

National School Reform Agreement

Australian Capital Territory Bilateral Agreement: 2019 Progress Report

National School Reform Agreement – Bilateral Agreement Report – Australian Capital Territory – 2019

Executive Summary

The ACT Government is committed to driving reform for improved outcomes for all Australian students and to ensuring all students, regardless of background, have an educational experience of the highest quality that meets their needs, motivations and aspirations.

All ACT education sectors; ACT Public Schools, Catholic Education and Independent Schools made considerable progress in 2019 against identified priority actions across the three areas of national strategic reform. The ACT led this activity on a strong foundation of collaboration with over 5,000 participants from the ACT community to draft a vision for The Future of Education, An ACT Education strategy for the Next 10 Years, a vision designed to achieve equity of outcomes for all ACT students. This strategy also includes a strong focus on opportunities and access in early childhood for every ACT child through development of the ACT Early Childhood Strategy. This strategy connects government and services more closely to ensure access to opportunities that build strong foundations for educational outcomes and positive post schooling experience from the earliest years.

The provision of quality data to better inform tailored strategies for improvement and quality educational practice has been a key focus with the ACT. The ACT led the nation as the first jurisdiction to take NAPLAN online and to incorporate reporting to the achievement standards within the new School Administration System (SAS) in all ACT public schools.

This strong foundation has been built on with enhanced educational pathways, achieved in partnership with the Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS) and strengthening of inclusive education. The ACT has contributed to the review of ASAT and the ATAR to maintain national consistency and accountability. We continue to review and enhance curriculum offerings to ensure their relevance for educational pathways and successful post schooling outcomes, with key achievements for 2019 including substantial recognition of formal external vocational training and the development of new courses and course classifications. This same partnership, along with an extensive suite of professional learning for School Leaders in Cultural Integrity, and strong programs for STEM and NCCD moderation has built capability for equity and inclusive education in ACT schools.

All sectors have worked closely in partnership with the Teacher Quality Institute to strengthen quality teaching and school improvement processes, supporting pre-service and early educators with quality and transparent processes for initial teacher registration and enhanced professional support throughout all career stages. This has been further supported through a focus on building School Leader and Teacher capability with an extensive program of professional learning, mentoring and sharing of learnings on innovation and research based, data informed practice for personalised learning through the Affiliated Schools programs and communities of practice.

Many activities are ongoing into 2020 and beyond as we continue to build on the quality of education in ACT schools to drive improved student outcomes. A summary of 2019 achievements for the ACT is outline below.

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Progress Against Each Reform Direction

Reform Direction A - Support students, student learning and achievement

Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
Develop a cross-sectoral implementation plan to underpin the ACT Government's Future of Education Strategy.	All	2019	<p>Completed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>Future of Education First Phase Implementation</i> plan (First Phase Plan) was developed and passed by the ACT Legislative Assembly in August 2019.
Establish a cross-sectoral reform forum to share progress and challenges.	All	2019	<p>In progress and ongoing</p> <p>Regular meetings between senior officials of all sectors have allowed for collaboration and sharing of progress and challenges on a number of fronts including legislation reform.</p> <p>In addition, there is strong ongoing cross-sectoral collaboration focused on implementation of the Australian Curriculum, NAPLAN online and NCCD collections.</p> <p>Planning for cross-sectoral forums to support school improvement initiatives commenced in 2019 but was delayed to 2020 to allow foundational collaborative agreements to be put in place. The impact of COVID-19</p>

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
			on collaborative activities has resulted in implementation of the forums being delayed for commencement in 2021.
Deliver professional learning on the Australian Curriculum General Capabilities.	All	2019	<p>Completed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2019, 718 teachers across the ACT have engaged in professional learning workshops on the Australian Curriculum General Capabilities. • These have been delivered as a universal offering to individual teachers, teaching teams and whole school teams. • The ACT staff partnered with schools to strengthen their understanding of and capacity to design and deliver curriculum, incorporating the General Capabilities as part of the three-dimensional design. • Each term teachers have engaged in developing their understanding of the General Capabilities and how they can be incorporated into teaching and learning plans to develop the capabilities within students.
Develop and implement academic reporting explicitly aligned to Australian Curriculum achievement standards.	Gov	2019 and ongoing	<p>Completed and ongoing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT Education Directorate staff delivered professional learning for 718 teacher attendees in 2019 to assist with unpacking the Achievement Standards to explore

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
			<p>the depth of understanding and sophistication of knowledge and skills expected of students at the end of each year level or band of years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Learning has targeted the interconnectedness between curriculum, assessment and reporting. Academic reporting in the ACT is explicitly aligned to the Achievement Standards. A new School Administration System (SAS) has rolled out in all ACT public schools. The reporting module captures reporting of student achievement against the Achievement Standards.
<p>Build upon existing ACT Australian Curriculum assessment reform effort to play a lead role in national efforts to refine ACARA’s national learning progressions in literacy and numeracy.</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>2019</p>	<p>Completed and ongoing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ACT notes that the Minister- endorsed Version 3 of the Learning Progressions has been published on ACARA’s alpha project website, allowing flexibility for jurisdictions that are implementing Version 2, whilst providing the time to move to the new version. The ACT continues to deliver professional learning to support teachers in using the progressions (Version2) as published on the Australian Curriculum website.

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
Build upon existing ACT Australian Curriculum assessment reform effort to play a lead role in national efforts to develop the digital formative assessment proof of concept.	All	2019	<p>Completed and ongoing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ACT remains informed through stakeholder briefings of progress in the Learning Progressions and Online Formative Assessment initiative (LPOFA) through updates on the Alpha phase and the solutions and products to be tested with teachers. • ACT teachers from all three sectors are members of the National Teacher Practice Reference Group. • The ACT supports stakeholder engagement in the project including with industrial bodies.
Conduct a cross-sectoral STEM educators forum (STEMEd ACT) in partnership with a range of professional teacher associations and the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies.	All	2019	<p>Completed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The STEMEd Conference 2019 was held in Canberra on 5 and 6 April 2019, with 125 conference delegates in attendance on day one and 115 on day two • Three keynote speakers Professor Ian Chubb, Centenary Professor Tom Lowrie and Professor Joan Leach opened key sessions. • The conference provided space for teachers to attend workshops, network, collaborate to share professional knowledge and experiences and hear from education

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			and industry experts with the goal of improving the implementation and teaching of STEM in ACT schools.
Implement the Cultural Integrity Continuum and Toolkit in all ACT Public Schools.	Gov	2018 onwards	<p>Completed and ongoing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 2018 Cultural Integrity has been included in the National School Improvement review process. Schools are reviewed on a five-year cycle. • ACT public schools use the Cultural Integrity Continuum to self-assess progress and determine next steps in their journey. • This is incorporated into annual Principal discussions and decisions and actions feed into school's planning processes as required. This ensures schools progress on their cultural integrity journey. • The ACT Directorate Annual Report 2018-19 provides a progress update on implementation of Cultural Integrity in schools, with tailored strategies informed by findings emerging from the annual external school review processes.
Implement the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures enriched elaborations for Science as part of cross-sectoral curriculum effort.	All	2019 and ongoing	Completed and ongoing.

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures enriched elaborations for Science were promoted in ACT schools. • A cross-sectoral project Empowered Learning Professionals: First Nations Science has been developed in response to the publication of 95 elaborations in Science. • External partnerships with CSIRO and staff from the Academy of Future Skills have been sought to support ongoing project delivery for 2020 and beyond.
Meeting the learning needs of students through more and expanded schools for Canberra’s growing suburbs.	Gov	2019 and ongoing	<p>Completed and ongoing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major infrastructure and capital works projects completed during 2019 to modernise facilities and better meet the learning needs of communities included; 1 new school, 2 school site upgrades and 8 school site expansions to accommodate over 725 additional places. • Planning also commenced for 2020 for five school sites including modernisation upgrades for two, a site expansion and a design tender and a feasibility study for new schools.

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
			<p>School Upgrades</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gungahlin College internal upgrade • Amaroo internal upgrade <p>School Expansions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neville Bonner expansion (175 places) • Gold Creek Primary School expansion (300 places) • Transportable learning communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Red Hill (50 places) ○ Fraser (50 places) ○ Lyneham High (50 places) (plus bike enclosure and amenities block) ○ Telopea (50 places) ○ Forrest (50 places) ○ Franklin ECS Expansion (phase 1 design & admin area modernisation) <p>New Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Molonglo P-6 and 7-10 <p>Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Tendering for Throsby P-6 • Campbell PS Modernisation (Design and construction Tendering)

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning for Gold Creek Senior School expansion (200 places) • Feasibility study for East Gungahlin High School • Narrabundah College Modernisation – Community Engagement and Due Diligence/Site Investigations <p>Work has also progressed to expand land access for non-government schools.</p>

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Reform Direction B – Support teaching, school leadership and school improvement

Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
Actively contribute to the review of senior secondary education including, pathways to work, further education and training and prerequisites for university entry.	All (through the Board of Senior Secondary Studies)	2019	<p>Completed and ongoing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ACT has actively contributed to a range of national reviews in 2019 including the Review of Senior Secondary Pathways, and the Australian Qualifications Framework Review. • The ACT curriculum reform process includes the annual development of new or replacement courses within a five year review cycle, with the Australian Curriculum underpinning foundational design specifications across all curriculum for 2019. • Course accreditation occurred for 49 new courses across five areas of study. These courses were established in partnership with schools, external experts, industry, tertiary training and education sectors to ensure that they are in step with the knowledge, skills and understanding required for successful post schooling outcomes. • Uniquely, the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate can incorporate substantial recognition of formal external vocational training to further support students.

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twenty one school based industry courses were supported by BSSS as part of a suite of contemporary courses integrating nationally recognised vocational competencies, with ongoing adjustment and alignment of the curriculum to training package requirements. • Inclusive education was strengthened further in the ACT through the expansion of the university H course program and imbedding the M classification in all courses. The H course enables senior secondary and University credit simultaneously valuable for transition opportunities, student ATARs and access to early offers. The M classification tailors courses for students with mild to moderate intellectual disability. • A review of the production of the ATAR was undertaken in concert with Tertiary Admissions Centres (TAC'S) and the Technical Committee on Scaling (TCoS) to interrogate and evaluate the validity and compatibility of data in order to maintain national consistency and accountability. • A comprehensive review of the ACT Scaling Test (AST) was undertaken. The AST is the pivotal scaling device for school based assessment outcomes that can

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
			contribute to the Tertiary Entrance Statement (TES), to determine ongoing relevance and validity, and identify areas for enhancement and future development.
Build off the lead role that the ACT Teacher Quality Institute has had in quality Initial Teacher Education regulation to actively contribute to quality assurance improvements in the national consistency and transparency of Initial Teacher Education regulation.	All (through the Teacher Quality Institute)	2019	<p>Completed and ongoing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TQI staff and trained Initial Teacher Education (ITE) accreditation panel members actively engaged in national ITE accreditation standards setting workshops, second half of 2019 • Active participation in national review of ITE program accreditation guidelines and procedures, second half of 2019 and on-going • Both ITE providers in the ACT implementing nationally approved TPAs (2018) and LANTITE (2017), ongoing • Master level ITE programs offered by the University of Canberra nationally accredited, 2019 • ITE providers in the ACT compliant with nationally agreed annual reporting requirements (2017), ongoing.

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Reform Direction C – Enhancing the national evidence base

Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
Build upon existing NCCD cross-sectoral moderation activities and strengthen consistency on a year by year basis.	All	2018 onwards	<p>Completed and ongoing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2019, the ACT undertook a range of activities to strengthen NCCD cross-sectoral moderation in the ACT. These included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ An NCCD Introductory/orientation session for new Disability Education Co-ordinating Officers (DECOs) and other interested teachers (21 February 2019). ○ NCCD mid-cycle moderation session (cross-sectoral) (4 April 2019, 15 May 2019) ○ NCCD end-cycle moderation session (cross-sectoral) (20 June 2019) ○ Staff member employed whose key role is to drive improvement in NCCD implementation (July 2019) ○ Quality Assurance work with individual schools (deliberately targeted due to variation in data, and some randomly selected) (mid-August to early October) ○ NCCD support visits to schools (started in Term 4 2019)

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			NCCD targeted support to schools where concerns from either party were identified and support visits or moderation sessions provided (ongoing).
Provide national leadership in NAPLAN online by maximising implementation in all ACT schools.	All	2018 onwards	Completed and ongoing. The ACT has been an enthusiastic early adopter of NAPLAN online, being the first jurisdiction to go essentially fully online in 2018 (except for a small number of independent schools), followed by all but three small independent schools in 2019.
Contribute to the ongoing data collection for the Australian Teacher Workforce Data Strategy including amendment of legislation to allow for sharing of data held by the Teacher Quality Institute.	All (through the Teacher Quality Institute)	2019 onwards	Completed and ongoing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversations with TQI commenced for the drafting of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), provisions and suitable platforms for data sharing. Key achievements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Legislative amendments to allow data sharing with Australian Teacher Workforce Data (ATWD) enacted in August 2019 ○ Negotiation of an MoU with the ATWD data linkage agency and the Australian Institute of

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			<p>Health and Welfare (AIHW) commenced October 2019.</p> <p>The 2019 ACT Teacher Workforce data file created and ready for upload to ATWD, via AIHW, in December 2019.</p>
<p>Build off the existing ACT cross-sectoral student identifier to actively contribute to the development and implementation of a national Unique Student Identifier.</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>2019 onwards</p>	<p>Complete and ongoing.</p> <p>The ACT has taken a constructive approach to the implementation of the ACT's Universal Student Identifier and strongly supports the initial application of the national USI as a system to identify students transferring through jurisdictions, systems and schools, including in child protection circumstances, with protocols to check on a student's whereabouts.</p>
<p>Build upon recent ACT performance measures to actively contribute to the development of new measures of performance particularly student learning gain and general capabilities.</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>2018 onwards</p>	<p>Complete and ongoing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directorate staff participated in a workshop led by Victoria to explore more effective ways of representing student learning gain through the My School web site. • At the national level, the development of measures of general capabilities has not yet commenced noting

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			<p>that the Data Strategy Group is yet to develop a proposal to Education Council for this work.</p> <p>The ACT has in the interim moved to improve the measurement of student wellbeing, challenging behaviours, and student engagement and belonging.</p>
Implement new national measures of performance particularly student learning gain and general capabilities.	Gov	As available	<p>Complete and ongoing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following development of new strategic measures of performance in 2018, the ACT implemented these in 2019 for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student learning growth ○ Equity of student outcomes ○ Strength of student engagement and belonging with their school. <p>Measures of general capability will be added once developed nationally.</p>