



Australian Government
Department of Industry,
Science and Resources

The 2026 Prime Minister's Prizes for Science – Science Teaching Prizes

Additional advice for responding to assessment criteria

Strong nominations will include specific examples of nominee activities that demonstrate how the contribution to student learning meets the assessment criteria. We encourage nominators use the full breadth of the assessment criteria to demonstrate how the nominee profoundly impacted students and science, technology, engineering or mathematics education.

Assessment criterion 1

Professional knowledge: Professional knowledge of one or more areas of science, technology, engineering or mathematics, STEM education and students (10 points)

Demonstrate this by identifying:

- the nominee's knowledge and understanding of the concepts, substance and structure of the content and teaching strategies related to their teaching responsibilities
- the nominee's use and knowledge of teaching strategies that are responsive to the learning strengths and needs of students from diverse backgrounds underrepresented in science, technology, engineering or mathematics
- that science, technology, engineering or mathematics teaching is a part of the nominee's workload.

Strong responses to this criterion will:

- **Clearly outline the significance of their professional knowledge in creating an effective learning environment and demonstrate how their inclusive strategies enhance learning outcomes for all students. This may be demonstrated by:**
 - **Describing curriculum-based learning programs developed by the nominee to enhance learning outcomes for all students. Evidence of outcomes may be demonstrated by formative assessment, internal and external evaluation processes and student reflections.**
 - **Describing the diversity of the student population and how the learning programs have engaged students. Level of engagement may be demonstrated through metrics such as, proportion of the target group who participated.**
- **Explaining why you, the nominator, believe that the nominee should be considered for the Prime Minister's Prize for Science Teaching. This should be supported by a range of evidence that outlines the context, challenges and beneficial outcomes of the nominee's achievements as a result of applying their professional knowledge.**

Assessment criterion 2

Professional Practice: Implements highly effective teaching and learning practices to achieve high quality learning outcomes in science, technology, engineering and/or mathematics (10 points)

Demonstrate this by identifying how the nominee:

- adopts or develops innovative and imaginative approaches to teaching, to create and maintain challenging learning goals and emotionally supportive and physically safe learning environments
- engages students in generating, constructing and testing scientific knowledge and methods by collecting data, investigating, developing, analysing or evaluating problems, concepts, situations or evidence
- ensures the science is contextual, engaging and relevant to the students' lives
- develops student confidence and the ability to use scientific knowledge and processes to make informed decisions or to develop solutions to problems
- inspires students to pursue further studies in science, technology, engineering or mathematics.

These approaches should be demonstrated in the nominee's own classroom and school. If invited to Stage 2, evidence will be required to support this criterion.

Strong responses to this criterion will:

- **Clearly outline how the nominee's teaching and learning approach has been transformational to student engagement in science, technology, engineering or mathematics. This may be demonstrated by:**
 - **Describing the learning approach and the strategies used to support and encourage students to engage in the learning program.**
 - **Collaboration with industry, scientific organisations and internal and external teaching and student bodies to deliver learning programs and activities.**
 - **For each example, include detail on the elements of the program that support a safe, welcoming and supportive learning environment for students.**
 - **Provide evidence of engagement and impact for example by results from school-based evaluation surveys or proportion of student and teacher engagement.**
- **Provide examples where the nominee has developed innovative and creative initiatives or practices that have positively impacted student experience or student engagement in science, technology, engineering or mathematics. It is encouraged that you draw on a diverse range of evidence to support the response, such as:**
 - **Describing the unique pedagogical approaches to support student access and engagement. For example, trans-curricular and cross-curricular approaches and collaboration.**
 - **School-based student competency data, formal evaluation data (e.g. school-based improvement data, initiative evaluation), student retention and attendance.**
 - **Student participation in STEM competitions, including rates of success and evidence of students pursuing further education and careers in science, technology, engineering or mathematics.**

Assessment criterion 3

Professional Engagement: Contribution to and engagement with the broader science, technology, engineering or mathematics education community (10 points)

Demonstrate this by identifying:

- how the nominee engages with the school community, professional teaching networks and broader communities to:
 - improve the quality and effectiveness of science, technology, engineering or mathematics teaching
 - build teachers' capacity to implement their curriculum.
- how the nominee is widely recognised as having made a significant contribution to science, technology, engineering or mathematics education in their school, local school area, state/territory, nationally or internationally through activities such as:
 - engaging with colleagues to improve science teaching practice in their school, local schools, state/territory, nationally or internationally
 - innovative practices that have been adopted in other classrooms, schools or regions
 - participation in curriculum development
 - contributions to relevant education policy at state/territory or national levels.

Strong responses to this criterion will:

- **Clearly outline the nominee's professional engagement activities that have significant impact on the broader science, technology, engineering or mathematics education community. Evidence to demonstrate this may include:**
 - **Initiatives to share knowledge with other teachers and students e.g. design and facilitation of professional learning programs.**
 - **Participation in public forums, advisory boards, science teacher focused conferences and workshop facilitation.**
 - **Building and supporting teacher capability by sharing knowledge through leadership, mentorship and advisory roles.**

- **Detail the nature of the nominee’s engagement activities, provide specific examples, and demonstrate the reach of the contribution to the science, technology, engineering or mathematics education community. This may be demonstrated by:**
 - **Information on the strategies the nominee used to maximise engagement impact.**
 - **Leadership and mentorship to support school engagement with industry, academia and government initiatives.**
 - **The use of funding (government grants, industry/academia initiatives) to increase scale and reach of initiative.**
- **Provide specific examples of outcomes and benefits of the nominee’s professional engagement for the science, technology, engineering or mathematics education community.**
- **Outline any existing or potential positive impacts on curriculum development in science, technology, engineering or mathematics education. This may be demonstrated by:**
 - **policy change**
 - **the adoption of strategies across other schools (district, state and national level)**
 - **involvement in curriculum development.**
- **Development and implementation of open access resources for Australian students and teachers to improve engagement in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.**