

**EFFECTIVE PIANO PEDAGOGY: A STUDY OF TEACHER PERCEPTIONS.**  
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This study investigated any current emerging undergraduate pedagogy degree trends or exclusive program components in Australia within a framework of identified wide ranging skills and teacher characteristics relevant to piano pedagogy. Research was conducted nationally across all States through purpose-designed and piloted questionnaires distributed to piano teachers in a variety of settings with interviews following this. A questionnaire (N = 107) completed by beginner piano teachers (n = 22), pedagogy lecturers (n = 19) and experienced qualified piano teachers (n = 66) as well as follow-up interviews (N= 27), addressed perceived effective piano teaching skills and pedagogy degree issues such as practicum, technique, piano methodologies, mentorship, and teacher training procedures.

Results indicated that a majority of lecturers and qualified teachers agreed on the application and efficacy of pianistic technique as an essential component of piano teaching. Most questionnaire respondents perceived a holistic approach to technique and student-centred learning techniques as vital elements of effective piano pedagogy practice. Likewise, improvisation skills were viewed highly by all sub-groups although not emphasized strongly in their current and past degree training procedures. A concerning finding was the low rating given to sight reading and aural skills despite being addressed in experienced teacher and lecturer past tertiary study.

The assessment of perceived important teacher characteristics in effective piano pedagogy revealed a common consensus among all three sub-groups on the most essential pedagogy behaviours: (a) patience; (b) an ability to motivate students; and (c) employing a positive approach to teaching. This study provides new insights into the underlying role of practicum in pedagogy degree training. A considerable proportion of qualified teachers and undergraduate teacher trainees perceived practicum as a central piano pedagogy degree component.

Interview data was consistent with the questionnaire where student-centred learning was highlighted by undergraduate teacher trainees, whilst pianistic technique was considered essential to most qualified teachers and lecturers. Many qualified teachers interviewed noted having very little or no actual past specialized piano pedagogy training. These findings contribute to existing research into pre-service teacher perceptions and instrumental pedagogy. Further research relating to effective piano pedagogy characteristics is important and related to the multifaceted procedures of music teacher training.