

7 April 2020

## Communiqué

### Senior secondary arrangements and university admissions

The Education Council met by teleconference to discuss advice from the Australasian Curriculum, Assessment and Certification Authorities (ACACA) on options for senior secondary arrangements and university admissions. Ministers reiterated the importance of this issue and acknowledged the urgency in providing certainty to students, their families and teachers.

Ministers noted the considerable work being undertaken by each state and territory to consider the assessment requirements for senior secondary students and the impact on the calculation of final subject results.

ACACA advised Ministers that while some issues will benefit from a national approach, others will rely on local adaptation to suit the circumstances across states and territories. To promote equitable outcomes, Council agreed a set of national principles to support local decisions. The principles are that:

- Students will be able to achieve a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education this year, and that certificate will facilitate access to university, further education and employment.
- In consideration of the current situation, any revisions to school assessment programs must be made with students' best interests in mind and to honour the intent of the learning described in the curriculum.
- Equity in assessment must be maintained while also providing schools with flexibility to accommodate their unique circumstances, including the specific needs of individual students.
- Revisions to assessment programs must not compromise the integrity of senior certification and public confidence in the credentials issued to this year's senior students.

To ensure that students applying for university entry interstate are not disadvantaged, Education Council decided that Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) results will be released in a nationally consistent window of dates beginning in 2020.

Further announcements regarding specific arrangements will be advised by state and territory governments.

### Continued delivery of school education for all students during COVID-19

Education Council endorsed a set of national principles for the consideration of the National Cabinet to support continued delivery of high-quality school education for all students during COVID-19. Noting that decisions about education in government schools continue to be the responsibility of states and territories, these principles will inform decision-making to ensure that every student has access to education in a sustainable and effective manner.

Jurisdictions will continue to regularly share information, experiences, learnings and outcomes relevant to managing the impact of COVID-19 in school education.

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