

Catalyst Certification

Self-Paced Training Guide — Tier 2 of 4

achievoedu.com.au | ~3 Hours | Prerequisite: Spark | 2026

Before You Start

Catalyst builds directly on Spark — you should have completed Spark certification and used AchievoEDU actively for at least 4 weeks before starting. This guide covers everything assessed in the Catalyst quiz (10 questions, 80% pass mark) and the practical evidence component. Read the Background section first, then work through all four modules. Total time is about 3 hours, counting as 3 hours of CPD aligned to AITSL Standards 3, 4, 6, and 7.

PREREQUISITE CHECK

You must hold Spark certification before starting Catalyst. If you haven't completed Spark yet, start there — Catalyst assumes you're already comfortable with the day-to-day mechanics of awarding points and reading your class dashboard.

Background — From Individual Practice to Culture Change

Spark was about your own classroom practice. Catalyst is about influence beyond it — identifying students who need support before a crisis, shifting whole-class and whole-cohort engagement, and helping colleagues adopt the same practices you've built. The research base shifts accordingly, from individual behaviour reinforcement toward wellbeing, protective factors, and adult learning.

Protective Factors & Early Identification

Resilience research (drawing on decades of developmental psychology, including foundational longitudinal studies such as Emmy Werner's work on at-risk youth) consistently finds that early identification and a single consistent, caring adult relationship are among the strongest protective factors against poor student outcomes. Wellbeing check-in data doesn't replace a teacher's judgement — it gives you an early, low-friction signal so a caring response can happen sooner rather than after a problem has already escalated.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

FRAMEWORK NOTE

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support describe three layers of response: Tier 1 (universal supports for all students — this is what Spark-level recognition already provides), Tier 2 (targeted supports for a smaller group showing early signs of difficulty), and Tier 3 (intensive, individualised support for a small number of students with significant need).

Catalyst-level practice sits mostly at Tier 2: using wellbeing and recognition data together to notice a student drifting from the Tier 1 universal support most students respond to, and responding with a targeted, proportionate check-in — well before a Tier 3, intensive intervention would be needed.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Competencies

Wellbeing check-ins connect to what's broadly known in the research literature as social-emotional learning — competencies like self-awareness, self-management, and relationship skills. A student's honest wellbeing response is itself a small act of self-awareness; how a Catalyst-certified teacher responds to that data shapes whether students continue to engage honestly with the check-in over time.

Adult Learning Theory & Coaching Colleagues

Coaching adult colleagues is a different skill from teaching students. Adult learning research (commonly associated with Malcolm Knowles' principles of andragogy) emphasises that adults learn best when new practice is presented as directly relevant to their own immediate context, builds on their existing experience rather than dismissing it, and is something they choose to adopt rather than have imposed. This is why the Coaching Colleagues module focuses on short, practical staff sessions rather than lecturing colleagues on platform features.

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR ADOPTION

Research on staff-wide practice change consistently shows that top-down mandates without peer modelling and peer support produce shallow, short-lived adoption. A respected colleague demonstrating a practice in a genuine staffroom conversation does more for adoption than any policy memo — which is exactly the role Catalyst-certified staff are positioned to play.

Module 1 — Wellbeing Check-ins & Early Identification

How Wellbeing Check-ins Work

Students complete a regular (typically daily) wellbeing check-in using a simple emoji-based scale. Over time, this generates a pattern for each student — not just a single data point, but a trend staff can read alongside recognition data for a fuller picture.

Configuring Frequency and Prompts

- Check-in frequency is configurable at the school level — most schools run this daily or several times a week
- Prompts can be simple (a single mood scale) or extended with an optional short comment field, depending on your school's configuration

Reading Wellbeing Flags and the Tiered Alert System

- A single low check-in is not automatically a flag — the system looks for patterns (e.g. a run of low responses) before surfacing an alert
- Tiered alerts help distinguish a single rough day from a sustained pattern warranting a closer look or referral
- As a Catalyst-certified teacher, your role is to notice these signals early and respond proportionately — not every flag needs escalation, but every flag deserves attention

Using Check-in Data Alongside Recognition Data

The most powerful use of AchievoEDU data isn't either data stream alone — it's both together. A student showing low wellbeing check-ins and also low recognition frequency is a much stronger signal than either alone, and is exactly the kind of student the Class Overview dashboard is designed to help you notice.

Privacy Considerations

- Teachers see whether a check-in is complete, and any flags raised — not necessarily the full historical detail available to school leadership
- Parents do not see wellbeing scores, only that the platform is in use — always confirm your specific school's configuration, as visibility settings can vary
- Wellbeing data should be discussed with students and, where appropriate, referred through your school's existing pastoral care or student support pathway — AchievoEDU surfaces the signal, it doesn't replace your school's support processes

Module 2 — House Competitions & School Events

Designing a Term-Long House Competition

- Plan a competition arc for the whole term — not just an ongoing leaderboard, but named events, milestones, and a clear ending point
- Consider a mix of individual and house-level goals so no single high-performing student dominates the outcome

Point Multiplier Events and Value-Based Challenges

- Bonus multiplier days (e.g. “Striving Week”) can lift engagement during typically low-energy periods of the term
- Value-based challenges tie a themed week to a specific school value, giving recognition categories a clear seasonal focus

Configuring the Foyer Display

- Countdown timers build anticipation ahead of an event or competition close
- Live house standings and recognition shoutouts on shared screens extend recognition beyond the individual student's device

Recognising Whole-Class Achievements

Individual recognition is powerful, but whole-class or year-level recognition (e.g. “this class had zero missed check-ins this week”) builds a different, more collective form of pride — use both.

Keeping Competition Healthy

AVOIDING NEGATIVE RIVALRY

House competition should motivate through shared identity, not shame lower-performing houses. Avoid publicly dwelling on which house is losing — frame updates around progress and effort, not just rank.

Module 3 — Coaching Colleagues & Embedding Culture

What the Catalyst Role Means — and Doesn't

Being a Catalyst-certified teacher doesn't mean policing other staff's platform use. It means modelling consistent recognition practice visibly, and being a first point of informal help for colleagues who are unsure or disengaged.

Running a Staff Professional Learning Session

- Keep it to 20 minutes — a focused, practical session beats a long one that competes with everything else on a staff meeting agenda
- Use AchievoEDU's provided facilitation materials rather than building your own from scratch
- Live-demonstrate awarding a point rather than only describing it — adults learn best from seeing a practice modelled in context, not just hearing it explained

Why Teacher Adoption Drops — and How to Prevent It

- Reason 1: Staff forget the categories/values mapping — prevent this with a visible quick-reference (e.g. laminated card, staffroom poster)
- Reason 2: Staff feel awarding points is “one more thing” on top of an already full day — prevent this by reinforcing the under-10-seconds framing and modelling it in the moment, not as homework
- Reason 3: Staff don't see the platform mentioned again after initial training — prevent this by keeping AchievoEDU as a standing, brief agenda item in staff meetings, not a one-off launch event

Modelling Recognition in Shared Spaces

Award points visibly during yard duty, mention specific recognitions at assemblies, and reference AchievoEDU data naturally in staffroom conversation. Consistency across a whole staff is built through repeated, casual visibility — not a single memo.

Module 4 — Advanced Analytics & Parent Communication

Reading Year-Level Analytics

Move beyond your own class to year-level and cross-class patterns. Look for gaps between classes with similar cohorts — a large difference often points to a practice gap worth addressing collegially, not a cohort difference.

Identifying Under-Recognised Students Across Classes

A student can look adequately recognised in one class but be consistently missed across their full timetable. Cross-class analytics surface this pattern, which single-class views cannot.

Using Data in Parent Conversations

- Recognition data gives a concrete, positive starting point for a parent-teacher conversation, even when the meeting's main purpose is to discuss a concern
- Avoid presenting raw numbers without context — pair data with a specific example or story

Crafting Parent Portal Messages

- Keep push notifications short and specific — name the achievement, not just “well done”
- Reserve portal announcements for genuinely noteworthy whole-class or whole-school news, to avoid notification fatigue

Preparing a Term-End Summary for Leadership

A simple one-page summary — total recognitions, standout trends, and one area to focus on next term — is enough to keep leadership informed without becoming a reporting burden.

Practical Evidence — Choose ONE

In addition to the quiz, Catalyst certification requires one piece of practical evidence, submitted via achievoedu.com.au/certify with a short written explanation. Reviewed within 5 business days.

Option A — Analytics Screenshot

A screenshot of your class analytics dashboard showing 50+ recognitions across at least 3 behaviour categories over a 4-week period, plus a 100-word written reflection on what the data shows about your class's recognition patterns.

Option B — Staff PL Session

A short video (2–5 minutes) or written summary of a 20-minute staff PL session you facilitated on AchievoEDU, with at least 3 colleagues attending. Include what you covered, how staff responded, and one thing you'd do differently.

Option C — Student Case Study

A 200–300 word de-identified written case study describing how you used wellbeing check-in data or recognition data to identify and support a student who needed additional attention — what the data showed, what you did, and what happened.

Ready for the Quiz

You've now covered the four Catalyst modules and the research behind them — protective factors and early identification, the tiered support model behind wellbeing alerts, and the adult learning principles behind coaching colleagues.

NEXT STEP

Head to the Catalyst quiz (10 questions, Google Form, 80% pass mark) and submit your chosen piece of practical evidence via achievoedu.com.au/certify.