CAPSTONE ASSESSMENT
Illustrating Principle C2 (Complexity)
Approval Requirements for Achievement Against the Standards (With Support)

The capstone assessment required by Principle C2 (Complexity) of the *Approval Requirements for Achievement Against the Standards (With Support)* is a culminating experience that aims to assess the full integration of the PSTs' learning during their programme and their ability to access and integrate multiple sources of knowledge and skill to address problems of practice. As part of this process PSTs will also be able to explain the connections of their actions and decisions to the Standards.

Setting the context for the capstone
The capstone assessment must be based on an open-ended (i.e. not easily resolved) authentic practice situation that requires complex decision-making and the synthesis of learning (cognitive and affective) from across the programme.

The *authentic practice situation* could be:
- drawn from the PST's own description of a challenging practice situation they have faced on practicum, or
- an inquiry the PST has carried out based on a puzzle of practice that they have attempted to resolve, or
- a real, complex task that teachers typically need to complete such as a major piece of planning for a defined context or contexts (level, subject, student profile) or
- a provided case study, vignette or scenario that replicates the type of complex decisions that teachers regularly need to make, or
- a visual prompt (photograph or video) of sufficient detail to enable interpretation, or
- a posed problem that a teacher or school-leader is struggling with and is seeking PST advice on, or
- a role play or simulation of typical complex situations accompanied by an analytical commentary

The capstone can be worked on individually or in groups but it is important that the assessment accurately captures the ability of each student to meet the assessment criteria below. It may be presented orally or in written form or in a combination of both.

Assessing the capstone
Assessment Criteria
In order to ensure that PSTs engage with the integrative nature of the Capstone assessment, Assessment Criteria should address the following:
- Understanding and analysis of the situation including the ability to identify the contributing factors to the described situation and to explain what they consider to be the underlying cause.
- Ability to generate a range of alternative approaches to address the situation along with a commentary on their likely efficacy.
- Evidence of integrative learning – the ability to synthesise knowledge and learning (cognitive and affective) across courses within the programme.
- Ability to explain, justify and evaluate a solution
- Ability to explain how their response to the capstone reflects capabilities drawn from across the standards.

- Ability to reflect on gaps in their learning, weaknesses in particular aspects of the standards, and their intentions to address these as they progress to their next career stage.
- Overall communication and collaboration skills.

Example of an Assessment Rubric
Given the culminating nature of the capstone assessment it is important to define an acceptable level of performance on each criterion. The following rubric suggests one way of doing this with "Proficient" as the expected level of performance. While the aim should be for the PST to achieve Proficient on each criterion the critical judgement is an holistic one - on balance have they achieved Proficient across the whole task.

The rubric example below is particularly focussed on the assessment of a response to one of the provided authentic practice situations from the contexts listed above – namely, a response to a "*provided case study, vignette or scenario that replicates the type of complex decisions that teachers regularly need to make.*" While the details in the rubric may vary slightly where PSTs are responding in relation to other contexts from the list above the overall content of the rubric should transfer to the assessment of any of the contexts selected.

Criteria	Emerging	Approaching Proficiency	Proficient
Situation analysis	Focuses on a single or superficial problem of practice with little or no consideration that there might be other ways of reading the situation.	Understands that the situation is complex and that there are multiple factors at play but depth of analysis of these factors is limited and the underlying causal factor is not clearly defined.	Recognises the complexity inherent in the context and is able to clearly articulate the factors at play, and the interplay between them. On the basis of this analysis explains what they consider to be the underlying causal factor.
Generation of alternatives	Focuses on a narrow range of alternatives that are largely limited to one perspective and/or develops each alternative superficially.	Generates a range of alternative approaches to addressing the situation and recognises that differing perspectives generate different alternatives.	Brings multiple perspectives to bear to generate alternative approaches and recognises the potential incompatibility and trade-offs between alternatives.
Knowledge synthesis	Draws on knowledge from within the programme to analyse alternatives and develop solutions but explanations are sketchy and connections between knowledge from different areas of the programme are not evident.	Makes connections between knowledge generated in different parts of the programme to provide depth to the analysis of alternative approaches and to develop solutions.	Knowledge from different parts of the programme is compared and evaluated for its value in generating alternative approaches and developing solutions. Achieves depth and makes interesting and helpful connections.
Recommended Solution	Describes a solution but with limited detail or justification.	Outlines a solution and explains why it addresses the situation and is superior to alternatives.	Weighs alternatives to generate a solution. Outlines the solution and the conditions necessary for its successful implementation while recognising that other alternatives may provide useful solutions in certain circumstances.

Connections to the Standards	Identifies connections to the standards throughout the assessment but largely in a superficial way.	Connections to the standards are woven throughout and relationships between the standards are discussed.	Connections to the standards are explained with judgements about the relative importance of each standard to particular contexts, and the relationships between the standards, featuring throughout the discussion.
Reflection	Determines that situation is resolved when there is further to do or learn.	Recognises that with more knowledge about the situation and with greater personal knowledge and experience a more sophisticated solution could have been generated but is not specific about the particular gaps in their own knowledge that they intend to work on.	Recognises that with more knowledge about the situation and with greater personal knowledge and experience a more sophisticated solution could have been generated. Is open and specific about the particular gaps in their own knowledge and how they intend to address those gaps.
Communication	Communication is understandable.	Communication is understandable and professional (accurate grammatically, sources of idea referenced).	Communication is understandable, professional (accurate grammatically, sources of idea referenced), learning-oriented and engaging.
Collaboration (where relevant)	Contributes to team but to a limited extent and with little initiation of ideas or responsiveness to others' ideas	Initiates ideas and contributes insights to the team. Shows some responsiveness and engagement with others' ideas.	Takes on responsibility in negotiation with the team, shows initiative in contributing thoughtful insights and engages openly with others ideas in ways that help move the team forward.

	Emerging	Approaching Proficiency	Proficient
Overall holistic judgement	Demonstrates some understanding of complex practice but is not yet able to draw on sufficient depth and breadth of learning from the programme, nor to make sufficient connection to the Standards, to give confidence that they are fully ready for independent practice.	Draws on programme learning to demonstrate an understanding that practice is complex and multi-faceted. Is almost ready for independent practice but some gaps in ability to draw on and integrate learning from across different parts of the programme, and to make connections to the Standards, need to be addressed to give confidence in full readiness.	Demonstrates a clear understanding that practice is complex and multi-faceted. Their ability to integrate a depth of learning that is meaningfully connected to the Standards from across the full range of the programme gives confidence that they are fully ready for independent practice.