

House of Representatives Committee: Employment, Education and Training

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Inquiry into Education in Remote and Complex Environments 2019 - 2020

Public Hearing - 5 February 2020

Department of Education, Skills and Employment

Mr Laming, provided in writing on 5 February 2020

1. Question

Information on European Qualifications Framework (EQF) elements to facilitate early collaboration with prep teachers and connection to health services where required (vulnerability).

Answer

The European Qualifications Framework is a European reference framework whose purpose is to make qualifications more readable and understandable across different European countries and systems.

The Australian Qualifications Framework is the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training. It incorporates the qualifications from each education and training sector into a single comprehensive national qualifications framework.

In 2016 a comparative analysis was undertaken of the two frameworks. This joint activity of an Australia-European Union working group analysed and documented the technical and conceptual characteristics of the respective frameworks in their operational contexts, and systematically identified key elements of their comparability, similarities and differences, in a mutually beneficial way.

The report presents the findings in the context of the longstanding education and training policy dialogue between the European Union (EU) and Australia, where an enhanced relationship between the Australian and European frameworks has been an important theme.

The report can be found at <https://www.education.gov.au/news/improving-australian-and-european-mobility>

National Quality Framework for early childhood education and care

The National Quality Framework provides a national approach to regulation, assessment and quality improvement for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services across Australia. It aims to raise quality and encourage continuous improvement and consistency in children's education and care services.

The importance of collaborative transitions that support continuity of learning is recognised as a key concept under the National Quality Framework, namely within Quality Area 6 of the National Quality Standard. Services are encouraged, as an essential part of continuously improving their service delivery, to include transition supports into schools for families and children, in their Quality Improvement Plans.

The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) is responsible for a range of functions under the National Law including support for early learning services to develop their quality practices, and regularly communicates and engages with the sector on

this important topic. For example, see

<https://wehearyou.acecqa.gov.au/2017/08/31/transition-to-school-a-collaborative-effort>

A number of jurisdictions do have formal transition to school statements (or advice for supporting students in their transition), which early childhood education and care services complete and provide to the school a child is going to attend. These requirements are driven by individual state and territory governments.

Further information can be found at:

NSW	https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/information-for-parents-and-carers/transition-to-school
VIC	https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/learning/Pages/transkit.aspx
QLD	https://earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/early-years/transition-to-school https://education.qld.gov.au/schools-educators/ecec/transition-to-school
SA	https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/education-and-learning/schools/school-life/starting-primary-school
WA	https://www.education.wa.edu.au/dl/4e8jnv
TAS	https://www.education.tas.gov.au/about-us/projects/strong-partnerships/transitions/
ACT	https://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/starting_school
NT	https://education.nt.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/428693/02_NTEC-Transitioning_Overview_WEB.pdf

Australian Early Development Census

The Australian Early Development Census is a national population measure of how children have developed by the time they commence their first year of full-time school. The census data is collected every three years and the results are publicly available at national, state, community and local community levels. The census looks at groups of children in the community, not individuals.

The census data helps schools, communities and governments pinpoint and tailor their services, resources and support to help young children and their families. The census can be used by communities, schools and policy makers, in conjunction with other resources (such as state, territory and national statistics) to plan and evaluate efforts to create optimal early childhood development outcomes.

School profiles are provided to participating schools to aid principals and schools who use the Australian Early Development Census and other community data in their transition to school planning for the following year. These profiles are for school use only and are not publicly available.

2. Question

Information on Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) Indigenous weightings and regressions performed to isolate any Indigenous disadvantage not related to income, education and rurality.

Answer

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority administers ICSEA on behalf of the Council of Australian Governments Education Council and has provided the following response:

The current ICSEA is not designed *“to isolate any Indigenous disadvantage not related to income, education and rurality”*.

The details of the ICSEA modelling – how socio-educational advantage (SEA), Indigenous status and Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA+) information is used to explain performance of schools – is available in the 2013 ICSEA Technical Report www.myschool.edu.au/more-information/technical-and-statistical-information/

“ICSEA identifies and quantifies many non-policy, malleable characteristics of a school and its student cohort and thus allows *comparisons between schools that serve statistically similar students*” (italics added).

The research ACARA has undertaken indicates that the selected set of variables provide the best prediction of performance using information that is collected consistently from schools across the country.

3. Question

Is there any provisions for demonstration projects to disseminate best practice between states?

Answer

The Australian Government, and state and territory governments, fund a range of resources and supports for teachers and students in schools and early learning settings. At a national level, funding has been provided to agencies such as the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) and Education Services Australia as well as private organisations such as the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, Community Languages Australia and the Australian Academy of Science.

Examples include:

- AITSL publishes *Illustrations of Practice* that showcase best-practice teaching in a range of classroom settings across career stages, year levels and learning areas. The Illustrations are aligned to relevant Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and are accompanied by information about the learning and school context. Discussion questions are also provided for each Illustration and they may also link to the Australian Curriculum.
- ACARA has developed a series of illustrations of practice for teachers implementing the Australian Curriculum. The illustrations of practice are available on the Australian Curriculum website and include short videos demonstrating how schools are integrating a particular learning area, cross circular priority or general capability into their teaching.
- *Primary Connections: Linking Science with Literacy* is delivered by the Australian Academy of Science and provides primary teachers with comprehensive curriculum resources and professional learning, which link the teaching of science with the teaching of literacy. *Primary Connections* focuses on developing primary students' knowledge, understanding and skills in both science and literacy, through an inquiry-based approach.

The resulting materials have been shared between the Australian Government and states and territories through existing professional networks, formal Education Council mechanisms and by the providers directly.

The National School Reform Agreement includes a commitment to establish an independent national evidence institute to generate, curate and mobilise evidence and resources that inform teacher practice, system improvement and policy development. In June 2020 Education Council will consider arrangements for the establishment of the institute.

Other jurisdictions have also established research institutes, such as New South Wales and Queensland, to collect, analyse and disseminate data. For example, the New South Wales Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation is a dedicated hub for in-depth analysis of

education practices and their effectiveness. Further information can be found at www.cese.nsw.gov.au/.

The Queensland Department of Education relies on research to inform its education policy and services. This includes developing a research agenda, disseminate and promote research to support learning, evidence-based decision-making and strategic policy and support research-based evaluation of departmental programs. Further details can be found at <https://education.qld.gov.au/about-us/reporting-data-research/research>

4. Question

What is the timeframe for the 'capacity to contribute' work and likely penetration of state school parent populations?

Answer

The Australian Government provides a funding contribution for eligible primary and secondary students, regardless of the school they attend. This funding contribution is calculated using the Schooling Resource Standard formula recommended by the 2011 Review of Funding for Schooling, chaired by Mr David Gonski AC. For most non-government schools, this contribution is discounted based on a school community's 'capacity to contribute' (CTC) to the school's operating costs. This discount ranges from 10 per cent for schools with an estimated low capacity to contribute, to 80 per cent for schools with an estimated high capacity to contribute.

Some non-government schools are exempt from the capacity to contribute arrangements including Special and Special Assistance schools; Majority Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander schools; and Sole provider schools.

Capacity to contribute arrangements do not apply to government schools, distance education and eligible overseas students.

The Australian Government has announced that from 2020, a Direct Measure of Income (DMI) will be used to determine CTC for non-government schools based on the personal income tax data of the parents within a school community. This is a shift from current arrangements which use the socio-economic status (SES) score of the area(s) where the students reside. The impact of the use of the DMI will vary school by school and for this reason implementation arrangements will introduce change gradually. In 2020 and 2021, the new DMI methodology will only be used to calculate a school's CTC score if the outcome is financially beneficial. The school will also be able to choose the most financial beneficial score in 2020 or 2021 from either remaining on their current CTC score (based on the SES score methodology using 2011 Census data) or by moving to an updated CRC score using 2016 Census data.

In recognition that systems are best placed to understand the needs of their schools, approved authorities will continue to have the flexibility to distribute funding to schools according to their needs-based funding arrangements that comply with section 78(5) of the *Australian Education Act 2013* (the Act).

As individual non-government schools move to the new measure, a new transition path will be set towards the Commonwealth shares of 80 per cent of the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) for non-government schools. Schools that are below the 80 per cent share of the SRS when they move to the direct measure will transition to 80 per cent by 2023. Schools that are above 80 per cent share of the SRS when they move to the direct measure, will transition to 80 per cent of the SRS by 2029.

Payments under the new arrangements will require amendments to the *Australian Education Act 2013* and Australian Education Regulation 2013.

Department of Education, Skills and Employment

Mr Laming, provided in writing on 5 February 2020

5. Question

Can the roll-out of the Unique Student Identifier (USI) be easily accelerated to capture not just new but also existing students at time of roll out, and is it possible for it to be extended to include early learning?

Answer

In December 2019, Education Council agreed on design criteria and a model for the generation and operation of a national USI for the Australian schools sector that will support better understanding of student progression and improve the national education evidence base. The USI model agreed by Council allows systems and schools to maintain their existing arrangements and map local identifiers to a national identifier. Senior officials will oversee the development of a detailed implementation plan before providing advice back to Council in 2020 on a recommended approach to implementation.

The Australian Government is working closely with states and territories and the non-government education authorities to progress the development of this initiative, including details on the USI's scope and roll out.

Decisions about the speed and nature of the roll out of the USI are yet to be made by Education Council.

6. Question

What are the findings of the National Indigenous Australians Agency looking at boarding school impact?

Answer

The National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) has provided the following response:

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) (now the National Indigenous Australians Agency) commissioned Grant Thornton Australia (GTA) to undertake analysis of the investment in support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary boarding students. The report *Boarding: investing in outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students* was published in September 2019, available at <https://www.niaa.gov.au/resource-centre/indigenous-affairs/analysis-investment-support-indigenous-secondary-boarding-students>.

The report makes a number of recommendations, including the need for national boarding standards, strengthened communication between government and the boarding sector, further changes to ABSTUDY and improvements to wrap-around and transition support services for boarders. The report also highlights there is a shortfall in funding for boarding providers with a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

NIAA continues to work with other Commonwealth agencies and state and territory governments to improve arrangements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary students who study away from home.

Department of Education, Skills and Employment

Mr Laming, provided in writing on 11 February 2020.

7. Question

What are the outcomes of the evaluation of Clontarf and similar services (new in South Australia)?

Answer

The National Indigenous Australians Agency has provided the following response:

NIAA funds a number of school-based academies such as those delivered by the Clontarf Foundation which provides intensive mentoring, a structured reward system focused on achieving attendance and behaviour targets, and extra-curricular activities to help students stay engaged in education. Academies also focus on work readiness, work placements, traineeships and employment.

Evidence shows that wrap-around support services provided through academy and mentoring programs have a powerful and positive impact on individuals, families and communities and can achieve a broad range of community outcomes.

There have been a number of reviews and evaluations of these types of projects, including:

- Yu, K. et al., (2017), Evaluation of the NSW Clontarf Academies Program 2017, CESE, NSW Department of Education, Sydney [Evaluation of the NSW Clontarf Academies Program 2017 \(PDF, 2MB\)](#)
- Ware, V. (2013), Mentoring programs for Indigenous youth at risk, Closing the Gap Clearinghouse Publications, AIHW, Canberra.
- Macniven, R. et al., (2019), The impact of physical activity and sport on social outcomes among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: A systematic scoping review, Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/31082940>
- Lonsdale, M. et al., (2017), Evaluation of the Sporting Chance Program (2011), Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) https://research.acer.edu.au/policy_analysis_misc/14
- Office of Evaluation and Audit (Indigenous Programs), (2009), Performance Audit of the Sporting Chance Programme, Canberra, Department of Finance and Deregulation.

NIAA is also working in collaboration with IAS scholarship providers to better understand the impact of investment and to improve overall performance monitoring and evaluation. The agency will be conducting an impact evaluation in consultation with IAS funded scholarship providers. The purpose of the impact evaluation will be to provide evidence to support future IAS scholarship investment.

8. Question

What is the uptake of early learning language apps, including the geographic breakdown?

Answer

A breakdown of the uptake by state and territory and geographic region is provided below.

Early Learning Languages Australia (ELLA) stats as at 6 February 2020

State/Territory	Participating preschools	% of participating preschools	Geolocations of participating preschools	
ACT	80	2%	Major Cities	79
			Inner Regional	1
NSW	1632	39.8%	Major Cities	1225
			Inner Regional	311
			Outer Regional	90
			Remote	5
			Very Remote	1
NT	30	0.7%	Outer Regional	22
			Remote	4
			Very Remote	4
QLD	910	22.4%	Major Cities	605
			Inner Regional	182
			Outer Regional	112
			Remote	11
SA	192	4.7%	Major Cities	141
			Inner Regional	20
			Outer Regional	22
			Remote	5
			Very Remote	4
TAS	66	1.6%	Major Cities	1
			Inner Regional	49
			Outer Regional	12
			Remote	4
VIC	917	22.3%	Major Cities	704
			Inner Regional	175
			Outer Regional	36
			Remote	2
WA	268	6.5%	Major Cities	170
			Inner Regional	37
			Outer Regional	27
			Remote	30
			Very Remote	4
TOTAL	4095			

As at 6 February 2020, there are a total of 4,095 preschools participating in ELLA, which is approximately 34 per cent of the total 11,922 total service providers with a preschool program delivered to four and five-year-old children in Australia in 2019 (from summary tables, ABS, Preschool Education Australia, 2019).

9. Question

What is the status of high achieving teacher program?

What is the status of the families as first teachers program?

Answer

Status of high achieving teacher program

The Government has committed over \$28 million in funding for La Trobe University and Teach For Australia to deliver the High Achieving Teachers Program and support schools experiencing teacher workforce shortages. Commencing in 2020, the High Achieving Teachers Program is offering two alternative, employment-based pathways into teaching.

The first intake of High Achieving Teachers Program participants commenced the Program in 2020, with the two providers recruiting and placing over 170 program participants in teaching positions at schools in the Northern Territory, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia. Approximately, 60 per cent of program participants have been placed in schools in regional, rural and remote Australia.

La Trobe University will recruit and place a second intake of 40 program participants in 2021, with a focus on schools in regional Victoria. La Trobe University's Nexus Program will continue to target high achieving individuals with a strong commitment to the community in which they will work.

Teach For Australia will recruit another two intakes of 120 program participants per intake in 2021 and 2022, with a focus on recruiting individuals with a background in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Teach For Australia will continue to place program participants in teaching positions in secondary schools in the Northern Territory, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia.

In delivering the High Achieving Teachers Program, Teach For Australia will build on the successes of their delivery of the Teach For Australia Program which has placed more than 300 teachers (40% of all participants placed in the Program) in regional, rural and remote schools since 2009.

Both providers are recruiting high achieving individuals, committed to pursuing a career in the teaching profession, and placing them in teaching positions in Australian secondary schools experiencing teacher workforce shortages, including those in regional, rural and remote communities.

Families as first teachers

Families as First Teachers (FaFT) is an early learning and family support program for remote Indigenous families. The aim of FaFT is to improve developmental outcomes for remote Indigenous children by working with families and children prior to school entry.

The Australian Government contributes funding through the National Partnership on Northern Territory Remote Aboriginal Investment. Funding is administered by the Northern Territory Government.

Further information can be found at <https://education.nt.gov.au/support-for-teachers/faft>

Department of Education, Skills and Employment

Mr Laming, provided in writing on 11 February 2020.

10. Question

Is there any work on a consistent standard for private education provision – must they be aligned to the curriculum?

Answer

To receive funding under the *Australian Education Act 2013* (the Act) a provider of school education must be registered with a state or territory and meet a number of ongoing conditions, including teaching the Australian Curriculum. The requirements for eligibility under the Act are set out in Division 2 of Part 6 of the Act.

The requirements for registration and accreditation of schools are set by state and territory registration bodies which are set out in the table below:

New South Wales	NSW Education Standards Authority https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/home
Victoria	Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority https://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx
Queensland	Office of Non-State Schooling, Education Queensland https://www.nssab.qld.edu.au/About/index.php
Western Australia	Office of Non-government and International Education https://www.education.wa.edu.au/non-government-school-registration
South Australia	Education Standards Board, Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board of South Australia https://esb.sa.gov.au/#
Tasmania	Schools Registration Board https://schoolregistration.tas.gov.au/
Northern Territory	Director Education Services, Northern Territory Department of Education https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/registration-of-a-non-government-school
Australian Capital Territory	ACT Non-government Schools Office https://www.education.act.gov.au/schooling/non-government-schools

11. Question

Is there any architecture for teachers to upload videos to curricular aligned presentations for students to see online?

Answer

There is no national architecture for teachers to upload videos to curricular aligned presentations for students to see online.

However, individual education authorities provide a range of options for their teachers. For example, teachers can place video links or upload clips to Google Classroom. They may also make their own short clips or films on open source platforms and upload them.

Department of Education, Skills and Employment

Mr Laming, asked at the hearing on 5 February 2020, Hansard page 4

12. Question

What is the degree of information sharing between the early learning sector and prep in both the independent and state school systems?

Answer

The importance of collaborative transitions that support continuity of learning is recognised as a key concept under the National Quality Framework, namely within Quality Area 6 of the National Quality Standard. Services are encouraged, as an essential part of continuously improving their service delivery, to include transition supports for families and children, in their Quality Improvement Plans.

The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) is responsible for a range of functions under the National Law including support for early learning services to develop their quality practices, and regularly communicates and engages with the sector on this important topic. For example, see

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A number of jurisdictions do have formal transition to school statements (or something similar), which early childhood education and care services complete and provide to the school a child is going to attend. These requirements are driven by individual state and territory governments.

Department of Education, Skills and Employment

Mr Laming, asked at the hearing on 5 February 2020, Hansard page 5

13. Question

Provision of a list of state and territory ministers for early childhood, schools and higher education.

Answer**State and territory ministers for early childhood, schools and higher education**

State / Territory	Early Childhood, Schools and Higher Education	Higher Education specific
ACT	Yvette Berry MLA ACT Minister for Education (Schools) and Early Childhood Development	Andrew Barr MLA Minister for Tertiary Education
NSW	The Hon Sarah Mitchell MLC Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning	The Hon Dr Geoffrey Lee MP Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education
VIC	The Hon James Merlino MP Minister for Education	The Hon Gayle Tierney MLC Minister for Higher Education
QLD	The Hon Grace Grace MP Minister for Education (covering Early Childhood Education and Care and Higher Education)	
SA	John Gardner MP Minister for Education, Child Development and Skills – TAFE	
NT	The Hon Selena Uibo Minister for Education	
WA	The Hon Sue Ellery BA MLC Minister for Education and Training	
TAS	The Hon Jeremy Rockliff MP Minister for Education and Training	