

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Evaluation of professional competencies
expected of teachers



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Chapter I

REGULATION RESPECTING TEACHING LICENCES

Sections 14 to 26.1 of the *Regulation respecting teaching licences* stipulate the terms and conditions of the probationary period. The Regulation is available at:
<http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/teachers/teaching-in-quebec/teaching-authorizations/>.

1. Teaching licences

A teaching licence, whether a permit or a diploma, confers the entitlement to teach. It provides access to the teaching profession on either a temporary (permit) or permanent (diploma) basis.

Teachers can get training in additional subject areas and thus improve their professional mobility through a professional development program. Such programs do not usually lead to the issue of a new teaching licence,¹ however, they may be taken into consideration by an employer who wishes to place staff on the basis of the newly acquired skills. Consequently, school principals and centre directors are responsible for ensuring that the teachers they hire are qualified to teach the subject in question.

2. Validity of the teaching permit

A teaching permit is valid for five years. The period of validity and conditions for renewal are indicated on the permit. Generally speaking, the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports renews teaching permits upon request for a period of five years, provided the conditions for renewal specified when the permit was issued were met. Permits held by teachers undergoing a second probationary period are valid for one year only.

3. Who must complete a probationary period?

Most professionals are required to complete a supervised professional training period. This training period is known by various names: internship, residence, probation, etc. All of these refer to the professional integration period prospective applicants undergo in order to demonstrate their ability to practise the profession. In the case of the teaching profession, the individuals who must complete a probationary period are those who were trained in a 90-credit bachelor's degree program at a Québec university; those who obtained a teaching permit in recognition of a teaching licence issued outside Canada; and those who obtained a teaching permit in recognition of a teaching licence issued in Canada but outside Québec. The probationary period is part of the process of having their ability to teach officially recognized.

According to the *Regulation respecting teaching licences*, holders of a teaching permit for preschool, elementary or secondary education, including adult education and vocational and technical training, are required to undergo a probationary period.

Like the practicums available in the new teacher training programs, the probationary period constitutes a supervised period of professional practice that makes it possible to recognize the competencies of applicants for a teaching diploma.

For holders of a teaching permit, the probationary period coincides with a period of professional integration, which allows novice teachers to benefit from support as they begin to teach. It is

¹ A second teaching licence may be issued if a person successfully completes two teacher-training programs, one qualifying him or her to teach general education and another, to teach vocational training.

important that teachers on probation have access to the appropriate assistance to facilitate their integration into the professional community, in this case, the teaching profession.

It is up to the school principal or centre director to provide support and evaluation measures that will allow applicants to meet the objectives of the probationary period (e.g. establish a committee, where applicable; set up statutory meetings with the teacher on probation; set up group meetings; assign mentors). Assistance may also be sought from other resource persons (e.g. vice-principals, teachers, education consultants).

4. Objective of the probationary period

The *Regulation respecting teaching licences* stipulates the specific professional competencies on which the probationary period is to focus. These competencies² provide school principals and centre directors with benchmarks for the evaluation of teachers on probation.

The objective of the probationary period is to **recognize the professional competencies** required to teach. In particular, the probationary period focuses on applicants' ability:

- to communicate effectively orally and in writing and to develop, adapt, test and evaluate teaching/learning situations intended to help students develop the competencies described in the programs approved by the Minister, using information and communications technologies
- to establish contact with students individually or in groups, to maintain an atmosphere and environment conducive to the development of competencies and to consider individual differences of all kinds
- to establish interpersonal relationships with parents, other staff members and partners as needed in order to provide the appropriate services
- to act ethically and responsibly in the exercise of their various duties and to commit to an individual and collective professional development process

5. Duration of the probationary period

According to the *Regulation respecting teaching licences*, the probationary period is a period of professional practice by the end of which the applicant's competencies will have been evaluated. The evaluation is based on the competencies expected of teachers. A probationary period consists of a maximum of 900 hours of teaching in a recognized educational institution; it may, however, be reduced to a minimum of 600 hours if the applicant has achieved all the objectives of the probationary period. Teaching hours are counted toward the probationary period if the applicant has taught at least 200 hours over a period of 12 consecutive months for a single employer. The educational institution cannot fail applicants who have completed less than 900 hours on probation.

² Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Teacher Training, Orientations, Professional Competencies* (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2001).

Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Teacher Training in Vocational Education, Orientations, Professional Competencies* (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2002).

All hours of teaching that are completed as part of a contract and are devoted to the instruction of compulsory subjects and carried out under the *Basic school regulation for preschool, elementary and secondary education* in public educational institutions established under the *Education Act* (CQLR, c. I-13.3) or the *Education Act for Cree, Inuit and Naskapi Native Persons* (CQLR, c. I-14), or in private educational institutions governed by the *Act respecting private education* (CQLR, c. E-9.1) or in special-status institutions listed in Schedule VII of *The Regulation respecting teaching licences* are recognized for the purposes of the probationary period. These hours must be completed while the licence is still valid.

After the applicant has taught 200 to 300 hours under contract, the person responsible for the organization and supervision of probationary periods at the school board or private or special-status institution must give the applicant an evaluation of his or her performance.

Teachers on probation are responsible for keeping track of their hours of teaching. Upon arrival at a new institution, they must inform the principal or director of the number of hours they have already completed in their probationary period.

While applicants must be under contract, they must be aware that an accurate evaluation of their teaching ability requires a minimum of background information. For this reason, they are encouraged to complete their probationary period in no more than two or three educational institutions.

6. Responsibilities

The authorities responsible for the administration of probationary periods are the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, the school board, and the public, private or special-status institution. The teacher on probation also has responsibilities throughout the process.

- The Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur

The Ministère is responsible for developing and applying the regulatory provisions respecting teaching licences. Upon receipt of the appropriate documents, the Minister issues teaching licences, informs applicants of their right to undergo a second probationary period or confirms the nonrenewal of the teaching licence.

- School boards and private and special-status institutions

Each of these bodies must appoint a coordinator to coordinate and oversee the application of the procedure governing the organization and supervision of probationary periods. The coordinator is also responsible for ensuring effective communication with the Direction de la formation et de la titularisation du personnel scolaire (DFTPS) of the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur.

- The principal or director

Within a private, public or special-status institution, the principal or director is the person primarily responsible for the organization and supervision of probationary periods. He or she must ensure that all teachers on probation are aware of and comply with the institution's policies regarding the

organization, supervision and evaluation of probationary periods. It is important, after each 300-hour period, that the principal or director of the educational institution in which the probationary period is taking place evaluate the development of the applicant's competencies. A teacher's professional competencies must be evaluated at least twice during the probationary period in order to be able to recognize them at the end of the period.

- The teacher on probation

Teachers on probation are responsible for informing the principal or director of each institution at which they teach that they are on probation. They must actively collaborate with the principal or director, their colleagues and their mentor. They must also comply with the teachers' obligations as stipulated in section 22 of the *Education Act*.

7. Decision

The principal or director is responsible for evaluating the educational and professional practices of teachers on probation. However, the Ministère favours an approach that fosters the active participation of the teachers on probation. In this approach, tools for gathering and recording information make it possible to identify, develop and evaluate the different competencies. The teacher on probation concerned, as well as the coordinator for the school board or private or special-status institution, must be informed of the results of the evaluation.

At the end of the probationary period, the last employer is responsible for issuing an attestation of success or a notice of failure to each applicant for a teaching diploma. This decision must be based on the employer's own evaluation and, if applicable, on previous evaluations of the applicant by other educational institutions. Whether it attests to a success or failure, the form is sent to the applicant and to the DFTPS of the Ministère. The form can also be used to request the issue of a teaching diploma or an authorization to undergo a second probationary period.

Where an applicant for a teaching diploma has not attained the objectives of the probationary period, the employer forwards the notice of failure and the evaluation rubrics to the DFTPS, as well as a description of the evaluation terms and conditions and, if applicable, measures taken to address serious weaknesses. The applicant also receives these documents. The Ministère suggests using the *Probationary Period Evaluation Report* (see also Appendix 1, *Instructions for the evaluation of competencies during the probationary period*).

8. Entitlement to a second probationary period

An applicant who fails a probationary period may send a written application for a second probationary period to the Minister within 60 days of receiving the notice of failure. The application must contain the applicant's name, address, social insurance number and date of birth. The applicant may apply for a second probationary period by completing the form entitled *Probationary Period (Attestation of Success, Notice of Failure)* or the form entitled *Application to serve a second probationary period*, if the applicant has not signed Notice of Failure. If the application is not made within the specified time limit or does not contain the specified information, the applicant's teaching permit will no longer be valid.

The same terms and conditions apply to the second probationary period as the first, except that it is limited to 600 hours.

The documents used for evaluating the probationary period and the second probationary period must be sent to the following address:

Direction de la formation et de la titularisation du personnel scolaire
Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur
1035, rue De La Chevrotière, 28^e étage
Québec (Québec) G1R 5A5
Telephone: 1-866-747-6626 (toll-free)
418-646-6581

Chapter II

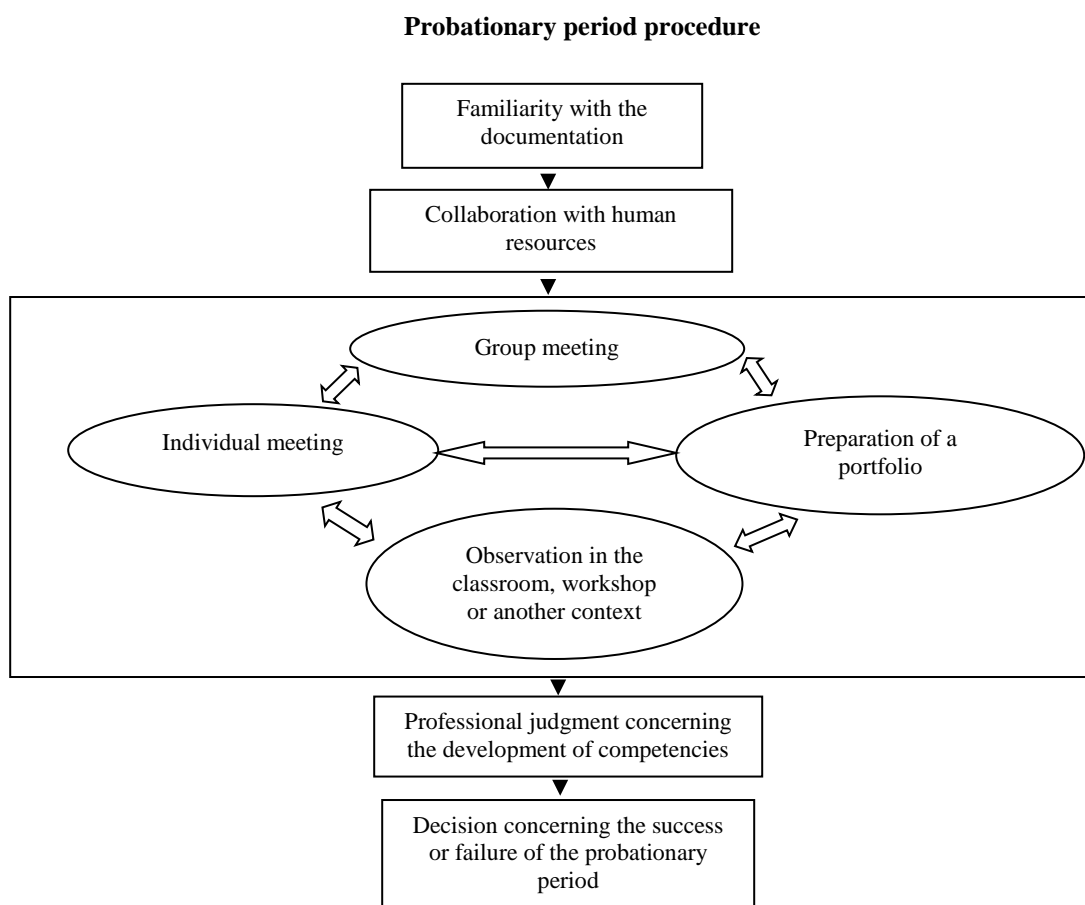
THE PROCESS

1. Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the proposed procedure and tools for evaluating the competencies of teachers on probation. Although complex, this process is coherent. Based on the professional judgment of the school principal or centre director, it also involves the active participation of the teacher on probation, and must be solidly supported by the appropriate instruments.

2. Summary probationary period procedure

In brief, the proposed procedure guides the principal or director and the teacher on probation through a common process in which each participates in his or her own way. The goal of this process is to arrive at a fair and well-founded decision regarding the teacher's professional competencies. The following diagram illustrates the different steps in the procedure.



2.1 Familiarity with the documentation

The school principal or centre director is responsible for organizing probationary periods in his or her educational institution and, at the end of this period, for submitting an evaluation report to human resources attesting to each applicant's level of development of the professional competencies. This aspect of the process requires a clear and transparent procedure that will ensure fair and equitable treatment for all teachers on probation. The first—crucial—step is to become familiar with the documentation on the probationary period as well as the different instruments and to make sure that the

staff members concerned are aware of and understand the documentation in question.

2.2 Collaboration with human resources³

Throughout the school year, the principal or director should maintain a list of teachers on probation in his or her institution along with their profiles. There should be regular contact with human resources in order to obtain and validate the information needed to plan the teachers' accompaniment and evaluation. The principal or director and those responsible for human resources will then be able to decide whether or not to request the assistance of one or more mentors to organize and supervise the probationary period.

2.3 Group meeting

A first group interview may take place at the beginning of the school year. The principal or director of the institution or, depending on the context, the representative of the school board meets with all applicants for a teaching licence. This is an ideal opportunity to make introductions, specify the role of each participant and provide those concerned with the documentation on the terms and conditions of the probationary period. This meeting helps create a friendly atmosphere and establish relationships between the teaching staff and the teachers on probation.

2.4 Individual meeting

The individual meeting enables the principal or director and the teachers on probation to discuss and spell out their respective expectations. It is also an opportunity to prepare and review observations. It helps create an atmosphere of trust and a collaborative relationship throughout the process.

2.5 Preparation of a portfolio

The portfolio is used to record relevant achievements that attest to the development of professional competencies during the probationary period. The applicant may choose varied documents and he or she must justify their pertinence.

The portfolio is organized in accordance with the 12 professional competencies and the documents it contains must demonstrate the development of each of these competencies.

2.6 Observation in the classroom, workshop or another context

Observation is a means of gathering, at times determined in advance by the teacher on probation and the principal or director, information about different aspects such as behaviours, attitudes, skills or actions taken in the classroom, the workshop or another context in which teachers on probation can demonstrate their professional competencies. The Ministère suggests competency evaluation rubrics based on the reference framework for competencies.⁴ These evaluation rubrics, presented in the *Probationary Period Evaluation Report*, contain a selection of indicators related to observable behaviours to be assessed, depending on the method used (observation, meeting or portfolio).

³ This suggestion applies in particular to the public sector.

⁴ The reference framework refers to the following two documents:

Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Teacher Training, Orientations, Professional Competencies* (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2001).

Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Teacher Training in Vocational Education, Orientations, Professional Competencies* (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2002).

2.7 Professional judgment on the level of development of each competency

The school principal or centre director is responsible for judging competency development. The competency checklist, completed after a period of 200 to 300 hours of teaching and at the end of the probationary period of 900 hours, makes it possible to evaluate the level of development of each competency using a four-level descriptive scale. This checklist can be found in the *Probationary Period Evaluation Report*.

2.8 Success/failure decision

Once the principal or director has evaluated the level of development of each competency, he or she must make an overall professional judgment based on the evaluation. This is a final decision on the success or failure of the probationary period and, therefore, on whether the applicant will be recommended for a permanent teaching licence (teaching diploma). To help support the decision and ensure its fairness, the Ministère introduced a decision rule at the end of the process in the *Probationary Period Evaluation Report*.

3. Shared responsibilities

The implementation of a process for evaluating the professional competencies expected of teachers on probation involves the participation of several partners. The following table illustrates, for information purposes and for the three methods of gathering information, one way of sharing responsibilities. The third column gives a suggested time frame for the selected methods.

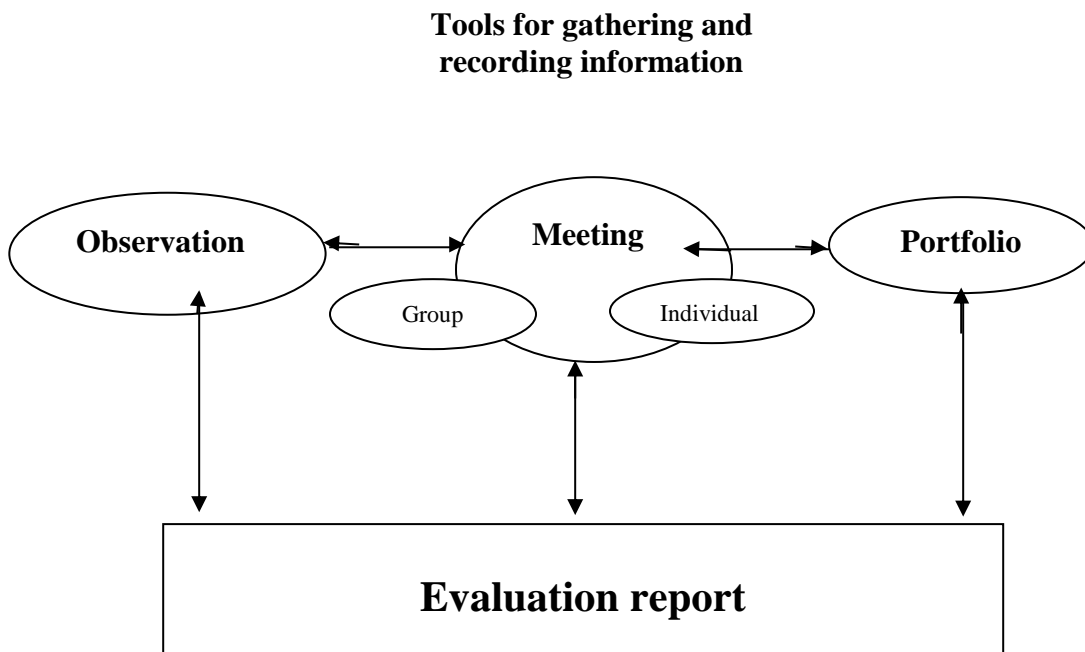
Shared responsibilities

Partners	Responsibilities	Time frame
Human resources or Educational services or The school principal or centre director (in certain private educational institutions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Becomes familiar with the documentation on the probationary period Provides principals and directors with a list of teachers on probation in their institution and all other relevant information Ensures that conditions are conducive to the evaluation of the probationary period Offers principals and directors support or training as needed Participates in the development of clear criteria for the selection of mentors, if applicable Participates in the evaluation of applicants' competencies Sends an attestation of success or a notice of failure to the Ministère 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the beginning of the probationary period Throughout Throughout Throughout At the beginning of the probationary period At the end of the probationary period At the end of the probationary period
The school principal or centre director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Becomes familiar with the documentation on the probationary period Finds out the number of teachers on probation in his or her institution Selects a mentor on the basis of clear criteria, if applicable Meets with the teachers on probation and introduces the mentor, if applicable (group meeting) Meets with the teacher on probation and the mentor, if applicable (individual meeting) Observes the teacher on probation in the classroom, the workshop or another context Studies the portfolio of the teacher on probation with the mentor, if applicable (individual meeting) Produces an evaluation report for each teacher on probation, signed by the parties concerned Sends the evaluation to human resources In the case of a private institution, sends an attestation of success or a notice of failure to the Ministère 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the beginning of the probationary period Throughout Throughout At the beginning and over the course of the probationary period At the beginning and over the course of the probationary period During the probationary period During and at the end of the probationary period During and at the end of the probationary period During and at the end of the probationary period At the end of the probationary period
The teacher on probation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Becomes familiar with the documentation on the probationary period Prepares for the meetings by identifying competencies Makes suggestions Discusses the process with colleagues on staff Collaborates with the principal or director, colleagues and the mentor, if applicable Organizes and presents his or her achievements and reflections in a portfolio, if applicable Analyzes his or her teaching practices Incorporates suggestions into his or her practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the beginning of the probationary period During the probationary period Throughout Throughout Throughout Throughout Throughout Throughout

The mentor (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becomes familiar with the documentation on the probationary period • Provides teachers on probation with accompaniment and support (e.g. observations, meetings, discussions about the portfolio) • Organizes or leads and participates in meetings with all teachers on probation in the institution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the beginning of the probationary period • Throughout • Throughout
Teachers on staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become familiar with the documentation on the probationary period • Discuss the process with colleagues on probation • Upon the request of the teacher on probation, observe his or her behaviour in the classroom or the workshop • Upon the request of the teacher on probation, help him or her organize his or her portfolio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the beginning of the probationary period • Throughout • During the probationary period • Throughout

4. A detailed look at the probationary period process

A single means of gathering information is not sufficient for the evaluation of all teaching competencies. That is why three methods are proposed for gathering information about competency development: the meeting, observation and the portfolio. At the end of the probationary period, the information should be recorded in a single instrument in order to provide a detailed portrait of the applicant's professional activities and an evaluation of the level of development of his or her professional competencies.



4.1 Familiarity with the documentation

In order to accurately and fairly evaluate the level of development of an applicant's professional competencies, it is necessary to understand the probationary period process and the concept of "competency."

"Competency" is the ability to "act effectively or respond appropriately"⁵ and involves a variety of elements to be evaluated: knowledge, experience, attitudes, skills, resources, etc.⁶ It is demonstrated in complex situations involving these different elements, and implies familiarity with and the use (construction) of these elements to achieve an aim or carry out a decision or action that "goes beyond the mere addition or juxtaposition of elements."⁷ Because it is complex, it takes a certain amount of time to develop.

The evaluation of a competency requires a professional judgment. According to the *Policy on the*

⁵ Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, Direction de la formation générale des jeunes, *Québec Education Program, Secondary School Education, Cycle One* (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2004), 9.

⁶ For a more detailed explanation of the concept of "competency," see *Teacher Training, Orientations, Professional Competencies*, 47.

⁷ *Teacher Training, Orientations, Professional Competencies*, 47.

Evaluation of Learning, “judgment is a factor throughout the evaluation process.”⁸ Therefore, it must be “based on relevant, valid and sufficient information”⁹ and on all of the elements of the competency.

That is why the principal or director and the teacher on probation should have a clear understanding of the process and of the tools used to gather evidence of competency development. This will help them to understand their respective responsibilities in the process. The information gathered will be recorded in the *Probationary Period Evaluation Report*.

The evaluation report contains three distinct sections:

- Evaluation rubrics and observation sheets for each of the 12 professional competencies
- A competency checklist for indicating the level of development of each competency
- A decision rule, which leads to a verdict of success or failure of the probationary period

The competency evaluation rubrics contain indicators describing different aspects of each competency. Should an indicator appear to be more appropriate in a specific situation, it can be added. Each rubric can be used twice, and suggestions for preparing the portfolio are given in Appendix 3.

The most practical way of proceeding is to copy the observation sheet and record on it information gathered in real-life situations and meetings or during observation periods. The facts and comments recorded are then used to fill out the evaluation rubric for each of the competencies observed, using the proposed rating scale.

4.2 Collaboration with human resources

Traditionally, the role played by human resources is to transmit administrative and information documents on the probationary period and the qualifications of teachers on probation. It is important that this collaboration between the school principal or centre director (or educational services) and human resources continue until the end of the process. It will make it possible to establish criteria for selecting mentors to help teachers on probation and to determine the role they will play in the process. Human resources can help train, support and evaluate teachers on probation or train new principals or directors or those already in place.

The mentor must have certain characteristics determined by the principal or director in collaboration with human resources and educational services (e.g. recognized teaching competencies, an interest in his or her own professional development and that of his or her colleagues, analytical and problem-solving skills, an aptitude for teamwork, the ability to communicate, interpersonal skills, credibility, discretion, empathy, enthusiasm). The mentor must, above all, accompany teachers on probation, earn their trust and provide support as needed. In order to maintain this relationship of mutual trust, it is essential that the mentor not be involved in the evaluation process, so that his or her role remains unequivocal. The website of the Carrefour national de l’insertion professionnelle en enseignement (CNIPE) (<http://www.insertion.qc.ca>) provides a forum for discussion and support for novice teachers and mentors. It also offers online mentoring and other information.

⁸ Québec, Ministère de l’Éducation, *Policy on the Evaluation of Learning* (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2003), 29.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.

4.3 Group meeting

If there is more than one teacher on probation in the educational institution or school board, it is useful to begin with a group meeting. This first meeting, which should take place at the beginning of the school year, enables the different partners to introduce themselves and specify their respective roles in the process. Even in schools or centres with only one teacher on probation, this meeting is very important, since it is part of the planning stage and provides a number of other advantages.

During this meeting, times are set for each of the activities involved in the process (see Appendix 2 for examples of planning activities). This is also an opportunity to introduce teachers on probation to the *Probationary Period Evaluation Report* and the tools for gathering information about their professional competencies throughout the process. If a mentor has been selected, he or she is introduced and his or her role explained. The group meeting makes it possible to create a network within which teachers on probation can share their thoughts, achievements and difficulties.

During the school year, group meetings are also a good opportunity to discuss their portfolios with teachers on probation. Section 4.5 explains how to prepare a portfolio.

Group meetings are conducive to the development of a learning community in which the individual participants become aware of the competencies they wish to improve and contribute by their comments to the improvement of their colleagues' practices. Other group meetings may take place during the process as needed, to give teachers on probation the opportunity to discuss the documents that should be included in the portfolio. These meetings are springboards for discussions about achievements, problems encountered and documents to be included, as well as an opportunity to share suggested reading.

4.4 Individual meeting

The individual meeting is an opportunity for two or more people to interact and establish expectations. According to Michel Perraudeau¹⁰ and Pierre Vermersch,¹¹ it is the act of verbalizing the action taking place, and is associated with the pedagogy of exchange. It is therefore essential to establish an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect.

The individual meeting is an opportunity for teachers on probation to share their thoughts about their practices, identify what they would like to change and determine how they could improve certain aspects. They can also talk about their progress. The principal or director should take this opportunity to express his or her expectations, encourage the teacher on probation and provide support and supervision.

The meeting can be used to plan the observation periods and to determine the competencies to be observed, the context, the roles of each participant and the conditions to be met. This meeting can also be useful after an observation period in order to adjust professional practices, discuss the portfolio and its contents, find solutions to certain problems or identify behaviours or indicators.

The parties may decide to use the portfolio to demonstrate only a certain number of targeted competencies and be organized around these competencies. If the teacher on probation and the principal

¹⁰ Michel Perraudeau, *Échanger pour apprendre. L'entretien critique* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1998).

¹¹ Pierre Vermersch, *L'entretien d'explicitation* (Paris: ESF, 1994).

or director agree that most of the competencies should be observed in the classroom using the evaluation rubrics provided in the appendix, or that they should be discussed in group or individual meetings, the portfolio can be used to demonstrate other competencies.

4.5 Preparation of a portfolio

The portfolio is an organized file of written work, achievements and reflections that illustrate the progress of the teacher on probation. The contents, arranged in chronological order and according to different contexts, document aspects related to the teaching profession and to the expected professional competencies (see Appendix 3). The portfolio is thus used to illustrate the progress of the teacher on probation (strengths, weaknesses, failures and achievements).

The first step consists in preparing a working portfolio. At this stage, the applicant gathers documents, for example written work, reflections and annotated readings, on a regular basis. Arranged according to different contexts, these documents are not selected for their appearance, but rather for their ability to provide evidence of the development of professional competencies. They demonstrate the applicant's progress. It is essential to justify the inclusion of each document with respect to the related competencies.

The second step involves preparing the final portfolio based on the working portfolio and organized according to the 12 competencies. The applicant selects documents in the working portfolio that best demonstrate each competency. These documents must be varied and relate to different contexts. The profile should be practical, succinct and well organized. It is also important to remember that a single document is not sufficient to demonstrate the development of a competency. Several documents should be provided as evidence for each one.

4.6 Observation in the classroom, the workshop or another context

Observation permits a careful verification of facts. It can be informal and unplanned and take place anywhere in the school or centre as long as it relates to a competency. It does not require an instrument and enables the principal or director and the teacher on probation to discuss things in order to make quick adjustments. The event can be discussed at the individual meeting and be recorded on an observation sheet. An informal observation could take place as follows: the principal sees a teacher on probation in the hall with students who are not obeying school rules. After class, she spends a few minutes with the teacher on probation to make an adjustment.

Observation can also be formal and systematic, in which case evidence is immediately recorded on the appropriate rubric or sheet. This technique makes it possible to study the characteristics of a particular event and should ideally have no influence on the teacher on probation. It is therefore preferable not to ask questions, make comments or give instructions during the observation period. Repeated opportunities for observation are an important source of basic information.

If the information gathered is to be credible, it is necessary to clearly define the observation focuses (competencies), describe the context of the observation, use an accurate and concise instrument that is familiar to both parties and specify the roles of each party. The principal or director and the teacher on probation agree during the meeting on the competencies to be observed based on indicators. However, since the classroom context is often unpredictable, any demonstration of competencies other than those targeted will also be observed and evaluated.

The first observation period should take place after 200 to 300 hours of teaching and participation in school life. If the results of the first evaluation are positive and the teacher on probation does not demonstrate any serious weaknesses in his or her competency development, a second observation should take place after 600 teaching hours. This evaluation may result in a decision on the success or failure of the probationary period. In the meeting that follows, the teacher on probation can then present his or her portfolio, if it was selected as a professional development tool. He or she will have selected those documents that best demonstrate the professional competencies in question as described in the competency evaluation rubrics and provide the most succinct evidence. Examination of the portfolio will help the principal or director justify his or her evaluation.

If the applicant has demonstrated serious weaknesses in the first observations, and if a professional development plan (see Appendix 4) has been proposed and followed up, there should be at least one other observation period scheduled after approximately 900 hours of teaching and participation in school life. The time lapse between the two formal observations enables the teacher on probation to improve teaching practices deemed problematic in the previous observations. This observation period enables the teacher on probation and the principal or director to note any progress and to gather the necessary information for making a final judgment. The meeting that follows will provide an opportunity to review the entire probationary period and substantiate the judgment.

At certain times, regulation is required when serious weaknesses are observed or when a teacher on probation requests assistance. This regulation can take the form of a professional development plan. Teachers on probation are more likely to accept this plan and use it to improve their professional practices if it is developed by the principal or director in collaboration with them. For example, the plan may propose that the teacher on probation attend a workshop or take a supplementary university course, do readings followed by discussions, work with an education consultant or work with a colleague. It is necessary to ensure from the outset that the plan presents realistic objectives and that it targets competencies or indicators that need improvement. It is important to verify whether it has been followed and, especially, whether the time allotted for competency development has been sufficient to produce the desired outcomes (see Appendix 4 for a sample professional development plan).

4.7 Professional judgment on the level of development of each competency

Judging the level of development of each competency at the end of the probationary period is a complex task and merits careful examination. First, it is important to bear in mind the fundamental values of justice, equality and equity, which are in constant interaction during the evaluation process.

It is very important, for every competency and its associated indicators, to have gathered relevant and sufficient information in a variety of contexts using at least two tools where necessary (e.g. observation and meeting). Each competency is judged on the basis of an analysis and synthesis of the information gathered.¹² If some aspects of a competency need further development, the judgment should be qualified and include recommendations, which will be recorded on the competency checklist.

The evaluations recorded for various indicators on each evaluation rubric, using the different tools, paint a portrait of the competency and provide an overview of its development during the probationary period. A first judgment should determine the level of development of the competency on the rating

¹² *Policy on the Evaluation of Learning*, 29.

scale included in the competency checklist, a descriptive scale of the level of development achieved at the end of the probationary period. These levels take into account the applicant's degree of autonomy, the support needed, the level of comfort and progress demonstrated during the probationary period and the evaluations received on different indicators at the end of the period.

The levels, presented in the table below, should help justify judgments on competency development and ensure that they are consistent from one institution to the next.

Levels of competency development

<p>Level 1</p> <p>The teacher on probation has developed a high level of competency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has shown considerable autonomy in developing the competency. • He or she has mastered the different aspects of the competency and progressed without difficulty, even if a few adjustments are needed. • According to the indicators of competency, the performance achieved at the end of the probationary period was mostly As and a few Bs.
<p>Level 2</p> <p>The teacher on probation has developed the competency to an acceptable degree</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has developed the competency with minimal support. • He or she has mastered several aspects of the competency and has demonstrated open-mindedness. He or she has made the necessary adjustments over time. • According to the indicators of competency, the performance achieved at the end of the probationary period was mostly As and Bs and a few Cs.
<p>Level 3</p> <p>The teacher on probation demonstrates serious weaknesses in the development of the competency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has required constant support in developing the competency. • He or she has had difficulty with several aspects of the competency and has made certain adjustments with support and supervision. There are still several major aspects to be corrected. • According to the indicators of competency, the performance achieved at the end of the probationary period was mostly Cs and Ds and some Bs.
<p>Level 4</p> <p>The teacher on probation has not developed the competency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has not developed the competency, despite the support received. • He or she has serious difficulty with several aspects of the competency and has rarely made the necessary adjustments. • According to the indicators of competency, the performance achieved at the end of the probationary period was mostly Ds and N/Os (not observed) and some Cs.

4.8 Success/failure decision

Once a judgment has been made on the development of each competency, a second, more general judgment is made on the competencies as a whole. This professional judgment based on the evaluation of the competencies is a final decision on the applicant's success or failure in the probationary period and, consequently, on whether to recommend the applicant for a permanent teaching licence (teaching diploma).

In order to justify the decision made by the principal or director at the end of the process and to ensure that judgments are as consistent as possible from one institution to the next, the following performance standard should be used:

Performance standard for the probationary period

The applicant scored at **Level 1** or **Level 2** on each of the 12 competencies.

In the event of a failure, the principal or director must send the *Probationary Period Evaluation Report*, written feedback and the proposed professional development plan to the teacher on probation concerned and to human resources. These documents are also forwarded to the DFTPS.

If the applicant who has failed decides to complete a second probationary period, the professional development plan will be discussed, adjusted if necessary and applied in order to provide the applicant with concrete support.

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Appendix 1

Instructions for the evaluation of competencies during the probationary period

In accordance with section 17 of the *Regulation respecting teaching licences*, the probationary period must be served in educational institutions in the following categories:

- 1° educational institutions set up under the *Education Act* (CQLR, c. I-13.3) or under the *Education Act for Cree, Inuit and Naskapi Native Persons* (CQLR, c. I-14)
 - 2° private educational institutions governed by the *Act respecting private education* (CQLR, c. E-9.1)
 - 3° special status educational institutions under agreement with the Minister
1. The attestation of success or notice of failure may be completed at any time during the school year.
- The employer may deliver an attestation of success or a notice of failure as soon as the candidate for a teaching diploma has completed his or her probationary period.
2. The employer sends the duly completed attestation of success or notice of failure to the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur and gives a copy to the person who has completed the probationary period.

In the case of failure, the supporting documents listed in section 24 of the *Regulation respecting teaching licences* must be sent to the candidate and to the Minister. This section reads as follows:

An employer who concludes that the probationary period objective has not been attained must so notify the teacher trainee in writing. The notice must contain reasons and mention the suggestions made to correct the shortcomings identified in the evaluation reports.

A copy of the notice must be sent to the Minister with the evaluation reports, a description of the evaluation procedures and the measures taken, if applicable, pursuant to section 21.

The file and supporting documents required in the case of failure must be mailed to the following address:

Direction de la formation et de la titularisation du personnel scolaire
Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur
1035, rue De La Chevrotière, 28^e étage
Québec (Québec) G1R 5A5

3. A person who wishes to request a second probationary period under section 25 may do so in any one of the following ways:

- by completing the section reserved for this purpose on the form *Probationary Period - Attestation of Success or Notice of Failure*
- by completing the form *Application to serve a second probationary period*

Section 25 reads as follows:

A person who fails the probationary period may serve a second probationary period if the person so notifies the Minister in writing within 60 days following receipt of the notice of failure. Sections 15 and 17 to 23 apply to the serving of a second probationary period which consists of 600 hours of teaching.

An employer who concludes that the objective of the second probationary period has not been attained must so notify the person concerned in writing. The notice must contain reasons.

A copy of the notice must be sent to the Minister with the evaluation reports, a description of the evaluation procedures and the measures taken, if applicable, pursuant to section 21.

4. The request made under section 25 to serve a second probationary period must be accompanied by the *Declaration Concerning a Judicial Record* form available at: www.education.gouv.qc.ca/enseigner-au-quebec.
5. According to section 15 of the *Regulation respecting teaching licences*:

The purpose of the probationary period is to verify a teacher's professional competence.

The probationary period focuses on

- (1) the ability to communicate orally and in writing in an efficient manner, and to develop, adapt, manage and evaluate teaching-learning situations designed to enable students to develop the competency described in the programs of studies approved by the Minister, making use of information and communications technologies;
- (2) the ability to establish a rapport with the students individually or as a group, to maintain an atmosphere and environment conducive to the development of competency and to consider individual differences of all types;
- (3) the ability to establish interpersonal relations with parents, the other members of the staff of the educational institution and the partners responsible for the implementation of the services; and
- (4) the ability to act ethically and responsibly in performing the various duties and to be committed to a personal or collective process of professional development.

The Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur advises that the information you provide may be used for future research, evaluation or study purposes to improve client services.

Appendix 2

Planning activities for the evaluation of competencies during the probationary period

▪ Planning activities	Time frame
▪ Group meeting ✓ Give information about the procedure ✓ Propose a schedule of meetings ✓ Present the instruments used ✓ Create a network	At the beginning of the probationary period, at the start of the school year
▪ Individual meeting (preparatory) ✓ Identify competencies and indicators ✓ Implement measures	During the week before the observation period
▪ Observation in the classroom or workshop ✓ Inform the teacher on probation of the visit ✓ Record facts, evaluate targeted indicators	After 200 to 300 hours
▪ Individual meeting (feedback) ✓ Review the observation of facts ✓ Identify strengths and aspects requiring improvement ✓ Agree on measures to be implemented ✓ Identify competencies and indicators for the next observation period	During the week following the observation period
▪ Group meeting ✓ Discuss the portfolio with peers ✓ Discuss problems encountered and possible solutions	During the probationary period
▪ Observation in the classroom or workshop ✓ Inform the teacher on probation of the visit ✓ Record facts and evaluate targeted indicators	After approximately 600 hours (an attestation of success may be signed if every objective has been achieved)
▪ Individual meeting (feedback) ✓ Review the observation of facts ✓ Identify strengths and aspects requiring improvement ✓ Agree on measures to be implemented	During the week following the observation period
▪ Observation in the classroom or workshop (for final evaluation) ✓ Inform the teacher on probation of the visit ✓ Record facts and evaluate targeted indicators	After 900 hours (or 600 hours in the case of a second probationary period)
Individual meeting (for final evaluation) ✓ Present the portfolio ✓ Review the observation of facts ✓ Identify strengths and aspects requiring improvement	After 900 hours (or 600 hours in the case of a second probationary period)
▪ Competency checklist – Decision rule ✓ Make an overall judgment ✓ Present the result of the evaluation to the teacher on probation	After 900 hours (or 600 hours in the case of a second probationary period)

Appendix 3

Documents that may be included in the portfolio of professional competencies

<p>Competency 1: To act as a professional who is inheritor, critic and interpreter of knowledge or culture when teaching students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annotated resumé• Diplomas, degrees, certificates• Demonstration of subject- or trade-related knowledge• Presentation of values, beliefs and view of teaching and learning• Reflections on actions taken that made it possible to understand students' cultural reality• Presentation of ways in which activities were subsequently adapted to give them meaning• Examples of projects related to the history of the subject or trade in question and other subjects or trades
<p>Competency 2: To communicate clearly in the language of instruction, both orally and in writing, using correct grammar, in various contexts related to teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Videos of activities accompanied by an analysis of their positive aspects• List of reference tools used and justification of their relevance in the context of the teaching profession• Texts intended for students, parents or colleagues• Examples of correspondence with parents
<p>Competency 3: To develop teaching/learning situations that are appropriate to the students concerned and to the subject content with a view to developing the competencies targeted in the programs of study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plans for meaningful and varied learning situations related to competency development (e.g. lesson plans)• List of learning styles of different students• Examples of learning situations and their impact on learning
<p>Competency 4: To pilot teaching/learning situations that are appropriate to the students concerned and to the subject content with a view to developing the competencies targeted in the programs of study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reflections on the applicant's teaching style• Accounts of proposed learning situations that foster the integration and application of acquired knowledge• Students' work showing the application of acquired knowledge Students' accounts (signed documents) demonstrating their degree of satisfaction with the proposed learning situations and relating the learning acquired

Competency 5: To evaluate student progress in learning the subject content and mastering the related competencies

- Examples of students' work (evaluation focuses, evaluation criteria and comments)
- Instruments used to evaluate the development of the targeted competencies
- Examples of communications with parents
- Evidence of work or discussion with members of the teaching team
- Evaluation forms
- Self-evaluation
- Tools designed to evaluate the development of competencies

Competency 6: To plan, organize and supervise a class as a way to promote students' learning and social development

- Presentations of methods of implementing rules of conduct
- Organizational models of the classroom or workshop used and justification of their use with respect to the learning to be acquired
- Video of the operation and management of the classroom or workshop, including a connection with the values of the institution
- Example of conflict resolution

Competency 7: To adapt his or her teaching to the needs and characteristics of students with learning disabilities, social maladjustments or handicaps

- Examples of teaching strategies for different types of students
- Analysis of cases involving students with difficulties and examples of how activities were adapted
- Presentation of ways of gathering and using information in order to gain a better understanding of students with learning disabilities, social maladjustments or handicaps, and provide them with the necessary support
- Participation in individualized education plans

Competency 8: To integrate information and communications technologies (ICT) in the preparation and delivery of teaching/learning activities and for instructional management and professional development purposes

- Examples of websites related to a subject, trade or particular field, critical analysis of the sites and demonstration of their relevance to teaching
- Students' work demonstrating the development of competencies and descriptions of contexts in which students were given the opportunity to apply the competencies
- Examples of different types of productions (e.g. web pages, electronic transparencies) or participation in discussion forums demonstrating an ability to use computer resources

Competency 9: To cooperate with school staff, parents, partners in the community and students in pursuing the educational objectives of the school or centre

- Letters or documents intended to inform or cooperate with parents, colleagues or others
- Description of school or centre projects demonstrating the applicant's degree of participation

Competency 10: To cooperate with members of the teaching team in carrying out tasks involving the development and evaluation of the competencies targeted in the programs of study, taking into account the students concerned

- Examples of collaboration with colleagues (cycle, department, school, centre) to plan learning scenarios, develop tools, discuss certain students, etc.
- Copy of the educational project or action plan of the institution and description of the applicant's contribution to it

Competency 11: To engage in professional development individually and with others

- Photographs or texts of the applicant's teaching practices, connections with his or her beliefs and values
- List of his or her strengths and aspects requiring improvement
- Teaching project carried out with students in the classroom or workshop and explanation of the connection with the targeted objectives
- Various annotated texts from journals, books, newspapers, etc.
- Reports of participation in workshops at conventions or seminars and description of their relevance to the applicant's professional development
- Examples of initiatives taken in the classroom or workshop following readings

Competency 12: To demonstrate ethical and responsible professional behaviour in the performance of his or her duties

- Examples of decisions related to the evaluation of student learning, including justifications
- Projects demonstrating the use of a cooperative approach in the classroom or workshop and analysis of the impact of the approach on students and the applicant himself or herself
- Reports of means used to solve conflicts related to racial, sexual or other forms of discrimination

Appendix 4

Professional development plan

(Make a copy for each competency)

Targeted competency:

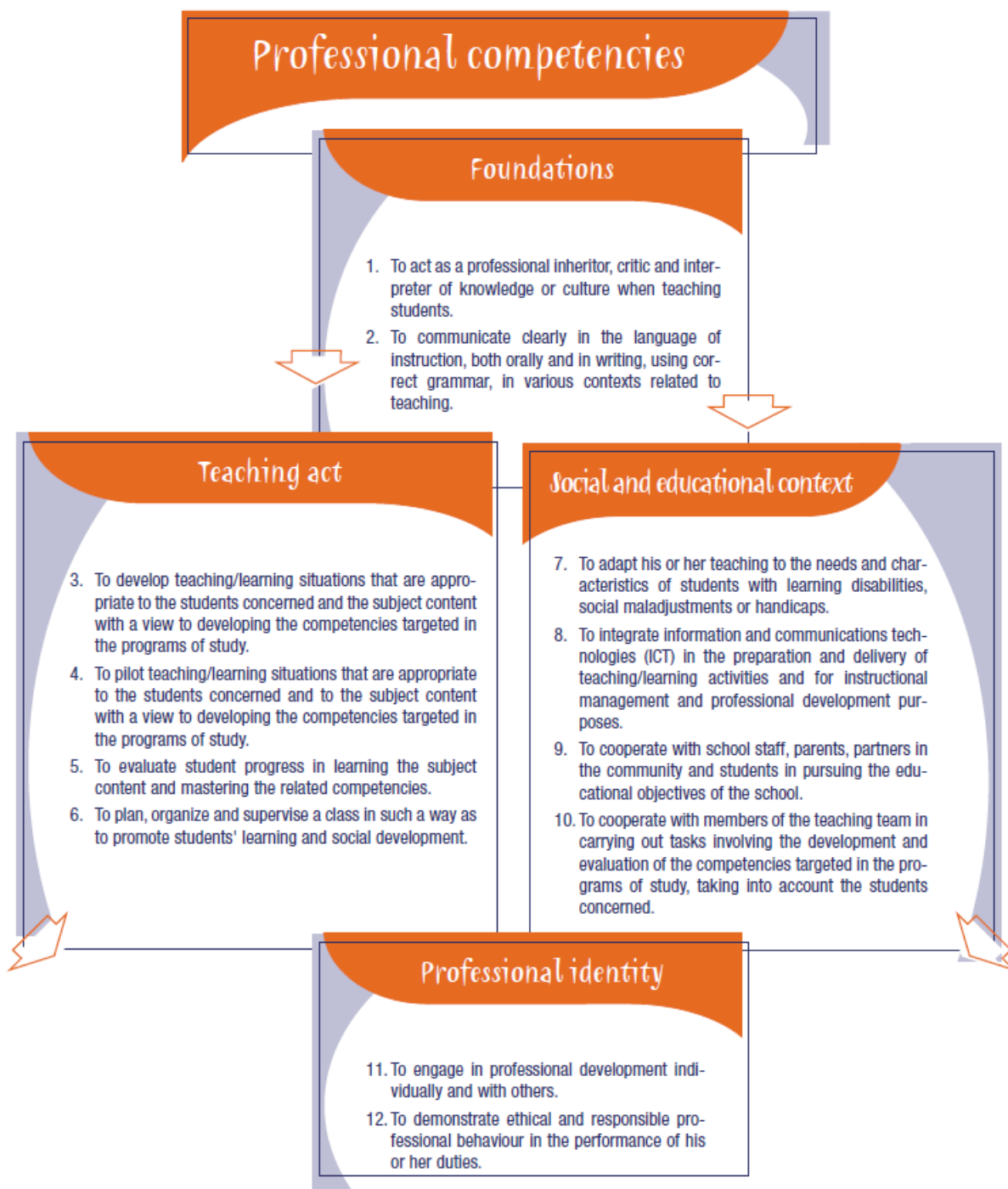
Aspects to be developed:

Targeted measures:

Follow-up dates:

Learning acquired (self-evaluation):

Supervisor's evaluation:



¹³ *Teacher Training, Orientations, Professional Competencies, 55.*



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