



Australia

Education for All 2015 National Review

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Australian Government
Department of Education

Education for All

Australia's National 2015 Review



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1. Introduction

Education For All Overview

At the World Education Forum (Dakar, 2000) 164 countries, including Australia, pledged to achieve the six goals identified under the Education For All (EFA) initiative by 2015 through the implementation of twelve strategies outlined in the Dakar Framework for Action.

The forum was originally organised by the International Consultative Forum on EFA, with the leadership subsequently passed onto UNESCO.

In July 2013, UNESCO invited Member States to undertake an EFA 2015 Review.

Subsequently, UNESCO wrote to Australia in December 2013 noting that the analytical framework for the review may not be directly relevant to Australia's context, suggesting Australia may wish to focus on national policies and programmes in areas specific to the EFA goals, on Australia's role in aiding other countries in their education development, provide insight on how Australia has addressed key policy issues concerning equity and quality of education and how Australia prepares students with appropriate skills for transition from school to the labour market.

UNESCO publishes a regular EFA Global Monitoring Report, with the 11th EFA Global Monitoring Report released in 2014. In addition, UNESCO held a Technical Workshop on the National EFA 2015 Review in Asia-Pacific from 20 - 22 November 2013 in Bangkok, Thailand, and a Regional Technical Feedback Workshop on the National EFA 2015 Reviews from 29 - 30 April 2014, also in Bangkok, which was attended by 120 participants from 31 countries.

Education Sectors in Australia

Australia has four education sectors: early childhood development, schools, vocational education and training and higher education.

Early Childhood Education and Care

The Australian Government believes that there are significant benefits to ensuring all children experience a positive early childhood, from before birth through the first eight years of life. Research shows that quality maternal, child and family health, early childhood education and care and family support programmes make a significant difference to improving outcomes for children with particular benefits for children from disadvantaged backgrounds¹.

The Australian Government became financially involved with child care in 1972, and extended this support to all children in 1974, in a change that also included preschools. Family day care places were added in the 1970s and 1980s to reflect a number of broad social changes which were occurring at that time in Australia: a growing feminist movement accompanied by more women entering the workforce, better education levels and growing demands across the board for more government involvement and funding in areas such as health, education and child care².

As new long day care places, occasional care places and family day care were added, costs were being shared by the Commonwealth Government and state and territory governments. In 1988, the

¹ The Council of Australian Governments (COAG), http://www.coag.gov.au/early_childhood

² Parliament of Australia. (2002). Commonwealth Support for Child Care, http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/Publications_Archive/archive/Child_Caresupport

Commonwealth announced the National Child Care Strategy which aimed at providing an extra 30 000 child care places. In 1994, the Commonwealth's New Growth Strategy provided funds to increase the number of work-related child care places. The Commonwealth introduced the Quality Improvement and Accreditation system which was aimed at improving quality and standards of approved child care and introduced the Child Care Cash Rebate (CCR) to help families with costs of work related child care expenses.

The Commonwealth announced the expansion of family day care places and extra places for outside-school-hours care in the 1995-96 Budget and established the Child Care Advisory Council in 1998. A major reform was introduced to the child care payments regime a year later with the introduction of the new Child Care Benefit (CCB) which replaced both Child Care Assistance and the CCR and allowed for varying levels of benefit, largely dependent on family income levels. Emphasis on more flexible services and services in remote and rural communities yielded:

- a new In-home Care initiative
- provision of family day care and outside school hours care in areas of need by the operators of long day care centres
- provision of incentives to encourage private operators to establish child care centres in rural areas.

Schools

While the Australian Government plays a national leadership role in school education, under Australia's federal constitutional arrangements, the eight states and territories retain responsibility for the delivery of school education, including the administration and operation of schools within their jurisdictions.

The Australian Government Department of Education is committed to working in partnership with the states and territories and the non-government schooling sector – including Catholic and Independent schools and systems – to improve outcomes in Australian schools. Under the Government's *Students First* package of reforms, there is a focus on the four key areas that will make a positive difference: teacher quality, school autonomy, engaging parents in education, and strengthening the Australian Curriculum. This also includes close collaboration with the Australian Government Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to ensure that mainstream policy, programmes and service delivery contribute to improvements in outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Agencies such as the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) and Education Services Australia (ESA) play an important role in improving the quality of education across jurisdictions. The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Education Council, the Australian Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs Senior Officials Committee and associated advisory bodies and working groups are the principal forums for policy coordination and collaboration at the national level.

In 2008, all Australian education ministers agreed to the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*³ (The Melbourne Declaration), which articulates the following two goals for Australian schooling:

- Australian schooling promotes excellence and equity
- all young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens.

³http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/National_Declaration_on_the_Educational_Goals_for_Young_Australians.pdf

The Australian Government contributes to these goals and to boosting participation and productivity through a number of programmes and by providing supplementary funding to states and territories to support government schools (also known as public schools). The Australian Government is also the major public funder of non-government schools (or private schools), which receive supplementary funding from state and territory governments, in addition to funding from other sources, such as parents and school communities.

From 1 January 2014, recurrent Australian Government funding to all schools and systems has been based on the needs of schools and students as outlined in the *Australian Education Act 2013*⁴. This legislation underpins the Australian Government's involvement in schools and aims to ensure that the system provides a high quality and highly equitable education for all students, and committing to COAG targets for school education.

The Government is committed to continuing improvements to national data collection, monitoring and reporting and is working closely with the states and territories to support the development of evidence-based policy. Ultimately, in recognition of the important role that schools, parents and communities play in translating national policy settings into action at the local level, the Government is consulting with state and territory school authorities to amend the *Australian Education Act 2013* to ensure that states and territories retain authority for schools within their jurisdictions, and non-government schools maintain their independence and autonomy.

Vocational Education and Training

The national vocational education and training (VET) system is a diverse and complex market with training provided by a mixture of public and private providers. The primary purpose of VET is to provide skills for the labour market. About half of the training in the public VET system is in Certificate III and IV, including apprenticeships and traineeships, and is generally regarded as entry-level training for work. VET also delivers basic language literacy and numeracy skills to higher level technical training needed by innovative firms.

Around half of all training is provided by 59 state owned providers. The remaining about 4 600 registered training providers include a mix of private for-profit colleges, not-for-profit organisations such as community colleges, schools, and enterprises delivering accredited in-house training. The national training system has around 3 000 qualifications and accredited courses and 18 000 defined units of competency that detail specific work-related skills.

VET qualifications and competencies are documented in training packages that are developed in consultation with the relevant industries. The qualifications in each training package may range from basic levels to advanced diplomas and graduate diplomas. VET training delivery overlaps with schools in Certificates I and with higher education in Diplomas and Advanced Diplomas and Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas.

Governance of the formal VET system regulates content and training providers for quality and consistency, to provide certainty to industry and employers about an individual's skills and to protect the sector's reputation – particularly in the context of the international VET market. Standards for VET providers, training content and regulators apply nationally. Regulation of the VET sector against the national standards is mainly administered by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). The other key bodies in the VET governance framework are the Industry Skills Councils that maintain and develop training package content in consultation with

⁴The Australian Government Department of Education, <https://education.gov.au/australian-education-act-2013>

industry, and the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) that is the collector and repository of national VET data.

The economic objectives of the Australian VET sector are to ensure the skills needs of industry are met to boost productivity and innovation. The VET system also aims to provide students with good employment outcomes and/or pathways to further education and training.

Higher Education

Australia's higher education system is a key player in its economic prosperity.

This is where the professional workforce for the jobs and the economy of the future is formed. It is through universities and colleges that individuals are given the opportunity to realise their aspirations to a high skill career. Australia needs to be sure that it is providing graduates with skills that are internationally competitive and relevant.

Universities and colleges also provide the platform for innovation, creativity and productivity. Australia's economy relies on the research and the highly skilled graduates produced by higher education to innovate and adopt world's best practice. Australia's researchers are leading the world in solving some of the most pressing problems facing Australia and the world through a highly competitive and well-resourced research capability.

Traditionally, Australian universities were established under state and territory legislation. In the period from Federation (1901) to the outbreak of World War 2, the Commonwealth had a relatively modest role in higher education. The Commonwealth intervened in the sector to ensure an adequate supply of key skills needed to support the war effort.

Through the late 1940s to early 1970, a university/college of advanced education system operated with increasing Commonwealth responsibility for higher education.

In 1974, the Commonwealth formally gained full responsibility for financing the higher education sector. Tuition fees were abolished and a broadly available means-tested income support for students was available. The growth in student numbers from the mid-1970s was dramatic. The total number of students enrolled in higher education increased by 42 per cent.

In the late 1980s, the Government embarked on a major expansion and reorganisation of the higher education sector. It committed to significant growth in student numbers and resources, a unified national system of higher education and the introduction of student contributions through the innovative Higher Education Contribution Scheme. The scheme provided a more equitable arrangement for funding of the higher education sector than the previous system of taxpayer funding.

Higher education reform in the 1990s and 2000s has concentrated on research and limited de-regulation to increase the flexibility of universities. Measures to increase flexibility have included fee deregulation for postgraduate coursework and a loans scheme for postgraduate coursework, limited fee de-regulation for fees for undergraduates and marginal funding for above-target enrolments. The Australian Government also implemented, in cooperation with the states and territories, a quality assurance framework.

On 28 August 2014, the Government introduced the *Higher Education and Research Reform Amendment Bill 2014*⁵ (the Reform Bill) to give effect to changes announced in the 2014-15 Budget. Subject to the passage of legislation, the Reform Bill, commencing in January 2016, will spread opportunity to more students, including disadvantaged and rural and regional students, equip

⁵ The Australian Parliament House, http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22legislation%2Fems%2Fr5325_ems_829f5750-c9d5-40bc-9a7c-069cb8bec583%22

Australian universities to face the challenges of the 21st century and ensure Australia is not left behind by intensifying global competition and new technologies.

Under this Government-announced comprehensive reform agenda for Australia's world class higher education system, universities will be able to offer Commonwealth supported places on a demand-driven basis to students enrolling in any accredited undergraduate qualification. For the first time ever, the Australian Government will provide tuition subsidies for undergraduate students studying at any registered higher education provider for any accredited course. Universities and other higher education institutions will be able to set their own tuition fees for the courses they offer. Students will continue to have access to the Higher Education Loan Programme so they do not have to pay any upfront costs for their education. To assist students from disadvantaged backgrounds the Government will establish a Commonwealth scholarships scheme where \$1 in every \$5 of additional revenue raised from the deregulation of fees will support access for disadvantaged students.

Australia's Aid Programme and Education For All

Australia's commitment to EFA goals is further reflected in its aid programme. This program views education as one of its important pillars. More specifically, Australia's education programme is committed to the EFA goals of providing quality basic education for all children, youth and adults. Australia invests in education as a driver of economic growth, to create new jobs and opportunities that lift people out of poverty.

Australia prioritises access to quality learning for all, with a focus on gender equality and assisting the most disadvantaged, including people with disability, find pathways out of poverty.

The Australian Government's aid policy outlines a sharp geographical focus on the Indo-Pacific region (90 per cent of country programming aid from 2014-15).

In 2013-14, Australia's aid assisted approximately 1.4 million more children to enrol in schools across the region, built more than 9 000 additional classrooms, trained over 100 000 teachers to help improve education quality and provided 4 450 new Australia Awards scholarships.

2. Main Education for All challenges in 2000 and targets for 2015

Australia has a longstanding commitment to the principles associated with EFA, including providing education for “every citizen and for every society” as a fundamental human right and critical aspect of effective participation in economic, social and community life.

In the area of early childhood education and care, the Australian Government former Department of Community Services (FaCS) defined “*providing support for quality child care and flexible child care services*” as one of its key activities as of 2000.

In 2000 - 2001 the Commonwealth outlaid approximately \$1.35 billion on child care support⁶. The vast majority of Commonwealth support in 2000 was in the form of the Child Care Benefit (CCB) which accounted for just over \$1 billion of total government funding.

CCB was introduced in July 2000 and replaced Child Care Assistance and the Child Care Cash Rebate. Families then could claim up to 50 hours of CCB for approved child care if they were, either working, looking for work, involved with volunteer work, studying or training, a person with disability or if they were caring for a child with disability.

The introduction of CCB significantly improved the affordability of child care. Consequently, many more families could use federally approved child care. In the December quarter of 2000, 444 400 families had claimed the CCB as a fee reduction and 26 500 families had used child care but did not claim the CCB as a fee reduction.

Child care for eligible parents undergoing training in 2000 went to those participating in the Jobs, Education and Training Program (JET) or the Work for the Dole initiative. JET helped sole parents and low income parents or carers to re-enter the workforce. Eligible participants could have their child care costs paid in full.

As part of the 2005 - 2006 Welfare to Work budget changes, JET was replaced by the Jobs, Education and Training Child care Fee Assistance (JETCCFA) programme. JETCCFA was introduced in order to help families with the cost of approved child care for eligible parents undertaking activities such as job search, work, study, training or undertaking rehabilitation to enter, or re-enter the workforce as part of an Employment Pathway Plan (also known as a Participation Plan or Individual Participation Plan).

The main legislation that underpinned the Australian child care system in 2000 included:

- *The Child Care Act 1972*⁷.
- *Family Assistance Act 1999*⁸.
- *Family Assistance (Administration) Act 1999*⁹.
- *Schedules 5 and 6 of the A New Tax System (Family Assistance and Related Measures) Act 2009*¹⁰.

⁶ The Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services, Annual Report 2000-01, page 28

⁷ See “Child Care Act 1972” at <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2012C00930>

⁸ See “A New Tax System (Family Assistance) ACT 1999” at <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2014C00365>

⁹ See “A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999” at <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2014C00401>

¹⁰ See “A New Tax System (Family Assistance and Related Measures) Act 2000” at <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2004C01310>

In the area of school education, the Australian Government's role has developed over time, with a key role in funding schools from the 1960s onwards. Commonwealth responsibility for national leadership and policy direction increased significantly from the 1980s and 2000s, reflecting national policy objectives and a greater focus on improving student outcomes. The conditions associated with financial assistance provided to the states and territories were outlined in quadrennial legislative instruments and the *Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Act 2000*¹¹. Under the latter, the Government has provided targeted support to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from 2001-2014.

Through the *1989 Hobart Declaration*¹² and the *1999 Adelaide Declaration*¹³, Australia's education ministers committed to working together to ensure high quality schooling for all young Australians. In 2008, the Melbourne Declaration reinforced these goals and acknowledged major changes in the world, such as globalisation, the growing importance of Asia literacy and advances in information and communication technologies (ICT). The Melbourne Declaration identifies key strategies and initiatives for achieving educational goals across eight interrelated areas:

- developing stronger partnerships
- supporting quality teaching and school leadership
- strengthening early childhood education
- enhancing middle years of schooling and youth transitions
- supporting senior years of schooling and youth transitions
- promoting world class curriculum and assessment
- improving educational outcomes for Indigenous youth and disadvantaged young Australians, especially those from low socioeconomic backgrounds
- strengthening accountability and transparency.

The Melbourne Declaration noted that Australia already had a high quality, world-class schooling system, which performs strongly against other countries in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). However, it recognised a continuing need to improve educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students from low socio-economic backgrounds, as well as the overall attainment rate for Year 12 or equivalent qualifications.

The OECD identifies an education system as high quality when average achievement in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) major domain in each cycle (reading, mathematical or scientific literacy) is above the OECD average. Australia has been identified as high quality in each PISA cycle since it began in 2000.

The OECD reports educational equity in terms of the relationship between a student's socioeconomic background and their educational performance in the major domain for each PISA cycle. In PISA 2000, Australia was classified as low equity. Australia has been classified as high equity in each subsequent cycle of PISA except for 2009, when Australia was classified as average equity (noting that caution is needed when comparing equity trends as methodologies have varied over reporting cycles). PISA data from 2000 through to 2012, along with other national and international assessments that Australian students participate in, also indicates that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, on average, perform at a lower level than non-Indigenous students.

¹¹See "Indigenous Education (targeted Assistance) Act 2000", <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2005C00033>

¹²http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/natgoals_file.pdf

¹³<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/1301.0Feature%20Article232001?opendocume nt&tabname=Summary&prodno=1301.0&issue=2001&num=&view=>

In 2008, Australian governments agreed to work together to ensure that school students acquire the knowledge and skills needed to participate effectively in society and to gain meaningful employment in a globalised economy. This reflected a broader approach to cooperative federalism aimed at improving the quality and effectiveness of government services, the achievement of outcomes and providing increased flexibility in the way services are delivered to the Australian people. At the time, COAG agreed to a series of targets that informs the current performance reporting framework for school education, including to:

- lift the Year 12 or equivalent or Certificate II attainment rate to 90 per cent by 2015
- lift the Year 12 or equivalent or Certificate III attainment rate to 90 per cent by 2020
- halve the gap for Indigenous students in reading, writing and numeracy by 2018
- at least halve the gap for Indigenous students in Year 12 or equivalent attainment rates by 2020 from the baseline in 2006.

These targets were included in the *Australian Education Act 2013*, alongside a needs-based funding model with national targets for improving the performance of school students and ensuring a high quality and highly equitable schooling system. The act also states that the quality of a student's education should not be limited by where the student lives, the income of his or her family, the school he or she attends, or his or her personal circumstances, nor should the quality of education be limited by a school's location, particularly those schools located in regional Australia.

The VET sector in Australia is the sector which plays a critical role in providing industry with skilled workers. Australia is experiencing a period of economic transition at present, which is changing the current and future needs of Australian workplaces. The effects of technological change coupled with structural adjustment in many industries, particularly manufacturing, will continue to change the world of work.

As Australia's economy continues to rely more upon knowledge intensive, higher-skilled professions, its capacity to boost productivity and innovation will be crucial to sustaining its prosperity. The Australian government is taking steps to ensure that industry has access to a skilled and adaptive workforce that is able to meet the challenges of the future.

Australia's VET sector has many acknowledged strengths including nationally recognised qualifications, industry input into course content and provision of training through public and private providers. VET skills and upskills a broad range of people in many professional areas. Qualifications range from short certificates through to trade apprenticeships and advanced diplomas.

Yet as the needs of industry evolve, in response to Australia's economic changes, the VET sector too must modernise. The government is responding to concerns that have been raised about the VET sector's ability to continue to deliver the skills demanded by the Australian economy. Its package of VET reforms, launched in 2013, aim to simplify and streamline the governance and regulatory arrangements of the VET system. This will allow VET to be more responsive to the needs of industry and less hindered by bureaucratic red tape.

One aim of the reforms is to redesign the framework of VET to ensure that industry has more input into the design and development of courses. Students need to complete qualifications equipped with the right skills that industry needs. They also need to be work-ready, with adequate literacy and numeracy skills and the desire to keep upskilling and innovating in the workplace as a member of a team.

The Government has established a VET Advisory Board to provide advice to the Minister and the Department of Industry on reform priorities for VET. It also provides an avenue for industry expertise to be considered during VET policy development.

In addition, the Government is continuing to consult with stakeholders and review how training courses can better meet the needs of industry. To date this includes more than 5 000 engagements through face to face, submissions and webinars.

Apprenticeships form a key sector of the VET system and are an important source of skilled labour for many industries. It has been concerning that apprenticeship completion rates have been at around 50 per cent for some time. The reform agenda is taking action to address this matter.

A new Australian Apprenticeship Support Network will offer targeted advice, support, job matching and mentoring to apprentices and their employers as of July 2015. As wages tend to be low during the early years of an apprenticeship, the Government has also introduced Trade Support loans. These \$20 000 loans will provide essential financial support to apprentices and will encourage more apprentices to complete their training.

Complimenting these reforms is the new \$476 million Industry Skills Fund. This offers Australian businesses one access point from which to obtain information on the government's training options. The new Fund will also be trialling two programmes to help boost the training and employment opportunities of young people living in regional areas or experiencing social disadvantages.

VET training in Australia is delivered through many public and private providers. ASQA is responsible for ensuring the quality of VET providers and the courses they deliver. This has principally been done through its registration requirements and audits.

Through its reform agenda, the Government is now changing ASQA's funding model. Historically training providers have had to focus great attention on proving their compliance against complex regulations. The reforms aim to reward those providers that have proven that they are low-risk with greater autonomy. This will also free up these good providers to focus more time on their courses and teaching. The reforms will grant ASQA more time to focus their attention on those providers who are not providing quality education outcomes. ASQA will also be able to provide more education and support for training providers so that they are clearer about what is required of them.

Looking forward to 2015, the Government's VET reform agenda aims to redesign the framework through which VET is delivered in Australia. Implementing simpler, more streamlined systems with less red tape will allow VET to be more responsive to the changing skill needs of industry. Providing industry with a stronger role in VET will result in students graduating with more relevant skills and abilities. Offering training that results in strong employment outcomes for students will result in a more effective use of government funding.

The VET Reform agenda is part of the Government's forthcoming National Industry Investment and Competitiveness Agenda. This agenda will focus on Australia's economic strengths, create jobs and exploit competitive advantages with initiatives that promote national competitiveness and productivity. Further information on the VET reform agenda and its progress are available at www.vetreform.industry.gov.au.

In the field of higher education, the *Higher Education Funding Act 1988* was the guiding legislation for higher education in Australia since its passage. It was replaced in August 2014 by the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*. More recently, the Australian Government introduced the *Higher Education and Research Reform Amendment Bill 2014*.

As of the year 2000 there were three specific sets of policy measures for higher education in Australia:

- an enhanced national quality assurance framework
- reforms to the financing of research and research training

- additional supplementation for staff salaries conditional on management reforms and industrial flexibilities being achieved.

The main purposes of Australian higher education over the same period were to:

- inspire and enable individuals to develop their capabilities to the highest potential throughout their lives (for personal growth and fulfilment, for effective participation in the workforce and for constructive contributions to society)
- advance knowledge and understanding and aid the application of knowledge and understanding to the benefit of the economy and the society
- enable individuals to adapt and learn, consistent with the needs of an adaptable knowledge-based economy at local, regional and national levels
- enable individuals to contribute to a democratic, civilised society and promote the tolerance and debate that underpins it.

The objectives of the Government's policies for higher education were to:

- expand opportunity
- assure quality
- improve universities' responsiveness to varying student needs and industry requirements
- advance the knowledge base and university contributions to national innovation
- ensure public accountability for the cost-effective use of public resource.

In 2000, the Government endorsed new quality assurance processes in relation to all institutions seeking financial support from the Commonwealth Government. Public and private universities were established through legislation by the relevant state or territory authorities and individual university councils were responsible for the quality of their education provision. The need to strengthen the quality assurance system came from:

- the massive growth in higher education
- the influence of information technology in the delivery of education
- the internationalisation of education, including the emergence of new providers
- a greater focus on management.

The new quality assurance framework was to distinguish between the functions of accreditation and non-self-accrediting institutions and between the treatment of self-accrediting and non self-accrediting institutions. While states and territories continue to exercise their responsibilities in relation to accreditation, it was to be co-ordinated nationally through annual reports to the then Ministerial Council on Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs.

In March 2000, ministers with responsibility for higher education in all Australian states, territories and the Commonwealth endorsed the National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes and agreed to the establishment of the Australian University Quality Agency (AUQA).

AUQA was responsible for:

- conducting quality audits of self-accrediting institutions on a five-year basis
- providing public reports on the outcomes of these audits
- accrediting new universities and non-university higher education awards
- monitoring and reporting on comparative world standing of Australian higher education system.

Since 1989, Australian students contributed to the cost of their education through Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS, on average 24 per cent of the course cost). A key equity feature of HECS was that payment arrangements were based on the individual's capacity to pay. These interest-free deferred payment arrangements meant that students are not prevented from participating in higher education by an inability to pay up-front. Students are able to defer payment until their personal

income exceeded the minimum threshold for repayments (\$22 346 for 2000-2001). Students who paid up-front in full received a 25 per cent discount.

In 2000, there were 671 331 domestic students studying in Australian higher education institutions. Of these, 540 646 students (81 per cent) were in HECS-liable places.

HECS contributions were divided into three groups:

- \$3 521 per annum for arts and humanities, social science, visual and performing arts, education and nursing
- \$5 015 per annum for mathematics and computing, other health services, agriculture, architecture, science, engineering and business
- \$5 870 per annum for law, medicine, dentistry and veterinary science.

In the same year, higher education institutions were able to offer places in undergraduate award courses to domestic students for a fee payable directly to the institution (fee-paying students). In 2000, there were 2 647 domestic fee-paying undergraduate students, an increase of 48 per cent from 1999. Fees for undergraduate students ranged from \$8 050 for education to \$22 421 for veterinary science.

Higher education institutions were also able to offer domestic fee-paying places to postgraduate students. For these students, the fees ranged from \$6 224 for education to \$12 167 for business. Institutions receiving Commonwealth operating grants had a basic obligation to promote equity. The following groups were targets for equity planning:

- indigenous Australians
- people from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds
- people from rural and isolated areas
- people with disability
- people from non-English speaking backgrounds
- women in non-traditional areas of study.

The Commonwealth provided funding for Indigenous students under the Indigenous Support Funding Programme. Commonwealth support aimed at improving the higher education participation of the other equity groups was provided through the Commonwealth's Higher Education Equity Programme (HEEP). Institutions were expected to provide an annual equity plan to demonstrate the extent to which equity planning and practice are integrated into their operations.

In December 1999, the Government announced the introduction of the Research Training Scheme (RTS) in the Research White Paper Knowledge and Innovation: A policy statement on research and research training. The scheme was introduced to address some persistent concerns about the poor quality of some students' research training environment, mismatches between the research priorities of institutions and the interest of students, and high attrition and slow completion rates of students. Its key features were:

- Commonwealth-funded postgraduate research places were allocated to higher education institutions according to their performance
- places may be held at any higher education institution which provided the Minister with an acceptable Research and Research Training Management Plan
- places were reallocated through a performance-based formula
- the maximum duration of a RTS place was two years for a masters student and four years for a doctoral student
- all new places were HECS-exempt.

Other higher education issues over that period included:

- Overseas Student Places higher education institutions delivered over 86 000 places for overseas students in 2000, an increase of nearly 13 300 for 1999. 24 per cent of overseas

students in Australian universities were studying offshore compared to 21.5 per cent in 1999.

- Medical rural-bonded scholarships in the 2000 Budget, the Government announced a new bonded scholarship scheme for medical students to increase the number of doctors in rural Australia. 100 bonded scholarships valued at \$20 000 per annum were offered to students while studying. On completion of basic medical training, graduates were expected to serve as doctors for a six year period in rural Australia. Additional 100 student places for medicine were also announced. The Government announced it was going to reimburse the HECS debt of medical graduates who undertake to work in designated rural areas.
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Rapid developments in ICT were changing the way higher education institutions operated. New educational delivery technologies were being explored. ICT developments were being used to support quality improvements in both teaching and learning and in the “back office”.

3. Progress towards the Education for All goals

Education for All Goal 1: Expanding Early Childhood Care and Education

The Australian Government report, “*Education in Australia 2012: Five years of performance*”¹⁴ notes that attendance in high quality early childhood education has been linked to better engagement and performance at school, especially for those who are disadvantaged.

The most recent OECD publication, “*Education at a Glance 2013*”, notes Australia has one of the highest levels of spending per child on early childhood education, ranked fifth in the OECD.¹⁵

In 2013, 85 per cent of Indigenous children aged four years in remote and very remote areas were enrolled with seven in every ten Indigenous children attending preschool during the reference week. Indigenous children in remote and very remote areas were more likely to be at preschool than those in regional areas and major cities¹⁶.

Participation levels in preschool are generally high in Australia, with over 98 per cent of enrolled children attending preschool in 2013.

During the December quarter 2013 in Australia:

- 776 790 families used approved child care services for their 1 120 880 children.
- 1 120 880 children used CCB approved child care in Australia, up by 8.5 per cent since the December quarter 2012. For children aged 0 - 12 years using approved child care, this represents 29 per cent of the 3 808 440 children aged 0 - 12 years in Australia.
- In terms of affordability, more than 90 per cent of these families are estimated to have received CCR, with 50 per cent of their out-of-pocket costs covered by the Australian Government.
- Before Australian Government child care subsidies were taken into account, out-of-pocket costs for families varied from 39.9 per cent of weekly disposable income for families earning a gross income of \$35 000 per year, to 16.1 per cent for families earning a gross income of \$150 000 per year. After Australian Government child care subsidies, out-of-pocket costs were significantly reduced to around 9.0 per cent of disposable income across all income ranges.¹⁷

The Australian Government has implemented a number of programmes to target improvement in early childhood care and education, including:

National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education (NP UAECE)

In 2008 all Australian Governments committed to universal access to early childhood education (known as preschool or kindergarten). Universal access states that every child will have access to a preschool programme in the 12 months prior to full-time school, delivered by an early childhood teacher, for 15 hours a week, 40 weeks a year (or 600 hours over the year). A particular focus is on Indigenous and vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

¹⁴ COAG report: “*Education in Australia 2012: Five years of performance*”, released 21 October 2013, <http://www.coagreformcouncil.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/Education%20in%20Australia%202012,%20Five%20years%20of%20performance.pdf>

¹⁵ OECD, 2013a. *Education at a Glance 2013: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, [http://www.oecd.org/edu/eag2013%20\(eng\)--FINAL%20%20June%202013.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/edu/eag2013%20(eng)--FINAL%20%20June%202013.pdf)

¹⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013

¹⁷ Administrative data, Australian Government Department of Education, 2014.

While states and territories remain responsible for the delivery of early childhood education, the Australian Government has allocated \$1.6 billion from 2008 to the end of 2014, with a recent announcement of an additional \$406 million for 2015.

The latest data from 2013 indicates that 100 per cent of all four and five year old children were enrolled in a preschool programme in the year before full-time school, with 82 per cent receiving 15 hours per week (or 600 hours over the year).

Australian Early Development Census

A key focus for Australia is the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC), formerly known as the Australian Early Development Index. The AEDC is a population measure of children's development prior to their first year of full-time school. The AEDC will help governments at all levels, as well as community organisations and early childhood services to monitor progress, consider emerging trends and inform early childhood policy and planning across education, health and community services.

Data collected in 2009 and 2012 is publicly available for around 96 per cent of Australian local communities, including regional, remote and Indigenous communities.

Nationally, data from 2012 shows that 69.1 per cent of children were developmentally on track on four or more domains of the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) as they entered school. However, Indigenous children were more than twice as likely to be developmentally vulnerable than non-Indigenous children in each domain¹⁸. Australia has committed to the third national collection of the AEDC data in mid-2015.

National Quality Framework (NQF) for Early Childhood Education and Care

The National Quality Framework (NQF) for Early Childhood Education and Care commenced on 1 January 2012 and applies to most long day care, family day care, preschool and outside school hours care services.

Key features of the NQF are nationally consistent educator to child ratios, phased in gradually over a number of years, as well as improved qualification requirements. From 1 January 2014, at least 50 per cent of educators are required to have, or be actively working towards, at least an approved diploma level education and care qualification. The remaining educators must have, or be actively working towards at least an approved Certificate III level education and care qualification. Centre-based services catering for children of preschool age or under must also have an early childhood teacher, with requirements varying depending on the number of children for whom education and care is being provided.

National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection

To monitor the respective national partnerships relating to Early Childhood Education, the Australian Government established the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection (NECECC). The NECECC is designed to provide annual, nationally comparable data on early childhood education.

The NECECC is compiled from administrative data collected by states and territories and the Commonwealth government.

The NECECC measures enrolment and attendance in a preschool programme, along with a number of other key data elements. To ensure that the collection is comparable across the states and territories, governments have consistent collection dates and reference periods with data reported for a representative reference week only.

¹⁸ COAG report: *“Education in Australia 2012: Five years of performance”*, released 21 October 2013

To ensure national comparability for the collection each year, states and territories follow national data standards and protocols developed for each collection.

Some additional information is also used in state and territory annual reporting under the National Partnership on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education to report on achievement of National Partnership benchmarks relating to preschool.¹⁹

Inclusion and Professional Support Program

The Inclusion and Professional Support Program (IPSP) supports progress towards meeting the first EFA goal, “expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children”. IPSP promotes and maintains high quality, inclusive education and care, for all children, including those with ongoing high support needs (including disability), in eligible child care and early learning settings. This is achieved by increasing the knowledge and skills of educators, and the capacity of services, through providing professional development and support. This can include training, advice or access to additional resources as well as Inclusion Support. IPSP comprises two main elements - Inclusion Support and Professional Development - which build the capacity of child care and early learning services.

Budget Based Funded (BBF) programme

The Australian Government’s Budget Based Funded (BBF) programme provides funding to early education, child care and school aged care services. In 2014 - 15, \$61.84 million was allocated to the programme. The programme plays a vital role in ensuring families have access to a service where one would not otherwise be viable, particularly in regional and remote communities. In many cases, these children are some of the more vulnerable children in Australia. Approximately 11 950 Indigenous children attended BBF services in 2013-14.²⁰

Education For All Goal 2: Universalisation of Primary and Basic Education

To ensure young people are fully engaged, all young people in Australia are required to participate in full time school education, work or training until the age of 17. While government provided primary and secondary schooling is free, parents have the right to choose the type of education given to their child, which can include private schooling. Australian children almost universally participate in a complete primary school education programme.

According to results from the 2013 Year 5 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) reading results, 96.1 per cent of Australian students had NAPLAN reading scores at or above National Minimum Standard. 83.3 per cent of Indigenous students had scores at or above the National Minimum Standard, up from only 63.4 per cent in 2008.

All states and territories provide 13 years of formal school education. Primary education, including a preparatory year, lasts for either seven or eight years and is followed by secondary education of six or five years respectively. Typically, schooling commences at age five, is compulsory from age six

¹⁹ The Australian Government Department of Education, <https://education.gov.au/national-partnership-agreement-universal-access-early-childhood-education>

²⁰ Due to Machinery of Government changes in September 2013, at the national level, Stronger Futures crèches and Indigenous Playgroups funded through the BBF programme were transferred to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

until age 17 (with provision for alternative study or work arrangements in the senior secondary years) and is completed at age 17 or 18)²¹.

Participation rates for 6-15 years enrolled in schools using an estimated resident population denominator was approximately 98.3 per cent in 2011²².

Education For All Goal 3: Meeting the Learning Needs of Youths and Adults

The Australian Government recognises the importance of Year 12 or equivalent qualifications in assisting young people to make a successful transition from school to work or further study and has set a target, through COAG, that 90 per cent of 20-24 year olds attain Year 12 or equivalent, by 2015. In 2013 the national attainment rate was 86.7 per cent, up from 80.0 per cent in 2002. However, continued improvement is required for the 90 per cent target to be met by 2015.

COAG has also set a target to halve the gap for Indigenous students in Year 12 or equivalent attainment rates by 2020. Year 12 or equivalent attainment rates for Indigenous Australians (20-24 year olds) rose from 45.4 per cent in 2008 to 59.1 per cent in 2012–13.

At the same time, the proportion of young people (18-24) not fully engaged in employment, education or training is increasing (26.1 per cent in 2006 to 27.3 per cent in 2011),²³ which partly reflects an increase in youth unemployment. To this end, the Australian Government is developing an approach that assists long-term unemployed Australians, particularly young people, who might otherwise be trapped in long-term welfare dependency. The Government's approach will encourage young people to either 'earn' or 'learn'.

Specifically in relation to Indigenous Australians, a review of Indigenous Training and Employment Programs (the Forrest Report) has recently been completed by Mr Andrew Forrest and submitted to the Australian Government for consideration in August 2014. The Forrest Review provided recommendations to ensure Indigenous specific training and employment programmes are targeted and administered to connect unemployed Indigenous Australians with real and sustainable jobs. In 2011, 61 per cent of Indigenous youth aged 17 to 24 were not fully engaged in work or study and only 11 per cent of Indigenous 17 to 24 year olds were studying full time compared, to 33 per cent for non-Indigenous 17 to 24 year olds.²⁴

In February 2014, Universities Australia, the peak body representing Australian universities, announced the university/business partnership to boost graduate employment agreement between Universities Australia and business groups to improve the work-readiness of university graduates, expand their job opportunities as well as enhance outcomes for employers. The plan is part of a broader effort to deepen relationships between universities, entrepreneurs, industry and communities. The plan also involves universities and businesses continuing to identify, promote and disseminate further opportunities for work integrated learning (WIL). WIL includes activities such as

²¹ Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, *"National Report on Schooling in Australia 2011"*, Sydney, 2013, view at

http://www.acara.edu.au/verve/_resources/National_Report_on_Schooling_in_Australia_2011.pdf

²² Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision, Productivity Commission, *"Report on Government Services 2013 Volume 1"*, , Canberra, 2013, view at

http://www.pc.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/121784/government-services-2013-volume1.pdf

²³ Council of Australian Government (COAG), *"Education in Australia 2012: Five years of performance"*.

21 October 2013, 9.

²⁴ *Ibid*, 61.

work placements accredited for university course work, mentoring and shadowing programmes, and internships.

Education For All Goal 4: Improving Adult Literacy Level

Australia has implemented a number of strategies and programmes to support the goal of lifting adult literacy rates across the country. These strategies and programmes include:

- National Foundation Skills Strategy for Adults the National Foundation Skills Strategy²⁵, agreed in 2012, was developed by the Australian Government and the governments of the states and territories. The strategy contains commitments to action on a range of initiatives, aimed at improving Australians' literacy and numeracy skills. The strategy includes a target that by 2022, two thirds of working age Australian's will have literacy and numeracy skills at Level 3 or above (Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey). This is an aspirational target and current activity has a focus on professional development for language, literacy and numeracy trainers. Key initiatives include:
 - an annual scholarships programme for language, literacy and numeracy trainers
 - research into a Professional Standards Framework for language, literacy and numeracy skills practitioners
 - professional development training in the frameworks used to assess language, literacy and numeracy skills - *Australian Core Skills Framework* (language, literacy and numeracy) and the *Core Skills for Work Developmental Framework* (employability skills)
 - the Strategy has not been reviewed and nor has progress against the EFA goals been evaluated.
- Adult Migrant English Program a legislated programme under the Immigration (Education) Act 1971, which provides up to 510 hours of free English language tuition to new migrants and humanitarian entrants.
- Skills for Education and Employment Program provides eligible job seekers with up to 800 hours of free language, literacy and numeracy training to enable them to undertake further training and/or participate more effectively in the labour force.
- Australian Apprenticeship Access Program provides vulnerable job seekers with a tailored package of pre-vocational training, job search and post-placement support and other assistance. The programme aims to help them find and keep skilled employment through an Australian Apprenticeship.

In addition to the above programmes, new language, literacy and numeracy elements have been incorporated into VET Certificates for VET trainers.

Education For All Goal 5: Gender Parity and Equality in Education

All children regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability or geographical location have the opportunity to be engaged in and benefit from schooling. The Australian school education system encourages young people of both genders to engage in educational activities of interest and importance to them. This ensures that upon leaving school, all young people have an equal opportunity to enter further training or work in their chosen profession.

²⁵ Available at:

<http://www.industry.gov.au/skills/AssistanceForTrainersAndPractitioners/NationalFoundationSkillsStrategyForAdults/Pages/default.aspx>

Achievement of students in Reading, by Sex, Australia, 2008—2013												
Year	2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
3	90.3	94.1	92.0	95.6	92.4	95.5	92.1	95.6	91.9	95.5	94.0	96.8
5	89.3	92.8	89.6	93.9	89.3	93.4	89.5	93.5	89.5	93.9	95.0	97.3
7	92.8	95.6	92.1	95.9	93.5	96.3	93.4	96.0	92.5	95.8	92.8	95.7
9	91.5	94.4	89.9	94.7	88.5	93.3	90.9	94.0	89.4	93.5	91.8	95.0

As indicated in the table above, girls continue to outperform boys in Year 9 NAPLAN reading results. In 2013, 95.0 per cent of year 9 girls had NAPLAN reading scores at or above national minimum standard, compared to 91.8 per cent of year 9 boys.

There was significant improvement in year 5 reading NAPLAN results for both girls and boys, over the period 2008 to 2013, although girls are still maintaining their performance margin over boys. The percentage of girls at or above national minimum standard improved from 92.8 per cent in 2008 to 97.3 per cent in 2013, indicating a statistically significant improvement of 4.5 per cent, while boys improved from 89.3 per cent to 95 per cent, indicating a statically significant improvement of 5.7 per cent.

The scores for boys and girls in Year 5 NAPLAN numeracy over the period 2008 to 2013 indicate that their performances are similar. In 2013, 93.3 per cent of boys performed at or above national minimum standard compared to 93.4 per cent of girls. Since 2000, apparent retention from the first year of secondary school to Year 12 (the final year) has also improved for all students and for Indigenous students specifically. Retention for girls remains higher than for boys.

Attainment rates have increased over the last decade with female students remaining more likely than males to complete year 12 or an equivalent qualification, with 89.2 per cent of females attaining year 12 or equivalent in 2013 compared to males 84.3 per cent.

Section 19-30 of Australia’s Higher Education Support Act 2003²⁶ states “a higher education provider must treat fairly: all of its students; and all of the persons seeking to enrol with the provider”.

In 2013, more women than men were enrolled in courses at the bachelor level with women accounting for 55.6 per cent of students. Women comprised 54.9 per cent of students undertaking post-graduate courses.

More women than men now hold higher education qualifications. In 2013, among people aged between 25 and 64 years, 31.4 per cent of women held a bachelor degree or higher compared to 25.7 per cent of men.

Women's participation in higher education study has traditionally been concentrated in three main areas - health, education, and society and culture. There continues to be a wide gap between the number of women and men enrolled in these fields of study. In 2013, nearly twice as many women as men were enrolled in society and culture courses. Women's enrolments in health outnumbered men's by 2.6 to 1 while women’s enrolments in education outnumbered men’s by 3.1 to 1. In 2013, men outnumbered women in information technology and engineering courses by 4.4 to 1 and 5.4 to 1 respectively.

The Higher Education Reform Bill (see Introduction) engages with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), in particular Article 13(2)(c) which states that “higher

²⁶ See “Higher Education Support Act 2003”, <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2014C00113>

education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education” by:

- substantially expanding access to higher education by extending the demand-driven system to diploma, advanced diploma and associate degrees and to bachelor and sub-bachelor courses at private providers and non-university higher education providers. This measure will provide Commonwealth support for more than 80 000 additional students each year by 2018. This is a significant expansion in the number of Government subsidised places. The additional support provided to students will not only improve access, but also expand opportunity and choice for students in the higher education sector.
- removing the limits currently placed on student contribution amounts providers can charge. This measure may result in fees for some courses increasing, and others decreasing as higher education providers seek to compete on price. Competition will keep prices down. Students will continue to be able to defer paying their fees through the HELP scheme (see below).
- streamlining the HELP loan programmes currently available to Commonwealth supported and full fee paying students; and remove the FEE HELP and the VET FEE-HELP lifetime limits and loan fees.
- requiring higher education providers that have an equivalent Commonwealth subsidised full time student load of 500 or more to direct up to 20 per cent of additional total revenue collected as a result of the deregulation of student contributions to activities to improve access and participation. This measure will ensure disadvantaged students have the opportunity to access higher education.

The Australian Government administers the Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP) which consists of five HELP loans schemes to assist students with the cost of their fees. HELP loans have income contingent repayment arrangements. Outstanding loan balances are indexed and people are required to make repayments only when their income reaches the minimum threshold for compulsory repayment. The repayment threshold relates solely to the person who undertakes the study, and does not take into account the incomes of their parents, spouse or other family members. Repayment amounts are calculated as a percentage of the person’s repayment income. Most people repay their HELP debts over a number of years. This means that the Australian Government bears the deferral costs of the loans, which increase over the repayment period. If a HELP debt is never repaid because of low income the Government meets the cost. Women and men will only be required to pay their HELP debts when their income is above the minimum threshold for repayment. If a woman’s income dips below this threshold (for example, while working part-time or on maternity leave) her repayments will pause until her income once again exceeds the minimum repayment threshold.

Australians of low socio-economic status (SES) have access to the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP). HEPPP provides funding to higher education providers in order to improve access to domestic undergraduate courses for people from low SES backgrounds and improve the retention and completion rates of those students. Activities funded through the HEPPP include scholarships, academic support and alternative entry schemes, as well as partnership activities with schools, vocational education providers and others to raise aspirations and build the capacity of low SES people to participate in higher education. From 1 January 2015, the current HEPPP will be replaced with the Higher Education Participation Programme (HEPP). The aim of the HEPP is to increase the number of people from disadvantaged backgrounds who access, participate and succeed in higher education.

Australians with disability have access to the Higher Education Disability Support Programme (DSP). DSP assists in removing barriers to education for domestic students with disability by providing funding to eligible higher education providers to assist with the cost of providing educational support services and equipment to high cost students with disability; by encouraging providers to

implement strategies to attract and support students with disability; and by funding the Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training website, hosted by the University of Tasmania, which provides information and other resources designed to promote inclusive teaching and learning practices for people with disability.

Education For All Goal 6: Quality of Education

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring a quality education for all students by ensuring schools are positive learning environments where students are attending, engaging, learning and thriving. The Government recognises that providing safe and supportive learning environments contribute to positive learning outcomes, wellbeing and student resilience and that this can be enhanced through parent and community engagement.

The Australian VET system has also evolved in recent years to ensure key elements of infrastructure are in place to oversee and ensure quality. In addition to the maintenance of national standards for the regulation of VET, the National VET Regulator (the Australian Skills Quality Authority) was established in 2011 and the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) has been strengthened.

National Standards for the Regulation of VET

The legislative instruments of the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011*²⁷ contain many of the national standards for VET. The Commonwealth Minister responsible for VET created these legislative instruments after first seeking agreement from The Skills Council on Tertiary Education Skills and Employment. Other standards are outlined elsewhere. The national standards for VET govern the:

- Registration and operation of training providers
- Development of Training Packages
- Accreditation of courses
- Data provision requirements
- Operation of the regulators.

Providers must meet the national standards in order to be registered as training organisations and thereby have their training recognised at a national level. The national standards for VET are critical in ensuring that current and future training providers deliver high quality training and assessment services. The standards ensure the reputation of the VET sector is maintained and employers and industry continue to value VET qualifications.

²⁷ The *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* can be accessed at <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Series/C2011A00012> and the standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations contained within the Act can be accessed at <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Series/F2011L01356>.

National VET Regulator: Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)

The national VET regulator, the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) commenced operations on 1 July 2011. ASQA was established to improve the regulation of VET across the country and increase national consistency (although at this time Victoria and Western Australia continue to regulate VET in those jurisdictions). ASQA is responsible for ensuring quality at the individual provider level. ASQA has the power to limit the entry of providers into the VET marketplace to those who can demonstrate an ability to meet the required standards, as well as to prevent poor quality providers from continuing to operate.

ASQA's functions include:

- registering training providers as Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)
- registering organisations as Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) providers (which allows enrolment of international students)
- accrediting VET courses
- ensuring that organisations comply with the conditions and standards for registration, including carrying out compliance audits.

The work that ASQA performs at the individual provider level and at the system wide level provides useful information concerning the quality difficulties in VET, and provides guidance as to how these difficulties may be addressed. More information on ASQA can be viewed at www.asqa.gov.au.

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

The AQF²⁸ is the national policy for regulated Australian qualifications. The AQF incorporates the qualifications from each education and training sector into a single comprehensive national qualifications framework. Education, training and employment Ministers collectively own and are responsible for the AQF, as education and training in Australia is a shared responsibility of all Commonwealth, State and Territory governments.

The users of the AQF span each education and training sector: schools, VET and higher education and include the accrediting authorities and institutions providing education and training. The many AQF stakeholders include industry and representative bodies, unions, professional associations, licensing authorities, students, employers and governments. Ultimately students, graduates and employers, both Australian and international, benefit from the quality qualifications that are built on the requirements of the AQF.

The AQF is based on the learning outcomes expected from graduates at each AQF level and for each qualification type. The levels and qualification types are organised in a hierarchical structure according to the level of complexity of outcomes, in terms of knowledge and skills and their application. The sector or mode of delivery is not a factor in determining the AQF level of a particular qualification.

The AQF is an integrated policy that comprises of:

- the learning outcomes for each AQF level and qualification type
- the specifications for the application of the AQF in the accreditation and development of qualifications
- the policy requirements for issuing AQF qualifications
- the policy requirements for qualification linkages and student pathways.

²⁸ <http://www.aqf.edu.au/>

The strengthened AQF will be fully implemented from 1 January 2015. This will involve the accreditation of AQF qualifications, the authorisation of organisations to issue them, and the ongoing quality assurance of qualifications and ensuring the issuing organisations is legislated within Australian jurisdictions.

The VET sector delivers accredited training in two main ways: students can complete a suite of articulated and sequential modules (training packages or other accredited courses) that lead to full qualifications such as certificates and diplomas. Alternatively, students can choose to complete selected modules only, resulting in statements of attainment. Accredited training provides the student with nationally recognised and transferable skills. It can only be delivered by RTOs and content has to be approved by ASQA.

Australia's higher education system is underpinned by robust quality assurance arrangements. The Australian Government is further committed to fostering an environment in which universities are able to provide high quality education without being burdened by regulatory processes. The Government encourages Australia's higher education institutions to lift and maintain the quality of education. To this end, the Government has implemented a number of measures to enhance quality through innovation and continuous improvement programmes. Components of the Government's quality framework include:

- The Office of Learning and Teaching (OLT) which is the flagship of the Government's national quality initiatives, promoting and supporting change in higher education institutions for the enhancement of learning and teaching.
- The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) which is Australia's independent national overseer of higher education provision. TEQSA is established by the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011*²⁹. TEQSA registers higher education institutions and accredits the courses of institutions which do not have self-accrediting authority.
- The Higher Education Standards Framework which is a legislative instrument that sets the requirements for registration as a higher education provider and underpin TEQSA's work.
- The Education Services for Overseas Students, or ESOS Act, which sets out the requirements for education and training institutions offering courses to international students in Australia on a student visa.

The Australian Government introduced the "Upholding Quality" – Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching measure in the Higher Education Reform Bill. The Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching measure will provide a coherent suite of government endorsed surveys for higher education, that cover the student life cycle from commencement to employment. The surveys include:

- the University Experience Survey, measuring satisfaction of current students
- the Graduate Outcomes Survey, examining labour market outcomes of newly qualified higher education graduates
- development of a new Employer Satisfaction Survey to assess the generic skills, technical skills and work readiness of graduates.

Information from the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching will be presented in an accessible web-based format, with an initial version of the website available later in 2014 and full implementation by August 2015. This will help to ensure adequate information is available for students to make informed decisions about their study options. Higher education providers will

²⁹ See "Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011", <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Search/Tertiary%20Education%20Quality%20and%20Standards%20Agency%20Act%202011>

receive data from the surveys relating to their students and graduates, supporting their continual improvement efforts in key areas such as teaching practices, learner engagement and student support. The indicator suite will provide information on the student experience and employment prospects, enabling Australia to benchmark performance against the United States of America, United Kingdom and New Zealand.

The Australian Government's commitment to enhancing the teachers' mathematics and science training is reflected by introducing the Enhancing the Training of Mathematics and Science Teachers Programme. The programme was established in response to the 2012 report by Australia's Chief Scientist, Professor Ian Chubb, AC: "*Mathematics, Engineering and Science: In the National Interest*"³⁰. The purpose of the programme is to drive a major improvement in the quality of pre-service education for mathematics and science teachers. In 2013, five multi-institutional projects commenced. The projects bring together faculties of mathematics and science and faculties of education to collaborate on new pre-service teacher course design and delivery. The projects involve 24 higher education institutions as well as research organisations and state governments. Formative evaluation for the projects and programme also commenced in 2013. The projects are due for completion in late 2016 and early 2017.

Australia's support to education through the aid programme

In 2013-14, the Australian Government's aid programme invested approximately \$965.7 million in supporting education in developing countries (approximately 20 per cent of total official development assistance). Australia has bilateral aid programmes in education with 21 countries throughout Asia and the Pacific including Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Pacific Island countries, Bangladesh, Burma and Laos.

Australia's investments in supporting education through the aid programme primarily focus on supporting changes to the systems and policies that deliver better education in our region.

Australia's support to improve access to education opportunities and quality of learning includes:

- investing in school construction in disadvantaged regions
- supporting teacher training and improved learning assessment
- supporting technical education, skills development and training aligned with labour market needs
- supporting inclusion of children with disability in education
- supporting regional stability through increased access to education in conflict-affected areas
- increasing opportunities for girls to learn
- investing in innovative approaches and research with the private sector and civil society to improve access, reach and quality of education
- strengthening the management and accountability of education policies and systems globally, to ensure the sustainability of our investments.

In 2013-14, Australia's aid assisted approximately 1.4 million more children to enrol in schools across the region, built more than 9 000 additional classrooms, trained over 100 000 teachers to help improve education quality and provided 4 450 new Australia Awards scholarships.

Key achievements in 2013-14 included:

- upgrading 120 classrooms, training 4 315 teachers and providing access for over 600 000 children in Papua New Guinea to attend primary school

³⁰ The Chief Scientist of Australia, <http://www.chiefscientist.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/Office-of-the-Chief-Scientist-MES-Report-8-May-2012.pdf>

- providing assistance to the internationally renowned non-government organisation, BRAC, in Bangladesh to enable more than 900 000 poor children (over 62 per cent girls) to attend primary school and making schools more accessible for almost 30 000 children with disability
- supporting an additional 24 000 children in Myanmar to enrol at government, monastic and community schools and supporting more than 11 000 teachers and caregivers to receive training
- supporting around 2.1 million children in Syria, and 390 000 in the region to access educational support in response to humanitarian crises in Syria, Iraq and Yemen.

4. Implementation of Education For All Strategies

Early Childhood Education and Care

The Australian Government realigned a number of early childhood programmes in 2014 under the Child Care Services Support Programme in order to ensure they are more sustainable and better targeted to non-long day care services and educators. This included streamlining a number of small sub-programmes, ceasing unnecessary expenditure and focussing support to maximise the benefit of investment.

Their implementation complemented the introduction of the Long Day Care Professional Development Programme, which the Australian Government introduced in 2014 with funding of approximately \$200 million. This is the single biggest investment ever in Australia for professional development of long day care centre educators.

The Long Day Care Professional Development Programme is designed to provide assistance for long day care services with the cost of upskilling and training educators to meet the requirements of the National Quality Framework. The programme also provides additional support for early childhood teachers, as well as services located in regional, rural and remote communities, to help tackle skills shortages.

The realignment of activities under the Child Care Services Support Programme will ensure better targeting of support to non-long day care services and educators.

The Early Learning Languages Australia trial is an election commitment and 2014 - 15 Budget initiative and is part of the Government's commitment to reviving language study in Australia. The trial is part of a broader strategy to increase the number of children learning languages in school. The trial will test the effectiveness of providing preschool children with early exposure to a language other than English through online learning programmes.

Under the trial, children at up to 40 early childhood services providing a preschool programme will participate in a one year trial of online foreign language learning in 2015. The objective of the trial is to determine the effectiveness of online language learning for children in preschool programmes in a select range of languages and delivered across a range of settings. The funding of \$9.8 million will be used to develop the early learning language software, guidance for teachers, parents and children and to support service in delivery.

Schools

From 2000 to 2005, literacy and numeracy policy in Australia was guided by the *Adelaide Declaration*, in which it was agreed that upon leaving school students should have attained the skills of numeracy and English literacy so that all students should be numerate, able to read, write, spell and communicate at an appropriate level. In 2005, the Government appointed an independent committee to inquire into:

- the teaching of reading in Australian schools
- the assessment of reading proficiency including identification of children with reading difficulties
- teacher education and the extent to which it prepares teachers adequately for reading instruction.

The committee recommended that all schools identify a highly trained specialist literacy teacher with specialised skills in teaching reading, to be responsible for linking whole-schools literacy planning

process with classroom teaching and learning, and supporting school staff in developing, implementing and monitoring progress against individual literacy plans, particularly for those children experiencing reading and literacy difficulties.

All Australian governments are committed to the development and implementation of an Australian Curriculum from Foundation to Year 12, beginning with the learning areas of English, mathematics, science and history. All education ministers have endorsed the Australian Curriculum from Foundation to Year 10 in these first four learning areas, as well as achievement standards relating to the endorsed curriculum. The work to develop nationally consistent curricula and national statements of learning in key learning areas has been led by education ministers and senior officials from across the schooling sector since 2005. In January 2014, the Australian Government announced a review of the Australian curriculum. An initial response to the review was released by the Australian Government in October 2014. The response outlined the Australian Government's commitment to work through the review's recommendations and to collaborate with the states and territories, developing practical proposals to deliver a world class education for all Australian students.

Introduced in 2008, the National Assessment Programme – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) provides a national picture of how Australian school students are performing in the essential literacy and numeracy skills that are required to create a strong platform for all students as they progress through their school life. The Government is also committed to improving literacy results of children in remote primary schools. 2013 NAPLAN results³¹ show a difference of 15.4 per cent between metropolitan and remote Year 3 students' reading outcomes. To address this, the Government committed \$22 million to introduce and embed direct and explicit instruction teaching approaches in remote primary schools across Australia. This initiative will encourage better teaching and support better outcomes and is rich in professional learning and student support.

Australia's National Assessment Programme (NAP) involves collaboration between all Australian governments and non-government education authorities. It provides the means by which the achievement and progress of Australian students, schools and systems can be measured and reported using nationally-comparable data against national standards. NAP assessment results provide information for school authorities and schools to review the effectiveness of their programmes and to address areas requiring improvement. The results are not used towards students' grades or entry into programmes/courses but they provide valuable information which is used for policy analysis and to set future policy directions.

All students are expected to participate in NAP assessments and special provisions may be made to support individual students with special needs, including students with mild intellectual disability and communication or behavioural disorders. Special provisions reflect the type of support and assistance the student usually received in the classroom. This is based on the principle that all students have the opportunity to participate in educational activities, including assessments, on the same basis as other students and to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and competencies. It is also consistent with the Disability Standards for Education 2005, which set out the rights of students with disability and the obligations of school authorities in relation to education under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*³². These Standards provide a framework to ensure that students with disability are able to access and participate in education on the same basis as other students.

Australia's participation in international assessment programmes allow policy makers, schools and the community to benchmark Australian education performance internationally by monitoring student progress over time against international standards. This also supports improvements in

³¹http://www.nap.edu.au/verve/_resources/NAPLAN_2013_National_Report.PDF

³² See "The Disability Discrimination Act 1992", <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2014C00013>

teaching and learning. Australia has participated in highly regarded international assessments such as PISA since 2000 and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) since 1995. As well as informing policy discussions and reforms to curricula and teaching, PISA and TIMSS results are used as key performance measures within the NAP to provide data on the progress of school students towards achieving national targets. In addition, COAG has agreed that PISA results will be used to measure progress towards their aspiration for schooling and specifically the agreed outcome that “Australian students excel by international standards”.

PISA, along with other international assessments, also provides an important “health check” on the performance of Australia’s education system in key learning areas and emerging 21st century skills. In addition to the core domains of reading, mathematical and scientific literacy, Australia has also opted to participate in additional assessments such as problem-solving and financial literacy, which provide valuable data about Australian students’ acquisition of key life skills.

A rolling three yearly cycle of NAP sample assessments began in 2003 with science literacy (Year 6), followed by civics and citizenship (Years 6 and 10) in 2004 and ICT literacy (Years 6 and 10) in 2005. These sample testing is designed primarily to monitor national and jurisdictional progress. Participating schools receive their own students’ results and the school’s overall results, which can provide useful information to classroom teachers and assist with curriculum planning.

NAPLAN tests are conducted in May each year for all students across Australia in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. All students in the same year level are assessed on the same test items in the assessment domains of reading, writing, language conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and numeracy. Each year, over one million students nationally sit the NAPLAN tests, providing students, parents, teachers, schools and school systems with important information about the literacy and numeracy achievements of students.

Between 2008 - 2009 and 2011 - 2012, the Government provided funding under a Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership (LNNP, \$540 million) followed by an Improving Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership (ILLNP, \$243.9 million) to facilitate:

- strong school leadership and whole-school engagement with literacy and numeracy
- effective and evidence based teaching of literacy and numeracy
- monitoring student and school literacy and numeracy performance to identify where support is needed.

A large proportion of schools that participated in the LNNP and ILLNP appointed specialist literacy teachers or coaches. States and territories have reported this built teacher capacity to deliver whole school approaches and trained teachers in the effective use of data to better tailor teaching to meet student needs.

Similarly, the Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnership aimed to facilitate education reform within schools and in the broader community to improve student learning and wellbeing and to foster a successful transition to further education, work and active participation in the community. The \$1.5 billion National Partnership began in 2008 -2009 and approximately 1790 schools participated in the programme, which ceased on 31 December 2013.

As part of the Government’s contribution to COAG targets for Year 12 or equivalent attainment rates, the Government and state and territory governments entered into a National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions (NP YAT)³³ which commenced in January 2010 and ceased in December 2013. Initiatives under the NP YAT sought to support students to gain the skills and

³³http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/content/npa/skills/youth_attainment_transitions/national_partnership.pdf

qualifications needed for their transition from school to further education, training and employment. While the NP YAT ended in December 2013, a number of elements were extended until December 2014.

Vocational education and training in schools (VETiS) has become a significant part of senior secondary schooling in Australia, with over 252 000 secondary students enrolled in one or more VETiS subjects in 2012. VETiS enables students to achieve or work towards a nationally recognised qualification, obtain a senior school certificate and pursue a range of post-school education, training and employment options. The Trades Skills Centres in Schools programme is a VETiS related national initiative that supports Year 12 or equivalent attainment by providing secondary school students access to facilities and training linked to employment pathways in traditional trades and other eligible occupations. In 2014, the Government is working with states and territories and other relevant stakeholders to develop a new national framework on vocational education in schools.

On 15 April 2010, all education ministers endorsed the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014*³⁴. This plan aims to assist education providers to accelerate improvements in educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people by identifying national, systemic and local level action in six priority domains (readiness for school, engagement and connections, attendance; literacy and numeracy, leadership, quality teaching and workforce development and pathways to real post school options) that evidence shows will contribute to improved outcomes in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

Higher Education

The Australian Government's higher education policies are successful due to robust implementation and a collaborative working partnership with universities. As such, the Government believes it achieved the EFA goals in the context of higher education.

Australia has achieved grass roots success by increasing access and participation, creating a successful export earner in the international education sphere and reducing regulation.

While Australia has performed well in the past relation to the EFA goals, the Australian Government is reforming the higher education further by spreading access and opportunity to higher education to more Australians, including disadvantaged and rural and regional students.

The demand driven funding system is an example of constraints and solutions in achieving EFA goals. The system was introduced in 2012 to increase higher education participation. Prior to 2012, the Commonwealth Government controlled the number of bachelor-level domestic students attending Australian universities by allocating the number of Commonwealth supported places available at each university. The Commonwealth Government agreed to remove 'caps' on bachelor level Commonwealth supported places with the aim of expanding access to universities and increasing the responsiveness of the higher education sector to the needs of the economy. In 2012 the Commonwealth Government introduced the demand driven system which funded Commonwealth supported places for all domestic undergraduate students accepted into an eligible bachelor-level course (excluding medicine) at a public university. Since it was introduced, the demand driven funding system has increased access for low socioeconomic, Indigenous and regional and remote students. Universities have responded to increased student demand with more places with applicants more likely to receive an offer in most fields of education.

³⁴ The Australian Government Department of Education, <https://education.gov.au/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-education-action-plan-2010-2014-0>

However, uncapping Commonwealth supported places has seen a sharp rise in student numbers, which has led to increased costs for higher education incurred by the Government.

On 12 November 2013, the Australian Minister for Education, the Hon. Christopher Pyne, announced a review of the demand driven funding system. The review was undertaken by the Hon. Dr David Kemp, former Minister for Education, and Mr Andrew Norton, the Higher Education Program Director at the Grattan Institute. It focussed on whether the demand driven system was delivering quality education for the economy, students and the nation. The review recommended the Government maintained the demand driven funding system for bachelor places at public universities and extended the demand driven funding system to bachelor places at private universities and nonuniversity higher education institutions and sub-bachelor places at all institutions.

The Government accepted these recommendations and introduced the reforms in the Higher Education and Research Reform Amendment Bill 2014 on 28 August 2014. The Government is maintaining the demand driven funding system and spreading the opportunity to support students who choose to study higher education diplomas, advanced diplomas and associate degrees. Students studying for higher education undergraduate qualifications at Training and Further Education Institutes (TAFEs), private universities and non-university higher education institutions will also be supported.

The cost is to be shifted more evenly between the taxpayer and the student. Students will continue to defer the cost of their study and don't have to pay a cent until they are earning a decent wage (\$53 345 in 2014-15). The indexation rate for HELP debts will be shifted from the Consumer Price Index to the Treasury bond rate (capped at six per cent) to broadly reflect the cost of government borrowings.

In addition, with new levels of funding for Commonwealth supported places and the deregulation of the higher education system, new university students will contribute, on average, around 50 per cent of the cost of their higher education, up from 40 per cent.

These changes will help ensure the sustainability of the higher education system into the future and will ensure that there is a fair sharing of the costs for higher education between public funding and the students who benefit from this education.

5. Prospects for post-2015

Australia is committed to providing families with access to high quality care and early learning services for their children. Early childhood is a critical stage of development that forms the foundation for children's future wellbeing and learning. The skills and abilities acquired in early childhood years are fundamental to a person's success and wellbeing later in life.

A highly skilled and professional workforce is instrumental in ensuring high quality child care and early learning experiences. The Australian Government is providing \$200 million over three years, until 30 June 2017, to support access to professional development. The new Long Day Care Professional Development Programme (LDC PDP) will assist all educators in long day care centres to meet the National Quality Framework (NQF) qualification requirements and improve quality outcomes for children. The LDC PDP complements the Inclusion and Professional Support Programme which provides subsidised professional development and inclusion support for carers and educators.

Support for children's early literacy and numeracy development will be improved with the continued expansion of the Home Interaction Programme for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPPY) to a total of 100 locations by 2015. The programme is a two-year, home-based parenting and early childhood enrichment programme targeted to disadvantaged communities.

Australia has worked with a number of early childhood and early education peak bodies to test a range of flexible child care models across the long day care, family day care and outside school hours care sectors. These trials will be independently evaluated by the Australian Institute of Family Studies. However, the uptake by parents of some of the flexible arrangements on offer has not been as high as initially anticipated.

In 2014-15 child care fees assistance will receive Australian Government funding of around \$6.3 billion (around \$28.5 billion over the next four years).

Australia is continuing to invest significantly in early childhood development and education and child care assistance, to deliver better access to affordable and high quality early childhood education and care for families.

Despite increased Commonwealth funding for school education over recent years, PISA results show that Australia's top students are not performing as well as the top students in other countries. PISA trend data indicate that outcomes for Australian students are slipping relative to other countries. For example, the 2012 results show that since 2009, Australia has dropped from 15th to 19th in mathematical literacy, 10th to 16th in scientific literacy and 9th to 14th in reading literacy.

As NAPLAN is a full population standardised test, it does not show large year-on-year changes at the national level. Results for reading and numeracy between 2008 and 2013 are mostly stable with small changes in the percentage of students at or above national minimum standard and mean scale scores. The exceptions are statistically significant improvements in the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard and mean scale scores for Years 3 and 5 reading; and a significant decline in the percentage of students at or above national minimum standard for Year 9 numeracy.

There has been overall progress towards the COAG target of 90 per cent Year 12 or equivalent attainment by 2015, with the attainment rate at 86.7 per cent in 2013. However, there is evidence of continuing educational disadvantage at the lower end of the performance scale, which the Government is addressing through the introduction of needs-based funding across Australia. Additional funding is provided, regardless of sector, for students with disability, Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander students and students from low socio-economic backgrounds. This funding will follow the student to whatever school they attend in whatever sector.

The lack of improvement in student outcomes over recent years is concerning, given that educational outcomes provide the strongest basis for Australia's continued economic prosperity and productivity, as well as the strength of its civil society. Higher levels of education attainment are linked to higher levels of employment, productivity and wages. To ensure Australia's future prosperity and to remain competitive internationally, the Government is committed to ensuring that all Australian students have access to a high quality education.

Under new Australian Government funding arrangements which commenced in January 2014, recurrent funding to schools consists of a base per student amount plus loadings that address identified school and student need. These loadings are targeted at students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, Indigenous students, students with limited English skills and students with disability, as well as small schools and schools in regional and remote areas. This loading will assist schools to provide additional support for students who need it to help them achieve a quality education.

While funding is important, national and international research indicates that, by itself, it is not a sufficiently effective driver of improved outcomes – countries that spend a high proportion of the gross domestic product on education do not automatically produce high performing education systems. Previous approaches to funding have also been complex and of limited transparency. The Government is addressing this complexity through amendments to the *Australian Education Act 2013*, which will be streamlined to reduce the regulatory burden for schools.

The Government's approach to school education is based on the best evidence available. It reflects the realities of Australia's federation, in which states and territories are responsible for school education. This includes an expectation that states and territories deliver school education effectively and recognises that states, territories and the non-government school sector are best placed to determine how policies should be implemented in their schools.

Teacher quality is critical to the future prosperity of young Australians and the productivity of the nation. Research shows that the quality of the teacher is the single greatest in-school influence on student achievement. In the Australian context, it is conservatively estimated that a student with an effective teacher can achieve in three quarters of a year what would take a full year with a less-effective teacher. In view of these findings the Government established the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group in February 2014. The advisory group is preparing advice for the Government on how teacher education programmes could be improved to better prepare new teachers with the right mix of academic and practical skills needed for the classroom. Using an evidence-based approach, the advisory group will work to identify world's best practice in teacher education programmes, focussing on pedagogical approaches, knowledge of subject content to be taught and professional experience. The work will include a focus on foreign languages, and science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Enhancing teacher education and standards is at the heart of the Government's plans to lift the quality of and respect for the teaching profession. The advisory group will present its final report later in 2014.

The Government will also support a transition to more autonomous and independent models of schooling to ensure that schools are supported to work with parents and their communities to respond to local issues at the local level. The OECD has indicated that countries where schools account for their results by posting achievement data publicly and have greater autonomy in resource allocation tend to show better student performance than those with less autonomy. States and territories are already moving towards more autonomous and independent models of management to varying degrees. The Government is working with education authorities as they

continue on this path of reform, primarily through the Independent Public School initiative. The Government is also committed to supporting principals to build their capabilities and skills in recognition of the important role of the school principal in providing educational leadership and driving continuous improvement at his or her school.

The value of a national curriculum is considerable, which is why successive governments have worked with state and territory governments to develop a robust curriculum. Getting curriculum settings right remains an essential aspect of improving the quality of education. Given Australia's declining performance in scientific and mathematical literacy, this means working with education authorities to ensure a greater focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics in both primary and secondary schools. It also means ensuring curriculum content is robust, relevant and up to date. The final report was presented on 15 August 2014. The review examined the robustness, independence and balance of the Australian Curriculum, and evaluated both the process of its development and the content. At the same time, the Government will continue to prioritise the development of the national languages curriculum to reviving the study of foreign languages, particularly those of our key regional partners.

The Government recognises that parents are the first and most important influence on a child's attitudes and values toward school and learning. There is strong consensus that positive parent engagement influences student academic attainment, school attendance, wellbeing and productivity. The Government is committed to advocating for strengthened parent engagement in education to improve student learning outcomes. The Government will emphasise that parents matter in education by building on current involvement and playing a lead role in advocating for the importance of parent engagement in education to improve student learning.

Recognising its potential to influence and shape assessment approaches, ICT will be used to facilitate the assessment of competencies that have been difficult to capture with traditional assessment. For example, while NAPLAN testing has provided a key tool to measure literacy and numeracy skills of Australian students, moving NAPLAN to online delivery will bring a range of further benefits for schools, teachers, parents and students. These include a tailored test design for increased accessibility to better support students with a range of needs, in addition to faster results. The Government is presently working in partnership with state and territory education authorities to ensure there is rigorous planning and a robust approach to implementation to manage the challenges of moving NAPLAN online.

Clear accountability for school results helps create a learning environment that encourages innovation and excellence from school leaders, teachers and students. Greater access to information has been shown to inform better decision making at both the policy making and school levels, enabling teachers, parents and students to make better informed choices for their child and within their schools. The Commonwealth is investing in improved performance information to ensure that quality data is available to track progress, inform policy development, evaluate interventions and hold education systems to account.

The Australian Government supports a new approach to ensuring skills and training meets the requirements of industry and increased global competition through up-skilling Australia's workforce. Australia has developed a VET reform agenda to meet this challenge.

The Australian Government introduced the Higher Education and Research Reform Amendment Bill 2014 in August 2014.

There are five themes to this bill:

- strengthening the higher education system
- expanding opportunities for students

- a sustainable higher education system
- investing in research excellence
- upholding quality.

The Reform Bill will enable Australia to achieve the best higher education system in the world and have some of the best universities in the world.

The reforms will encourage higher education institutions to compete for students. When higher education institutions compete for students, students win. Students win through an improved range of choices of courses that meet their needs, and that offer them qualifications that will get them a job. Students win through increased focus on the quality of teaching and of the all-round student learning experience.

Australian universities will be given the freedom and autonomy to work to their strengths, be internationally competitive and manage economic and social changes to the best of their abilities.

By introducing these higher education reforms, the Australian Government is trying to better influence some areas in particular including:

- Spreading opportunities to students the Reform Bill will deliver unprecedented choice and opportunity by expanding the demand driven funding system for students studying for higher education diplomas, advanced diplomas and associate degrees. Students studying for higher education undergraduate qualifications at TAFEs, private universities and non-university higher education institutions will be supported. An additional 80 000 higher education students per year will be supported by Government subsidies by 2018. These students will include more people from disadvantaged backgrounds, more students from rural and regional communities, Australians who require extra support to succeed at university and workers whose skills need to be updated. There are currently 133 non-university institutions in Australia that will be eligible to receive Commonwealth funding in 2016.
- Fee deregulation from 1 January 2016 the Australian Government will remove the cap on the maximum student contribution amount that universities and non-university higher education institutions can charge students enrolled in a Commonwealth supported place. This means universities and non-university higher education institutions will be able to set their own tuition fees for the courses they offer. Deregulation will give universities the freedom they need to handle the expansion of the system, achieve the excellence they desire and compete internationally.
- Commonwealth Scholarships to support equity and access for Australian students, the Reform Bill also introduces a new Commonwealth Scholarship scheme to support students from disadvantaged backgrounds, including from regional Australia. Higher education institutions will be required to commit one dollar in every five of additional revenue they raise from student contributions to this new scheme. With this investment, institutions will be able to provide tailored, individualised support to help disadvantaged students, including help with costs of living while they study, something regional students and families will especially welcome. The scholarships will also be able to cover fee exemptions and mentoring, tutorial support and even relocation expenses. The Commonwealth Scholarship scheme will be complemented by the Higher Education Participation Programme, which provides funding, irrespective of fee revenue, to allow universities to conduct outreach activities and undertake initiatives to support disadvantaged students.
- Student support the Australian Government wants a system where there are no financial barriers to participating in higher education, with all Australians who have the ability and the ambition to be able to participate in higher education. The HELP Scheme ensures students do not have to pay for their share of tuition fees upfront. However, the amount of funding

the Government provides through HELP loans is going to double over the next few years. Given the scale of costs now present in the higher education system, students will be required to pick up a fairer share which is why the Australian Government is changing the indexation rate for HELP debts from the Consumer Price Index to the Treasury bond rate (capped at six per cent). In addition, with the new levels of funding for Commonwealth supported places with the commencement of deregulation of the higher education system, new university students will go on to contribute, on average, around 50 per cent of the cost of their higher education, up from 40 per cent. These changes will help ensure the sustainability of the higher education system into the future and will ensure that there is a fair sharing of the costs for higher education between public funding and the students who benefit from this education.

- Quality to assist students to make informed choices about where and what they study, new information will be provided through the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching detailing the performance of each private and public higher education institution. Students and their families will be able to access this real and vital information about the quality of courses and institutions they are considering. There will be better information about previous graduates' success at finding jobs and what other students and employers think of the course they are planning to do. This information will also help Australian institutions compare their performance with other nations, and continually improve.
- Investing in research the Government's broader changes to higher education and research will safeguard a strong, competitive research system. The Government is providing funding for research into dementia, tropical health and medicine and the Antarctic gateway Partnership in Tasmania.

The Australian Government endeavours to make sure that Australian higher education keeps pace with the best in the world. The Government's Reform Bill will give Australian universities the freedom and autonomy to work to their strengths, be internationally competitive and manage economic and social changes to the best of their abilities.

The new freedom for universities will position our universities to attract the best and brightest students from across the world. International students contribute to Australia's education export industry, which is earning around \$15 billion per year.

The New Colombo Plan is a signature initiative of the Australian Government, supported by a commitment of \$100 million in new funding over five years which aims to lift knowledge of the Indo - Pacific in Australia and strengthen people-to-people and institutional relationships, through study and internships undertaken by Australian undergraduate students in the region.

Other national and international development trends, factors and issues that will influence education in Australia in the future

Technology and social media will continue to impact on teaching and learning methodologies and delivery. The Government recognises the enormous opportunities that technology creates for making higher education more widely available to Australian students and more accessible for international students wanting to study at our universities.

International mobility, quality of systems, qualification recognition and online delivery will be the key national and international development trends that will influence education in Australia in the future. Australia's capacity to compete internationally is a key driver for quality.

The Australian Department of Education is watching European higher education in the areas of: student funding, quality, financing/deregulation and internationalisation (particularly with Asia). Australia is interested in what is happening with Erasmus+ and U-Multirank.

Australia's aid programme education investments will primarily focus on supporting changes to the systems and policies that deliver better education in our region. This focus on systemic change requires Australia's aid investments to be catalytic, leveraging other sources of financing for development, particularly the domestic tax revenues of our partner countries and private sources of funding. Australia's diplomats will advocate for reforms to education and more effective spending by partner governments and multilateral organisations.

The aid programme will invest in better quality education, enabling young people to gain knowledge and skills to contribute productively to society. Australia will:

- get the foundations right to ensure children are healthy, safe and ready to learn by supporting early childhood development
- promote learning for all with a special focus on girls, disadvantaged children and those with disability, through teacher training, curriculum development and education infrastructure
- prioritise skills for growth to enable people to be job-ready and adaptable, by improving access to quality assured technical education and training, which matches the needs of the local private sector
- innovate for learning and improve education outcomes by working with the private sector and civil society to develop creative solutions to persistent education challenges
- continue to enable students from our partner countries to undertake tertiary study in Australia, enhance cross-cultural understanding through people-to-people links and build their capacity to contribute to development in their countries.

Annex A: Education at a Glance 2013 Data by EFA Goals³⁵

Contents and Notes to Annex A

International definitions

ISCED 0	Pre-primary Education
ISCED 1	Primary Education
ISCED 2G	Lower Secondary - General
ISCED 2V	Lower Secondary - Vocational
ISCED 3G	Upper Secondary - General
ISCED 3V	Upper Secondary - Vocational
ISCED 4	Post-Secondary / Non-Tertiary
ISCED 5B	Tertiary-type B Education
ISCED 5A/6	Tertiary-type A and Advanced Research Programmes

Missing data symbols

a	Data is not applicable because the category does not apply
m	Data is not available
n	Magnitude is either negligible or zero
x	Data included in another category or column of the table (e.g. x(2) means that data are included in column 2 of the table)

Australian equivalent

Preschool programs
Primary education
Year 6/7 to Year 10
VET Certificates I & II
Year 11 and Year 12
VET Certificate III
VET Certificate IV
Associate degrees, diplomas and advanced diplomas
Bachelor, master, graduate certificate and doctorate level qualifications

³⁵ OECD, [http://www.oecd.org/edu/eag2013%20\(eng\)--FINAL%2020%20June%202013.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/edu/eag2013%20(eng)--FINAL%2020%20June%202013.pdf)

Goal 1 Early Childhood Care and Education

Table 1.1 Enrolment Rates in early childhood and primary education in Australia, by age (2011, 2005)

Enrolment Rates (2011)
 ISCED 0 ages 3 to 6
 ISCED 1 ages 4 to 6

Age 3	Age 4			Age 5			Age 6		
Early childhood education	Early childhood education	Primary education	Total	Early childhood education	Primary education	Total	Early childhood education	Primary education	Total
13	66	1	67	15	83	98	n	100	100

Enrolment Rates (2005)
 ISCED 0 ages 3 to 6
 ISCED 1 ages 4 to 6

Age 3	Age 4			Age 5			Age 6		
Early childhood education	Early childhood education	Primary education	Total	Early childhood education	Primary education	Total	Early childhood education	Primary education	Total
17	51	2	53	18	72	91	n	100	100

Table 1.2 Characteristics of Early Childhood Education Programmes in Australia (2010, 2011)

Distribution of students in ISCED 0, by type of institution (2011)			Expenditure on educational institutions (2010)			
Public	Government-dependant private	Independent private	Total expenditure (from public and private sources) as a % of GDP	Proportion of total expenditure from public sources	Proportion of total expenditure from private sources	Annual expenditure per student (in USD)
24.5	75.5	n	0.1	55.8	44.2	8,898

Table 1.3 Total public expenditure on education in Australia (2010)

Direct public expenditure on educational institutions plus public subsidies to households and other private entities, as a percentage of total public expenditure and as a percentage of GDP, by level of education

Public expenditure on education as a percentage of total public expenditure				Public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP			
Pre-primary education	All Primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education	Tertiary education	All levels of education combined	Pre-primary education	Primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education	Tertiary education	All levels of education combined
0.2	11.5	3.4	15.2	0.1	3.9	1.1	5.2

Goal 2 Universal Primary Education / Universal Basic Education

Table 2.1 Enrolment rates in Australia, by age (2011)

Full-time and part-time students in public and private institutions

Number of years at which over 90% of the population are enrolled	Age range at which over 90% of the population are enrolled	Students as a percentage of the population of a specific age group												
		Age 2 and under ¹	Ages 3 and 4	Ages 5 to 14	Ages 15 to 19			Ages 20 to 29			Ages 30 to 39			Ages 40 and over
					M+	Men	Wome n	M+	Men	Wome n	M+	Men	Wome n	
12	5 - 16	a	40	99	84	83	85	33	32	34	13	12	13	4.9

Table 2.2 Students in primary and secondary education in Australia, by percent share in type of institution or mode of enrolment (2011)

Type of institution			Mode of enrolment	
Primary			Primary and secondary	
Public	Government-dependent private	Independent private	Full-time	Part-time
69	31	a	83	17

Table 2.3 Annual expenditure per student by educational institutions for all services in Australia (2010)

In equivalent USD converted using PPPs for GDP, by level of education, based on full-time equivalent

Pre-primary education (for children 3 years and older)	Primary education	Secondary education			Post-secondary non-tertiary education	Tertiary education (including R&D activities)			All tertiary education excluding R&D activities	Primary to tertiary education (including R&D activities)
		Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education	All secondary education		Tertiary-type B education	Tertiary-type A and advanced research programmes	All tertiary education		
22	23	26	24	25	17	22	40	37	23	27

Table 2.4. Expenditure on educational institutions as a percentage of GDP in Australia, by level of education in Australia (1995, 2000, 2005, 2010)

From public and private sources of funds

Primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education			
1995	2000	2005	2010
3.4	3.6	3.7	4.3

Table 2.5 Expenditure on educational institutions as a percentage of GDP in Australia, by level of education in Australia (2010)

From public and private sources of funds

All primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education	Primary and lower secondary education	Upper secondary education	Post-secondary non-tertiary education
4.3	3.4	0.8	0.1

Table 2.6. Expenditure on educational institutions as a percentage of GDP in Australia, by source of fund and level of education (2010)

From public and private sources of funds

Primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education		
Public (4)	Private (5)	Total (6)
3.7	0.6	4.3

Table 2.7. Total public expenditure on education in Australia (2010)

Direct public expenditure on educational institutions plus public subsidies to households and other private entities, as a percentage of total public expenditure and as a percentage of GDP, by level of education

Public expenditure on education as a percentage of total public expenditure				Public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP			
Pre-primary education	All Primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education	Tertiary education	All levels of education combined	Pre-primary education	Primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education	Tertiary education	All levels of education combined
0.2	11.5	3.4	15.2	0.1	3.9	1.1	5.2

Goal 3 Meeting the Learning Needs of Youths and Adults

Table 3.1 Percentage of 15-29 year-olds in education and not in education in Australia, by work status, including duration of unemployment (2011)

	In education							Not in education							Total in education and not in education
	Students in work-study programmes ¹	Other employed	Unemployed			Not in the labour force	Sub-total	Employed	NEETS ²	Unemployed			Not in the labour force	Sub-total	
			For any length of time	Less than 6 months	More than 6 months					For any length of time	Less than 6 months	More than 6 months			
Total	4.0	21.1	2.4	1.9	0.5	18.1	45.6	42.9	11.5	3.9	2.8	1.1	7.6	54.4	100
Men	6.5	18.2	2.1	1.7	0.4	18.2	44.9	46.5	8.5	4.3	2.9	1.4	4.3	55.1	100
Women	1.5	24.2	2.7	2.1	0.5	17.9	46.3	39.1	14.6	3.6	2.8	0.8	11.0	53.7	100

Notes:

1. Students in work-study programmes are considered to be both in education and employed, irrespective of their labour market status according to the ILO definition.
2. 15-29 year-olds who are neither in employment nor in education or training.
3. Data refer to 15-24 year-olds.

Table 3.2 Percentage of young people in education and not in education in Australia, by age group and work status, including duration of unemployment (2011)

Age group	In education							Not in education							Total in education and not in education
	Students in work-study programmes ¹	Other employed	Unemployed			Not in the labour force	Sub-total	Employed	NEETS ²	Unemployed			Not in the labour force	Sub-total	
			Any length of time	Less than 6 months	Including more than 6 months					Any length of time	Less than 6 months	More than 6 months			
15-19	6.0	29.3	4.8	3.9	0.9	39.9	80.0	12.2	7.8	3.5	2.5	0.9	4.4	20.0	100
20-24	5.0	22.2	2.0	1.8	c	12.9	42.1	46.2	11.7	4.9	3.3	1.7	6.8	57.9	100
25-29	1.3	12.9	0.6	0.3	0.3	4.0	18.9	66.6	14.6	3.4	2.7	0.7	11.2	81.1	100
15-29	4.0	21.1	2.4	1.9	0.5	18.1	45.6	42.9	11.5	3.9	2.8	1.1	7.6	54.4	100

Notes:

1. Students in work-study programmes are considered to be both in education and employed, irrespective of their labour market status according to the ILO definition.
2. Young people who are neither in employment nor in education or training.

Table 3.3 Enrolment rates in Australia, by age (2011)

Full-time and part-time students in public and private institutions

Starting age of compulsory education	Ending age of compulsory education	Number of years at which over 90% of the population are enrolled	Age range at which over 90% of the population are enrolled	Students as a percentage of the population of a specific age group												
				Age 2 and under ¹	Ages 3 and 4	Ages 5 to 14	Ages 15 to 19			Ages 20 to 29			Ages 30 to 39			Ages 40 and over
							M+W	Men	Women	M+W	Men	Women	M+W	Men	Women	
6	17	12	5 - 16	a	40	99	84	83	85	33	32	34	13	12	13	4.9

Table 3.4 (Web only) Transition characteristics from age 15 to 20 in Australia, by level of education (2011)

Percentage of the population enrolled by age and level of education

Graduation age at the upper secondary level of education	Age 15	Age 16			Age 17			Age 18			Age 19			Age 20		
	Secondary education	Secondary education	Post-secondary non-tertiary	Tertiary education	Secondary education	Post-secondary non-tertiary	Tertiary education	Secondary education	Post-secondary non-tertiary	Tertiary education	Secondary education	Post-secondary non-tertiary	Tertiary education	Secondary education	Post-secondary non-tertiary	Tertiary education
17	99	95	n	n	80	1	5	39	3	29	24	4	39	18	3	41

Table 3.5. Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary enrolment patterns in Australia (2011)

Enrolment rates in public and private institutions, by programme orientation, age group, and intensity

Upper secondary education										Post-secondary non-tertiary education									
Share of students by orientation				Enrolment rates in pre-vocational and vocational among 15-19 year-olds			Enrolment rates in pre-vocational and vocational among 20-24 year-olds			Share of students by orientation				Enrolment rates in pre-vocational and vocational among 15-19 year-olds			Enrolment rates in pre-vocational and vocational among 20-24 year-olds		
General	Pre-vocational	Vocational	Vocational of which combined school- and work-based	Full-time + part-time	Part-time	of which combined work- and school-based	Full-time + part-time	Part-time	Combined work- and school-based	General	Pre-vocational	Vocational	Vocational of which combined work- and school-based	Full-time + part-time	Part-time	of which combined work- and school-based	Full-time + part-time	Part-time	of which combined work- and school-based
51	a	49	m	8	7	m	8	6	m	a	a	100	m	2	1	m	2	2	m

Table 3.6 Students in primary and secondary education in Australia, by percent share in type of institution or mode of enrolment (2011)

Type of institution									Mode of enrolment	
Primary			Lower secondary			Upper secondary			Primary and secondary	
Public	Government-dependent private	Independent private	Public	Government-dependent private	Independent private	Public	Government-dependent private	Independent private	Full-time	Part-time
69	31	a	64	36	m	65	35	n	83	17

Table 3.7 Students in tertiary education in Australia, by percent share in type of institution or mode of enrolment (2011)

Type of institution						Mode of study							
Tertiary-type B education			Tertiary-type A and advanced research programmes			Tertiary-type B education				Tertiary-type A and advanced research programmes			
Public	Government-dependent private	Independent private	Public	Government-dependent private	Independent private	Full-time Men+Women	Part-time			Full-time Men+Women	Part-time		
							M+W	Men	Women		M+W	Men	Women
72	20	9	96	a	4	45	55	54	56	71	29	28	30

Table 3.8 Annual expenditure per student in Australia, by educational institutions for all services (2010)

In equivalent USD converted using PPPs for GDP, by level of education, based on full-time equivalents

Pre-primary education (for children 3 years and older)	Secondary education				Post-secondary non-tertiary education	Tertiary education (including R&D activities)			All tertiary education excluding R&D activities	Primary to tertiary education (including R&D activities)
	Primary education	Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education	All secondary education		Tertiary-type B education	Tertiary-type A & advanced research programmes	All tertiary education		
8,899	9,463	10,595	9,966	10,350	7,124	8,829	16,502	15,142	9,379	10,825

Table 3.9 Annual expenditure per student in Australia, by educational institutions for all services, relative to GDP per capita (2010)
By level of education, based on full-time equivalents

Pre-primary education (for children 3 years and older)	Secondary education				Post-secondary non-tertiary education	Tertiary education (including R&D activities)			All tertiary education excluding R&D activities	Primary to tertiary education (including R&D activities)
	Primary education	Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education	All secondary education		Tertiary-type B education	Tertiary-type A and advanced research programmes	All tertiary education		
22	23	26	24	25	17	22	40	37	23	27

Table 3.10 Expenditure on educational institutions as a percentage of GDP in Australia, by level of education (1995, 2000, 2005, 2010)
From public and private sources, by year

Primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education				Tertiary education				Total all levels of education			
1995	2000	2005	2010	1995	2000	2005	2010	1995	2000	2005	2010
3.4	3.6	3.7	4.3	1.6	1.4	1.5	1.6	5.0	5.2	5.3	6.1

Table 3.11 Expenditure on educational institutions as a percentage of GDP in Australia, by source of fund and level of education (2010)
From public and private sources of funds

Pre-primary education			Primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education			Tertiary education			Total all levels of education		
Public	Private	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private	Total
0.06	0.05	0.11	3.7	0.6	4.3	0.8	0.9	1.6	4.6	1.5	6.1

Table 3.12 Total public expenditure on education in Australia (2010)

Direct public expenditure on educational institutions plus public subsidies to households¹ and other private entities, as a percentage of total public expenditure and as a percentage of GDP, by level of education

Public expenditure ¹ on education as a percentage of total public expenditure				Public expenditure ¹ on education as a percentage of GDP			
Pre-primary education	All Primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education	Tertiary education	All levels of education combined	Pre-primary education	Primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education	Tertiary education	All levels of education combined
0.2	11.5	3.4	15.2	0.1	3.9	1.1	5.2

Table 3.13 Upper secondary graduation rates in Australia (2010)

Sum of age-specific graduation rates, by programme destination, programme orientation and gender

General programmes			Pre-vocational/ vocational programmes		
M + F	Men	Women	M + F	Men	Women
71	67	75	51	49	53

Table 3.14 (Web only) Trends in graduation rates (general and pre-vocational/vocational programmes) at upper secondary level in Australia (2005-11)

Graduation rates for general programmes							Graduation rates for pre-vocational and vocational programmes						
Total							Total						
2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
68	65	67	67	70	71	m	40	38	39	44	49	51	m

Table 3.15 Trends in tertiary graduation rates in Australia (1995-2011)

Sum of age-specific graduation rates, by programme destination

Tertiary-type 5A (first-time graduates)												
1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
m	36	44	49	50	51	50	50	49	49	50	50	m

Tertiary-type 5B (first-time graduates)												
1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	18	16	16	17	m

Goal 4 Improving Adult Literacy

Table 4.1 Educational attainment of 25-64 year-olds in Australia (2011)

Pre-primary and primary education	Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education		Post-secondary non-tertiary education	Tertiary education			All levels of education
		Vocational	General		Type B	Type A	Advanced research programmes	
6	20	15	16	4	10	27	1	100

Table 4.2 Percentage of the population that has attained at least upper secondary education in Australia, by age group (2011)

Age group					
25-64	30-34	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
74	84	84	78	69	61

Table 4.3 Percentage of the population that has attained tertiary education in Australia, by type of programme and age group (2011)

Tertiary-type B education						Tertiary-type A and advanced research programmes					
25-64	30-34	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	25-64	30-34	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
10	10	10	11	12	9	28	35	35	30	24	21

Total tertiary						
25-64	30-34	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	25-64 in thousands
38	45	45	41	35	30	4,491

Table 4.4 Trends in educational attainment in Australia, by age group, and average annual growth rate (2000-11)

Educational attainment	25-64 year-olds								
	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2000-11 average annual growth rate
Below upper secondary	41	35	33	32	30	29	27	26	-4.1
Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	31	33	34	34	34	34	36	36	1.2
Tertiary education	27	32	33	34	36	37	38	38	3.1

Educational attainment	25-34 year-olds								
	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2000-11 average annual growth rate
Below upper secondary	32	21	20	19	18	17	15	16	-6.3
Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	37	41	41	41	40	38	40	40	0.7
Tertiary education	31	38	39	41	42	45	44	45	3.3

Table 4.4 Trends in educational attainment in Australia, by age group, and average annual growth rate (2000-11)- continued

Educational attainment	55-64 year-olds								
	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2000-11 average annual growth rate
Below upper secondary	54	50	48	46	45	42	42	39	-2.8
Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	27	26	26	27	27	29	29	31	1.1
Tertiary education	19	24	26	27	29	29	30	30	4.3

Table 4.5 Enrolment rates in Australia, by age (2011)

Full-time and part-time students in public and private institutions

Starting age of compulsory education	Ending age of compulsory education	Number of years at which over 90% of the population are enrolled	Age range at which over 90% of the population are enrolled
6	17	12	5 - 16

Students as a percentage of the population of a specific age group												
Age 2 and under ¹	Ages 3 and 4	Ages 5 to 14	Ages 15 to 19			Ages 20 to 29			Ages 30 to 39			Ages 40 and over
			M+W	Men	Women	M+W	Men	Women	M+W	Men	Women	
a	40	99	84	83	85	33	32	34	13	12	13	4.9

Goal 5 Gender Parity and Equality in Education

Table 5.1 (Web only) Trends in graduation rates (general and pre-vocational/vocational programmes) at upper secondary level in Australia (2005-11)

Graduation rates for general programmes													
Total							Women only						
2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
68	65	67	67	70	71	m	74	71	73	73	75	75	m

Graduation rates for pre-vocational and vocational programmes													
Total							Women only						
2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
40	38	39	44	49	51	m	43	40	41	45	50	53	m

Table 5.2 (Web only) Educational attainment of 25-64 year-olds in Australia, by gender (2011)

Men								
Pre-primary and primary education	Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education		Post-secondary non-tertiary education	Tertiary education			All levels of education
		Vocational	General		Type B	Type A	Advanced research programmes	
6	18	21	16	4	9	25	1	100

Women								
Pre-primary and primary education	Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education		Post-secondary non-tertiary education	Tertiary education			All levels of education
		Vocational	General		Type B	Type A	Advanced research programmes	
6	21	9	17	5	12	29	1	100

Table 5.3 (Web only) Percentage of the population that has attained at least upper secondary education in Australia, by age group and gender (2011)

Men						Women					
Age group						Age group					
25-64	30-34	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	25-64	30-34	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
76	83	83	78	72	67	73	84	86	79	67	54

Table 5.4 (Web only) Percentage of the population that has attained tertiary education in Australia, by type of programme, age group and gender (2011)

Men																	
Tertiary-type B education						Tertiary-type A and Advanced research programmes						Total tertiary					
25-64	30-34	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	25-64	30-34	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	25-64	30-34	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
9	9	9	9	10	8	26	30	30	28	23	21	35	39	38	36	33	29

Women																	
Tertiary-type B education						Tertiary-type A and Advanced research programmes						Total tertiary					
25-64	30-34	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	25-64	30-34	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	25-64	30-34	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
12	11	11	14	13	10	30	40	40	32	24	21	42	51	51	46	38	31

Table 5.5 (Web only) Trends in educational attainment in Australia, by gender and age group, and average annual growth rate (2000-11)

Men									
25-64 year-olds									
	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2000-11 average annual growth rate
Below upper secondary	34	30	29	28	27	26	24	24	-3.0
Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	40	40	40	41	40	40	41	41	0.3
Tertiary education	26	30	31	31	33	34	34	35	2.6

Men									
30-34 year-olds									
	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2000-11 average annual growth rate
Below upper secondary	32	22	20	20	18	20	18	17	-5.8
Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	40	44	46	45	45	43	44	45	0.9
Tertiary education	28	34	34	35	36	38	39	39	3.1

Men									
25-34 year-olds									
	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2000-11 average annual growth rate
Below upper secondary	28	21	20	20	18	19	17	17	-4.4
Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	44	45	46	45	45	43	44	44	0.1
Tertiary education	28	34	34	35	37	38	39	38	3.0

Table 5.5 (Web only) Trends in educational attainment in Australia, by gender and age group, and average annual growth rate (2000-11)- continued

Men									
55-64 year-olds									
	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2000-11 average annual growth rate
Below upper secondary	43	40	38	36	36	34	34	33	-2.5
Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	36	34	35	36	35	36	37	38	0.5
Tertiary education	21	26	28	28	29	30	29	29	3.2

Women									
25-64 year-olds									
	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2000-11 average annual growth rate
Below upper secondary	48	40	37	36	33	32	29	27	-5.0
Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	23	27	27	28	27	29	30	31	2.6
Tertiary education	29	33	35	36	39	40	41	42	3.5

Women									
30-34 year-olds									
	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2000-11 average annual growth rate
Below upper secondary	40	25	22	19	17	17	15	16	-7.9
Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	26	34	35	36	36	33	35	33	2.1
Tertiary education	33	42	43	46	48	50	50	51	3.9

Table 5.5 (Web only) Trends in educational attainment in Australia, by gender and age group, and average annual growth rate (2000-11)- continued

Women									
25-34 year-olds									
	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2000-11 average annual growth rate
Below upper secondary	35	22	20	17	17	15	14	14	-8.1
Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	30	36	37	36	36	33	36	35	1.5
Tertiary education	35	42	43	46	48	52	50	51	3.5

Women									
55-64 year-olds									
	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2000-11 average annual growth rate
Below upper secondary	64	60	57	55	53	50	49	46	-3.0
Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	18	18	18	19	19	21	21	23	2.1
Tertiary education	17	22	25	25	28	29	30	31	5.4

Table 5.6 Educational attainment of 25-64 year-olds in Australia, by programme orientation and gender (2011)

Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary (ISCED 3/4)									Tertiary (ISCED 5)								
Vocational			General			Total			Vocational			General			Total		
M+W	Men	Women	M+W	Men	Women	M+W	Men	Women	M+W	Men	Women	M+W	Men	Women	M+W	Men	Women
19	25	13	16	16	17	36	41	31	10	9	12	27	25	29	38	34	41

Table 5.7 Enrolment rates in Australia, by age (2011)

Full-time and part-time students in public and private institutions

Starting age of compulsory education		Number of years at which over 90% of the population are enrolled	Age range at which over 90% of the population are enrolled	Students as a percentage of the population of a specific age group												
				Age 2 and under	Ages 3 and 4	Ages 5 to 14	Ages 15 to 19			Ages 20 to 29			Ages 30 to 39			Ages 40 and over
							M+W	Men	Women	M+W	Men	Women	M+W	Men	Women	
6	17	12	May-16	a	40	99	84	83	85	33	32	34	13	12	13	4.9

Goal 6 Quality of Education³⁶

Table 6.1 Average class size in Australia, by type of institution and level of education (2011)

Calculations based on number of students and number of classes

Primary education	Lower secondary education (general programmes)								
Public institutions	Private institutions			Total: Public and private institutions	Public institutions	Private institutions			Total: Public and private institutions
	Total private institutions	Government-dependent private institutions	Independent private institutions			Total private institutions	Government-dependent private institutions	Independent private institutions	
23.0	24.8	24.8	a	23.5	22.6	25.0	25.0	a	23.5

Table 6.2 Ratio of students to teaching staff in educational institutions in Australia (2011)

By level of education, calculations based on full-time equivalents

Pre-primary education		Primary education	Secondary education			Post-secondary non-tertiary education	Tertiary education		
Students to contact staff (teachers and teachers aides)	Students to teaching staff		Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education	All secondary education		Tertiary-type B	Tertiary-type A and advanced research programmes	All tertiary education
m	m	15.6	x(6)	x(6)	12.0	m	m	14.7	m

³⁶ Important note: Australian data on class sizes and teacher salaries should be considered indicative only. The data is based on a weighted average of state and territory education department responses.

Table 6.3 Ratio of students to teaching staff in educational institutions in Australia (2011)- continued

Notes:

1. Includes only general programmes in upper secondary education.
2. Public institutions only (for Australia, at tertiary-type A and advanced research programmes only; for Canada, at the tertiary level only; for Ireland, at tertiary level only; for Italy, from pre-primary to secondary level; for the Russian Federation, at primary and secondary levels only).
3. Excludes independent private institutions.
4. Year of reference 2010.
5. Data refer to teachers (head count) in primary, secondary and post-secondary non tertiary education.

Table 6.4 Ratio of students to teaching staff by type of institution in Australia (2011)

By level of education, calculations based on full-time equivalents

Lower secondary education				Upper secondary education				All secondary education			
Public	Private			Public	Private			Public	Private		
	Total private institutions	Government-dependent private institutions	Independent private institutions		Total private institutions	Government-dependent private institutions	Independent private institutions		Total private institutions	Government-dependent private institutions	Independent private institutions
x(9)	x(10)	x(11)	a	x(9)	x(10)	x(11)	a	12.2	11.6	11.6	a

Notes:

1. Includes only general programmes in lower and upper secondary education.
2. Upper secondary includes post-secondary non-tertiary education.
3. Year of reference 2010.
4. Lower secondary includes primary education.
5. Lower secondary includes pre-primary education.
6. Upper secondary education includes programmes from post-secondary education.
7. Data refer to teachers (head count) in primary, secondary and post-secondary non tertiary education.

Table 6.5 (web only) Average class size in Australia, by type of institution and level of education (2000)

Calculations based on number of students and number of classes

Primary education	Lower secondary education (general programmes)								
Public institutions	Private institutions			TOTAL: Public and private institutions	Public institutions	Private institutions			TOTAL: Public and private institutions
	Total private institutions	Government-dependent private institutions	Independent private institutions			Total private institutions	Government-dependent private institutions	Independent private institutions	
24.9	25.9	25.9	a	25.0	23.6	22.2	22.2	a	23.5

Table 6.6 Teachers' statutory salaries at different points in their careers in Australia (2011)

Annual salaries in public institutions, in equivalent USD converted using PPPs for private consumption

Pre-primary education				Primary education				Lower secondary education				Upper secondary education			
Starting salary, minimum training	Salary after 10 years of experience, minimum training	Salary after 15 years of experience, minimum training	Salary at top of scale, minimum training	Starting salary, minimum training	Salary after 10 years of experience, minimum training	Salary after 15 years of experience, minimum training	Salary at top of scale, minimum training	Starting salary, minimum training	Salary after 10 years of experience, minimum training	Salary after 15 years of experience, minimum training	Salary at top of scale, minimum training	Starting salary, minimum training	Salary after 10 years of experience, minimum training	Salary after 15 years of experience, minimum training	Salary at top of scale, minimum training
34,477	47,576	47,576	47,576	34,610	48,522	48,522	48,522	34,746	49,144	49,144	49,144	34,746	49,144	49,144	49,144

Table 6.7 Organisation of teachers' working time in Australia (2011)

Number of teaching weeks, teaching days, net teaching hours, and teachers' working time in public institutions over the school year

Number of weeks of teaching				Number of days of teaching			
Pre-primary education	Primary education	Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education, general programmes	Pre-primary education	Primary education	Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education, general programmes
40	40	40	40	196	196	196	195

Net teaching time, in hours				Working time required at school, in hours				Total statutory working time, in hours			
Pre-primary education	Primary education	Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education, general programmes	Pre-primary education	Primary education	Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education, general programmes	Pre-primary education	Primary education	Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education, general programmes
885	873	811	802	1,135	1,202	1,228	1,228	a	a	a	a