### Professional learning activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLA</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PLA 1</td>
<td>Understanding the refugee experience</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLA 2</td>
<td>Transitions and challenges of the refugee experience</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLA 3</td>
<td>Post-compulsory pathways</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLA 4</td>
<td>Supporting the individual student: review and plan</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLA 5</td>
<td>Supporting the individual: applying strategies to the whole-school approach</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLA 6</td>
<td>Reflecting on teaching and learning practice and classroom strategies</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLA 7</td>
<td>Applying strategies to support an individual student</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLA 8</td>
<td>Supporting parents and carers</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLA 9</td>
<td>The whole-school approach: mapping current strategies and planned changes</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLA 10</td>
<td>Using the SIFR Audit</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The professional learning activities (PLAs) are outlined in simple lesson plans and are designed for schools to support teachers and other school staff to engage with the material in the guide. They allow users of the guide to gain a deeper understanding of the issues and provide opportunities to apply concepts and strategies. Materials to support PLAs are found in the Tools and Resources sections. Most PLAs are designed to be used in conjunction with a case study.

You may chose to use one consistent case study for PLAs to suit your student cohort. Case studies 2, 3, 5 and 6 cover refugee pre- and post-arrival experiences and the education stages of preschool (Nan) primary (Rhadia), early secondary (Abdullah) and post-compulsory (Paw).
**PLA 1**

**Understanding the refugee experience**

**Relevant reading**

**CHAPTER 2:** Refugee-background students: a series of transitions

**CHAPTER 3:** Refugees in Australia

**Objective**

To gain a deeper understanding of the refugee experience and to reflect on current support and practice.

**Resources/tools**

**TOOL 8:** Framework to explore the refugee experience

**CASE STUDY:** 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6

**Instructions**

Ask participants to read a case study and write/discuss in Tool 8: Framework to explore the refugee experience, i.e. identify the experiences of trauma, aspects of personal and cultural history, and resettlement issues for the individual. Ask the participants to note the strengths of the individual.

**Reflection questions/activities**

How do the three components of the Tool 8: Framework to explore the refugee experience overlap and impact on each other in your case study? How were the individual’s rights impacted through the refugee experience? What rights must be upheld in Australia and what does that mean for your school?

---

**PLA 2**

**Transitions and challenges of the refugee experience**

**Relevant reading**

**CHAPTER 2:** Refugee-background students: a series of transitions

**CHAPTER 3:** Refugees in Australia

**Objective**

To explore the range of transitions and challenges for refugee-background students and to recognise what this means for the school’s structures, processes and practice.

**Resources/tools**

**CASE STUDY:** 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 or 10

**Instructions**

Choose a case study that features many transitions and challenges.

Organise the participants into three groups with each group having a different listening role as the story is read.

- Role 1: Discuss and note all of the transitions the child/young person has experienced, is currently experiencing and will be facing in the near future.
- Role 2: Discuss and note the challenges facing the young person as they resettle in Australia.
- Role 3: Discuss and note the challenges for a classroom teacher or others working to support the child/young person.

**Reflection questions/activities**

Share the responses from the listening roles with others as a general discussion or in groups of three with each listening role represented.

Discuss what these responses mean for the child/young person and for your school structures, process and practice.
PLA 3

Post-compulsory pathways

**Relevant reading**

**CHAPTER 2:** Refugee-background students: a series of transitions

**CHAPTER 3:** Refugees in Australia

**Objective**

To reflect on the range of education pathways available to post-compulsory students, and the implications of these pathways for refugee-background students.

**Resources/tools**

**CASE STUDY 6:** Paw, aged 17

**CASE STUDY 8:** Layla, aged 17 or

**CASE STUDY 10:** Shirin aged 16

**Instructions**

- Draw a timeline across the middle of a page that measures years equally from birth to 21 years old.
- Below the line, plot the possible pathway of an uninterrupted learning experience in Victoria (e.g. aged two to four play groups/childcare, aged four to five kinder, aged five–12 primary school, aged 12–18 secondary school, aged 18–21 gap year/TAFE, university or work).
- Choose Case study 6 (Paw) or 8 (Layla).
- Plot the pathway outlined in the case study above the line indicating education experiences, gaps, and refugee experiences.
- There should now be two pathways plotted on the same timeline (uninterrupted learning experience in Victoria, below the line, and the pathway outlined in the case study above the line).

**Reflection questions/activities**

Use this timeline to reflect on the possible range of skills learned, social connections, opportunities, supports, milestones and personal resources that can be attained in an uninterrupted education pathway within the school and community context. Participants may wish to use arrows and notes to mark these reflections under the uninterrupted pathway. What does this highlight for the gaps in skills, social connections, opportunities, supports, milestones and personal resources for recently arrived refugee-background young people at the post-compulsory level? What does this mean for programs and support you can offer this group in your setting? (Conclusions from these discussions should be shared with the team overseeing school improvement initiatives.)

PLA 4

Supporting the individual student: review and plan

**Relevant reading**

**CHAPTER 2:** Refugee-background students: a series of transitions

**CHAPTER 3:** Refugees in Australia

**CHAPTER 4:** The impact of trauma on wellbeing and learning

**CHAPTER 5:** The role of schools in supporting recovery from trauma

**CHAPTERS 7–11** also recommended

**Objective**

To understand refugee experiences of trauma and resettlement experiences that can exacerbate trauma. To understand the role of teachers and schools in supporting recovery from trauma.

**Resources/tools**

**CASE STUDY:** 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or 10

**RESOURCE 7:** Refugee and resettlement experiences that impact on learning and wellbeing

**RESOURCE 9:** Calmer classrooms: a guide to working with traumatised children

**TOOL 7:** Supporting individual students: review and plan

**Instructions**

Read the case study and refer to Resource 7: Refugee and resettlement experiences that impact on learning and wellbeing to support your understanding.

Use Tool 7: Supporting individual students: review and plan to take notes and guide discussion on relevant refugee and resettlement issues that relate to your chosen case study. In the last column, identify strategies to support your case study that reflect the recovery goals.

**Reflection questions/activities**

Discuss how experiences at school can exacerbate trauma. Identify a range of school strategies that can support the recovery of the student in your case study and note this in the space provided in Use Tool 7: Supporting individual students: review and plan. (Conclusions from these discussions should be shared with the team overseeing school improvement initiatives.)
PLA 5

Supporting the individual: applying strategies to the whole-school approach

Relevant reading

CHAPTER 2: Refugee-background students: a series of transitions
CHAPTER 3: Refugees in Australia
CHAPTER 4: The impact of trauma on wellbeing and learning
CHAPTER 5: The role of schools in supporting recovery from trauma
CHAPTERS 7–11 also recommended

Objective

To apply strategies identified to support an individual (in PLA 4) to the whole-school approach framework to supporting refugee-background students.

Resources/tools

CASE STUDY 10: Shirin aged 16
A completed TOOL 7: Supporting individual students: review and plan
TOOL 9: Five areas of action for the whole-school approach to support refugee-background students

Instructions

Use the school strategies identified in PLA 4 to complete the five areas of action for the whole-school approach.

Reflection questions/activities

Discuss the strategies in each area of action, are there some areas of the school where there are already strategies in place? Are there gaps? Are there areas where more strategies are required?

PLA 6

Reflecting on teaching and learning practice and classroom strategies

Relevant reading

CHAPTER 2: Refugee-background students: a series of transitions
CHAPTER 3: Refugees in Australia
CHAPTER 4: The impact of trauma on wellbeing and learning
CHAPTER 5: The role of schools in supporting recovery from trauma
CHAPTERS 7–11 also recommended

Objective

To reflect on classroom practices to support recovery from trauma and disrupted education

Resources/tools

RESOURCE 9: Calmer classrooms: a guide to working with traumatised children
TOOL 1: SIFR Audit (School ethos and environment, curriculum, teaching and learning)
TOOL 5: Classroom strategies to overcome blocks to learning
TOOL 6: Managing challenges in the classroom

Instructions

Use Tool 5: Classroom strategies to overcome blocks to learning for participants to identify if they often, sometimes or rarely use the strategies suggested.

Use Tool 6: Managing challenges in the classroom for staff to identify the strategies they would use to overcome some of the challenges for refugee-background students in class.


Reflection questions/activities

What are the strengths at the school in regard to these strategies? What are we doing well? What are the opportunities or limitations to use these strategies at the school? What actions can we identify? (Conclusions from these discussions should be shared with the team overseeing school improvement initiatives.)
Applying strategies to support an individual student

Relevant reading

CHAPTER 2: Refugee-background students: a series of transitions
CHAPTER 3: Refugees in Australia
CHAPTER 4: The impact of trauma on wellbeing and learning
CHAPTER 5: The role of schools in supporting recovery from trauma
CHAPTERS 7–11 also recommended

Objective

To apply appropriate strategies to support the needs of an individual student.

Resources/tools

RESOURCE 3: Strategies to help students with a refugee background who are experiencing behavioural issues
RESOURCE 9: Calmer Classrooms: A Guide to Working with Traumatised Children
TOOL 6: Managing challenges in the classroom
TOOL 5: Classroom Strategies to overcome blocks to learning
TOOL 7: Supporting individual students: review and plan
An individual learning plan template or equivalent from your setting
CASE STUDY 5: Abdullah aged 15

Instructions

Read the case study and identify the background factors, gaps, needs skills and strengths for Abdullah. Explore his school experience and identify contexts where he finds success, and contexts that are difficult. This may be noted on Tool 7: Supporting individual students: review and plan, or in the Individual learning plan template from your setting.

Reflection questions/activities

Use an individual learning plan template to respond to Abdullah’s needs, using the following as prompts: What are some realistic learning, personal and interpersonal behaviour goals for Abdullah? How could they be measured? What classroom strategies could be implemented to support Abdullah in terms of disrupted schooling, trauma, confusion and isolation? What broader classroom strategies and pedagogies are inclusive of a whole group/class that support these goals?

Supporting parents and carers

Relevant reading

CHAPTER 2: Refugee-background students: a series of transitions
CHAPTER 3: Refugees in Australia
CHAPTER 4: The impact of trauma on wellbeing and learning
CHAPTER 10: Partnerships with parents and carers

Objective

To consider the challenges for some refugee-background families and how the school can respond.

Resources/tools

CASE STUDY 9: Mary aged 33
TOOL 1: SIFR Audit: Partnerships with parents and carers

Instructions

Read the case study and discuss the following questions
What might Mary find challenging about the school?
What is important for Mary to understand and experience in relation to her children’s school?
Complete the audit questions in Tool 1.

Reflection questions/activities

What does your school currently have in place to support a parent like Mary?
What else could the school put in place to support Mary? (Conclusions from these discussions should be shared with the team overseeing school improvement initiatives.)
PLA 9

The whole-school approach: mapping current strategies and planned changes

### Relevant reading
All chapters are recommended for lead facilitators.

### Objective
To identify current strategies and to identify areas for improvement in a whole-school approach to support refugee-background students

### Resources/tools
**TOOL 9:** Five areas of action for the whole-school approach to support refugee-background students  
**TOOL 10:** Whole-school strategies to address resettlement challenges

### Instructions
Choose either Tool 9 or 10, or divide the group up and use both to reflect on whole-school practices. Use A3 paper or larger versions of the tools to allow group reflection. Ask participants to use different coloured markers or post-it notes to identify current strategies and suggested strategies.

### Reflection questions/activities
What are the strengths of the school? What are we doing well? Where are the opportunities for change? (Conclusions from these discussions should be shared with the team overseeing school improvement initiatives.)

PLA 10

Using the Audit

### Relevant reading
All chapters are recommended for lead facilitators.

### Objective
For the whole staff to be engaged in auditing and reflecting on school support for refugee-background students.

### Resources/tools
**TOOL 1:** SIFR Audit  
**TOOL 9:** Five areas of action for the whole-school approach to support refugee-background students (printed on A3 paper or larger)

### Instructions
Divide the group so each section of the audit is completed by a different group. You may choose to rotate the groups to ensure staff are able to contribute to different areas of the audit and that staff with a greater knowledge of certain areas are able to give feedback.

### Reflection questions/activities
Have participants identify and feedback to the larger group key strengths and areas for improvement for each area and display them using Tool 9: Five areas of action for the whole-school approach to support refugee-background students. (Ensure these reflections are shared with the team overseeing school improvement initiatives.)