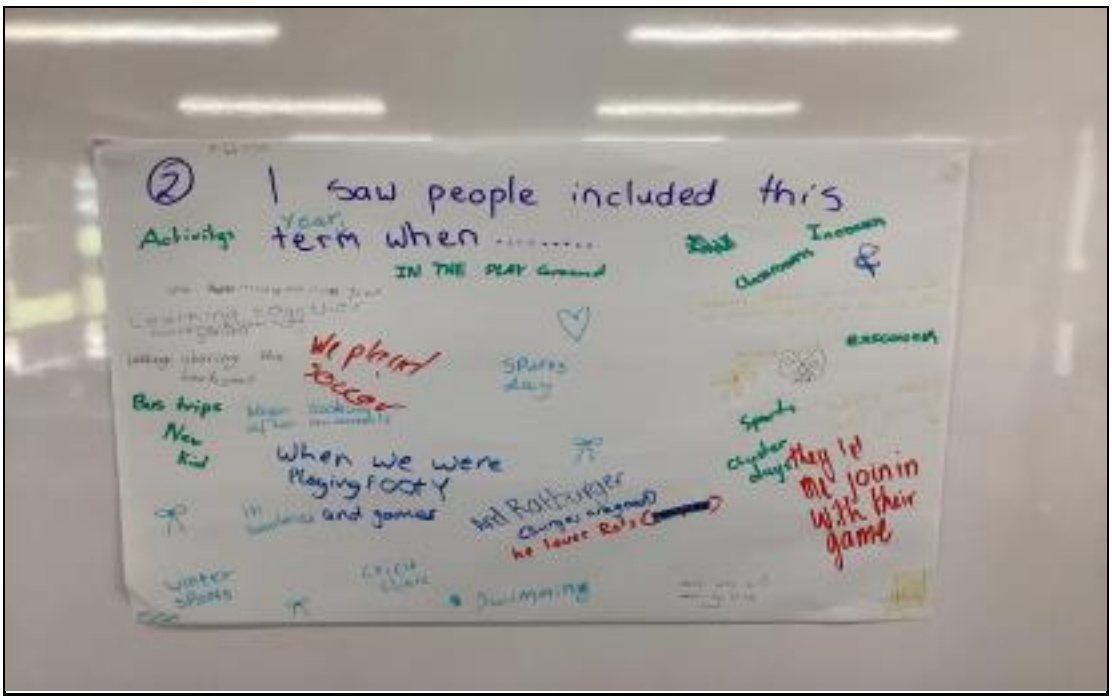
It was different to our regular because we got to change a sport to our likings and could teach it to others rather than getting taught by the teacher I enjoyed the task because we got to use around about the game and create something new

Question 5: Do you have any feedback on this task for your teacher? What could make it even better?

I don't have any feedback because I loved this task however I think that it would be even better if we got to play our own game.

Others used more public methods to capture students' perspectives. Ethan, for example, asked students to share their knowledge and practice related to inclusion in HPE on a piece of paper (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Ethan's example of student-created posters as evidence of their learning about inclusion.



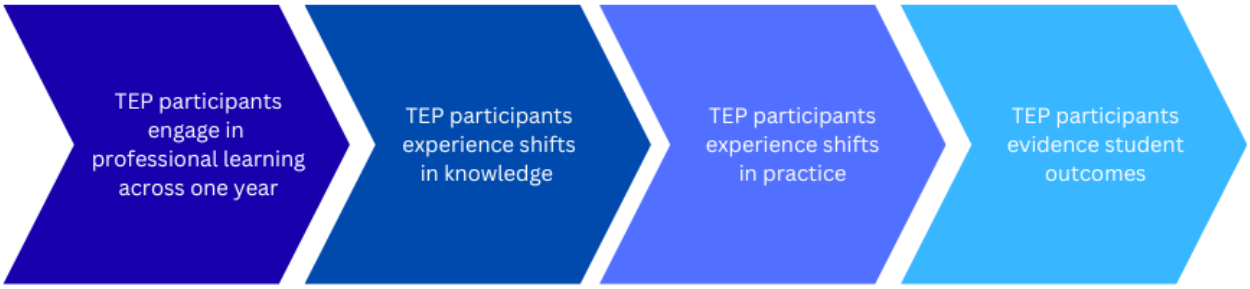
Observations were treated as essential sources of data, with a particular focus on indicators of engagement, for example when students that normally were sitting out started to engage with the practical tasks. These observations were documented via, for example, annotated lesson plans and notes recorded on mobile phones. In addition, structured checklists and charts, such as skill checklists and participation charts, were employed to systematically track behaviours and engagement, especially for target students, including those who frequently disengaged. Video evidence was also used, which worked as a pedagogical tool but also as visual documentation and evidence of skill development and improvement in specific students over time.

Overall, participants used multiple methods to evidence student outcomes. They were able to then triangulate data to generate complex analysis and statements of impact at the end of their IPI. All participants suggested that drawing on a broader range of evidence, including qualitative and quantitative methods, allowed for the collection of richer and more relevant artefacts that could capture sometimes complex shifts in student outcomes.

SUMMARY

How does the Teaching Excellence Program (TEP) improve student outcomes? In some respects, the response to this question is quite predictable, and aligns with the traditional models of teacher change (e.g. Guskey, 2002; Clarke and Hollingsworth, 2002). That is to say, the TEP (HPE) participants in 2025 engaged in meaningful and integrated professional learning over one year, which prompted shifts in knowledge and practice, and ultimately improved student outcomes related to learning, engagement and/or wellbeing (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: How the TEP improves student outcomes



The data suggest that features of the TEP and the intervention that participants felt most strongly supported their capacity to impact and evidence student outcomes were the:

- time and opportunity to reflect on their knowledge, practice and student outcomes;
- TEP inquiry cycle and inquiry stance;
- diverse learning community that participants engaged with across the TEP
- exploration of diverse methods for data collection;
- individualised support for practitioner inquiry;
- support for data analysis and reporting.

These features prompted shifts in their knowledge and practice, the most crucial being:

- expanded definition of student outcomes;
- expanded approach to 'evidence' and data collection;
- capacity to draw on evidence and student voice to inform pedagogical decision-making.

These shifts enhanced the participants' capacity to articulate and evidence the relationship between their new pedagogical practice and subsequent student outcomes. The participants understood student outcomes as belonging largely, but not always solely, to three interrelated categories: learning, engagement and wellbeing.

Learning related outcomes included enhanced:

- understanding of the use of technology to assist learning
- Fundamental Movement Skills
- interpersonal skills
- collaboration and empathy
- ability to apply theory to real-world contexts.
- understanding of 'inclusion'
- multi-structural knowledge with some progress towards relational thinking
- understanding, particularly with higher-order command terms that had previously been identified as an area of weakness.

Engagement related outcomes included:

- engagement/participation/involvement
- confidence
- enjoyment/fewer requests to 'sit out'
- focus and metacognition

Wellbeing related outcomes included:

- sense of belonging
- sense of connection and safety

Student outcomes were evidenced via multiple methods, which allowed for participants to triangulate data and generate complex analysis and statements of impact. All participants suggested that drawing on a broader range of evidence, including qualitative and quantitative methods, allowed for the collection of rich and more relevant evidence that could capture the complexity of their inquiry.

CONCLUSION

While establishing direct causal links between TPL and student outcomes remains challenging, this research demonstrates that if particular kinds of support are available, TEP participants can effectively use practitioner inquiry to capture rich evidence of student outcomes. This report has identified the kinds of support that the TEP participants required to be able to evidence student outcomes. These features shared in Figure 2, and their impacts - such as expanded approach to 'evidence' and data collection - have been outlined in this report and have informed the recommendation which are now shared.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are grounded in the data generated through this research and reflect the participants' perspectives.

Recommendation 1: Consider extending a single IPI across two semesters/terms. Such an extension would respond to the main challenge that participants faced: time. Participants felt that there was not enough time to plan, enact and report the IPI. There was also some concern from the participants about allowing enough time for student outcomes to eventuate.

Recommendation 2: Strengthen and diversify the support and capacity-building related to practitioner inquiry. This recommendation is further divided into 3 sub-recommendations that call for participants to be supported in:

> **2a: planning an achievable IPI.** Participants tended to plan for very large samples in the first instance. Encouraging participants to work with a small sample of students (e.g. one class or group) would enable richer data collection, analysis and reporting within the constraints of teacher workloads and TEP timelines.
>
> **2b: collecting data pre- and post- their pedagogical intervention.** Participants rarely planned to capture baseline or pre-intervention data. Explicitly encouraging participants to do so would help them evidence the impact of their pedagogical intervention on student outcomes.
>
> **2c: data analysis.** Adopting an expanded approach to 'evidence' and data collection can allow for richer and more student-centred inquiry but, consequently, TEP participants may require support with data analysis. This could include explicit

guidance in analysis and coding to enable evidence-informed decision-making and clearer articulation of the impact of pedagogical interventions.

Recommendation 3. Provide individualised and multi-modal support for IPI and evidencing student outcomes. This would support TEP participants at key points - including planning their inquiry and data analysis - as well as helping them maintain focus once they return to their demanding school context.

3a. Partner with universities and researchers. This could support the provision of individualised and multi-modal support for IPI and evidencing student outcomes.

Recommendation 4. Consider the title and focus of Step 4 of the TEP inquiry cycle. This step requires TEP participants to 'Examine evidence of learning'. A focus on learning is of course vital, but the data from this research suggests that the participants' most pressing problems of practice related to engagement and wellbeing, and it thus might be helpful to expand the focus to include these, alongside learning.

As these recommendations suggest, this research has generated knowledge and insight that can support the further strengthening of the TEP, and in particular how participants are supported to consider, impact and evidence student outcomes.

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