



Australian Government

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Improving Teacher Quality
National Partnership



Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn
CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICE



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INTRODUCTION

The latest research, such as that drawn upon in Mathew Ryan's 2008 report 'Top of the Class,' clearly tells us that the most influential factor in student achievement is the quality of the classroom teacher.

The Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership (NP) is designed to drive reform and innovation to improve the quality of teaching and leadership in ACT schools and to sustain a quality teaching workforce.

The ACT strategy for improving teacher quality targets critical points in the career 'lifecycle' of teachers. The strategy includes measures that heighten attraction, placement, development, retention and sustainability of a quality teaching workforce to raise student performance. It reflects the importance of leadership and succession planning, and identifies support and priorities at all levels of teaching.

The ACT is fully committed to delivering reform by actively engaging with the non government school sector and committing to common local and national strategies.

In collaboration with the Australian Government, this implementation plan will be reviewed and revised throughout the life of the Partnership Agreement to ensure that it reflects the implementation strategies of the national reforms and the changing context of the ACT environment.

The plan is a joint initiative of the Australian Government, the ACT Government, the ACT Catholic Education Office and Association of Independent Schools of the ACT.

CROSS SECTOR INVOLVEMENT

The ACT Improving Teacher Quality Final Implementation Plan involves a high level of cross sector collaboration. The development of the Plan has been overseen by a cross sector coordination group. Implementation of the facilitation reforms will be through a coordinated and collaborative approach. The Department will take the lead on developing the procedures and processes detailed in the reward reform initiatives, with the Catholic and Independent sectors participating in those reform elements where appropriate.

Consultation in the development of reform strategies has occurred with all key stakeholder groups and this will continue to occur as the strategies are implemented and evaluated. Implementation of the ACT Plan will be managed through the cross-sectoral coordination committee comprising senior representatives from the ACT Department of Education and Training, the Catholic Education Office Canberra-Goulburn Archdiocese (CEO) and the Association of Independent Schools of the ACT.

KEY REFORMS – A FOCUS ON STRENGTHENING AND REWARDING QUALITY TEACHING

The overarching objective of participating in this NP is to deliver improved student outcomes by improving the quality of teaching. In support of the ACT's intention to effect ambitious and extensive reform, this implementation plan contains significant reform activity across all schools.

The priority actions for the ACT aimed at improving the quality of teachers include: the development of career pathways for teachers, including national registration, through the establishment of the ACT Teacher Quality Institute; the development of strong partnerships between teacher education providers and school sectors facilitated through the Teacher Education Committee; improved pay dispersion to reward quality teaching; and the development of improved data collection and analysis tools. The ACT will also explore new and better pathways into teaching, focussing initially on the early childhood sector, and will provide more flexible and supported pathways to encourage Indigenous people to take up teacher education.

The ACT recognises that issues impacting on teacher quality affect both the government and non-government sectors. Consequently, strategies have been identified with cross-sectoral elements to include all schools.

Further detail about the strategies and initiatives designed to achieve the desired outcomes of this National Partnership is provided in the *Facilitation and Reward Reforms* sections.

CROSS SECTORAL REFORMS

1. Establishment of an ACT Teacher Quality Institute

The Institute will have initial responsibilities for pre-service teacher education accreditation, teacher registration and certification of teachers against the national standards. Leadership focused standards development may be an additional function of the Institute. Planning for the establishment of the Institute builds on recent consultations on an ACT teacher registration model and an ACT School Standards Authority. It is integrally linked to the ACT progressing the national professional standards and certification processes.

2. Establishment of a Teacher Education Committee

The Committee will formalise strategic partnerships with the University of Canberra, Australian Catholic University (Signadou Campus), the ACT Department of Education and Training, the Catholic Education Office, Independent schools, principals and education unions.

3. Creation of School Centres of Teacher Education Excellence

The initial ACT School Centre of Teacher Education Excellence will be established in the ACT Department of Education and Training's Early Childhood sector. In consultation with the Catholic, Independent and University sectors, additional centres will be established in primary and secondary schools in the three sectors during the life of the Plan.

4. Development of improved data collection and analysis tools

In line with the nationally agreed parameters for teacher workforce data collection, the ACT will develop and apply a set of tools to collect accurate data specific to the local workforce. The ACT will contribute to the development, population and maintenance of a national dataset and longitudinal teacher workforce study to improve both national and local workforce planning.

5. Implementation of national standards and certification processes for teachers

The ACT will implement nationally agreed teacher standards and certification processes in line with the National Professional Standards Framework for Teachers.

6. Increased school-based decision making in staffing processes

The ACT Department of Education and Training and the Catholic sectors will develop specific strategies to enhance the level of school based decision making in staffing and recruitment processes. Improved professional development for principals and school leaders, to support their effective management of current and future workforce needs, will underpin these strategies.

7. Enhanced strategies to support whole-of career continual improvement

Existing ACT Department of Education and Training and Catholic School Leadership Frameworks will underpin an expanded program of mentoring and leadership training to support a rigorous performance and development culture in ACT schools.

8. A new classroom teacher salary structure

The ACT Department of Education and Training will coordinate the development of proposals for a new classroom teacher salary structure based on standards and performance progression. These proposals will draw upon the National Professional Standards Framework for Teachers and certification processes to progressively expand the existing teacher salary scale.

FACILITATION REFORMS

The ACT will implement the following initiatives in support of the mandatory facilitation reforms required under the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership.

Facilitation Reform 1: World leading professional development and support which will empower principals to better manage their schools to achieve improved student results and higher quality to lead performance improvement at the local level.

The ACT will develop a coordinated cross-sector program of professional learning for principals focusing on improving school performance to enhance student outcomes. The ACT program will align to the recently developed ACT Department of Education and Training and Catholic sector school leadership frameworks. A focus will be developing principal leadership capability to implement the Improving Teacher Quality, Literacy and Numeracy and Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities National Partnerships effectively.

Facilitation Reform 2: New Pathways into Teaching

The ACT will work with local universities to develop options for engaging top-graduates in employment-based pathways into teaching. The ACT has expressed interest in participating in the second year of the national employment-based pathway for top non-teaching graduates.

A key feature of the ACT New Pathways program will be the development of collaborative cross-sector networks to share strategies for new teacher school-based induction and support and effective mentor training and mentor practices.

Facilitation Reform 3: Better Pathways into Teaching

The ACT will develop employment based teacher training options for early childhood workers including preschool assistants. The program will involve the development of flexible pathways to assist current workers in the early childhood sector gain early childhood specific teacher qualifications. The program will initially link to the University of Canberra, Bachelor of Education – Early Childhood Education degree.

Facilitation Reform 4: Indigenous Education Pathways

The ACT will develop flexible and supported pathways into teacher education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT. The initial Indigenous Education Pathways will align to scholarship and employment based teacher education initiatives in ACT public schools. The ACT strategies will reflect the urban context of the ACT Indigenous population.

Facilitation Reform 5: New professional standards to underpin national reforms

The key strategy for ACT implementation of national teaching standards is the establishment of the ACT Teacher Quality Institute. This independent cross-sector body will administer and oversee a range of functions including:

- pre-service teacher education course accreditation
- teacher registration
- teacher professional standards
- certification against the national standards.

The ACT will implement nationally agreed teacher standards and certification processes in line with the National Professional Standards Framework for Teachers.

Facilitation Reform 6: Nationally agreed process for accrediting/certifying Accomplished and Leading Teachers

The ACT will implement the nationally agreed certification processes for classroom teacher standards through the ACT Teacher Quality Institute.

The ACT will progressively incorporate accomplished and leading teacher levels into the classroom teacher salary structure. These proposals will be included in enterprise bargaining in each sector. The ACT will introduce positions in schools available for people with certification at the accomplished and leading standards.

Facilitation Reform 7: Joint engagement with higher education providers to improve teacher quality

The key ACT strategy for joint engagement with higher education providers to improve teacher quality is to establish the Teacher Education Committee. This Committee will deliver a strategic partnership between teacher education providers and education sectors within the ACT.

The Teacher Education Committee will provide expert input and advice to enhance the capacity of the ACT to implement reforms relating to teacher education.

Facilitation Reform 8: Establish quality placements for teacher education courses

The ACT will adopt the national framework through the cross-sectoral Professional Experience Sub-committee of the Teacher Education Committee. This committee will have a key role in the development of effective and sustainable university – school partnerships including communication between universities and schools on professional experience priorities and individual student needs, preparation of pre-service teachers for in-school learning, availability of professional experience placements in ACT schools and training and professional development for school-based mentors and supervising teachers.

Facilitation Reform 9: Establish School Centres of Teacher Education Excellence

The ACT Department of Education and Training will establish the initial ACT School Centre of Teacher Education Excellence in 2010, in the Early Childhood sector. The Department will develop the program in conjunction with the University of Canberra's Early Childhood section.

Additional School Centres of Teacher Education Excellence will be established in the ACT over the life of the National Partnership commencing from 2011. These will be established across the three education sectors (Government, Catholic and Independent).

The focus of all ACT School Centres of Teacher Education Excellence will be collaborative partnerships between schools and universities; innovative engagement with pre-service teachers and university staff and continued professional learning of ACT teachers. A key feature will be on-going sharing of best practice approaches and cross-sector evaluation of the programs.

School Centres of Teacher Education Excellence will recruit a higher proportion of teachers who have achieved certification against the National Professional Standards Framework for Teachers. Specific staffing decisions will be made by the public and Catholic education systems and individual Independent schools.

Facilitation Reform 10: Improved mobility of the Australian teaching workforce

Nationally consistent teacher registration, teacher standards and certification and pre-service teacher education accreditation will enable a nationally mobile quality teaching workforce. Nationally consistent processes will allow teachers to transfer more easily between jurisdictions and thereby seek employment across the country. This is likely to assist the ACT to attract teachers from interstate and enhance the Territory's competitiveness in the national education recruitment market.

Facilitation Reform 11: Improved quality and availability of teacher workforce data

All sectors in the ACT will contribute data to the national data collection initiatives and graduate teacher longitudinal survey. The ACT is committed to implementing the national data reforms to improve both national and local workforce planning.

The ACT will develop cross-sector data collection tools and a data system to collect key teacher workforce data. Systematic data collection, analysis and reporting will assist the ACT to map and predict workforce supply and demand issues more effectively.

Facilitation Reform 12: Improved performance management and continuous improvement in schools (linked to the professional learning and national standards)

The ACT is committed to cross-sector collaboration to achieve Facilitation reform through renewed performance management strategies to align with nationally agreed best practice and improved development systems (including leadership frameworks and professional learning programs) to provide continuous learning opportunities for all staff.

REWARD REFORMS

The ACT strategy for the Reward Reforms is dependent on the nationally agreed outcomes of key Facilitation Reforms. It should also be noted that the ACT is unable to participate in the reward reforms involving improved reward structures and improved in-school support in disadvantaged Indigenous, rural/remote and hard-to-staff schools, as the jurisdiction does not have schools that match the requirements of these reforms.

Reward Reform 1: Improved pay dispersion to reward quality teaching

The recently negotiated enterprise agreement for public school teachers spanning 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2011 sets out expectations of performance and professional responsibilities as teachers move through the incremental salary scale. These expectations are to be used as a guide for an annual professional discussion between individual classroom teachers and their supervisors and/or principals focusing on the teacher's performance, incremental progression, career plans and transfer entitlement options.

Access to the proposed classifications of Accomplished and Leading Teacher under the National Professional Standards Framework for Teachers will be explored through negotiations in the next enterprise agreement.

Full implementation of this Reward reform across the three sectors is dependent on the outcomes of separate industrial negotiation processes.

Reward Reform 4: Increased school-based decision making about recruitment, staffing mix and budget

The public and Catholic sectors will seek to develop the capability of principals and school communities to accept higher levels of responsibilities for school-based staffing decisions. The independent sector will contribute to this reform by sharing experiences and participation in the design and delivery of principal professional development programs across the three sectors.

Devolution of decision making to public schools will be staged to ensure on-going capacity building, planning and evaluation. The staged transfer of some responsibility for staffing decisions to individual schools will increase their capacity to respond to the needs of their students. An advisory committee, including representatives of principals, school boards and unions, will be established to monitor the success of each stage of the devolution and to plan future stages.

In addition to developing the capability of principals to accept an increasing level of school-based decision making, an accountability framework will be developed to support principal decision-making and to provide demonstrable links to school improvement. This will include regular monitoring and reporting to assure the quality of processes and outcomes. Periodic evaluations of the implementation of the new arrangements will inform refinements.

The Catholic sector will monitor developments in the public sector and participate in principal development programs prior to determining the full extent of its commitment to this priority.

Reward Reform 5: Continual improvement program for all teachers

Key ACT cross sector initiatives focusing on continual improvement include:

- **Improved induction and orientation programs for new and beginning teachers**

The ACT will expand and improve current system and school programs for the induction and support of new and beginning teachers. This work will link closely to improved partnerships with universities, mentor training and nationally consistent graduate standards.

- **Mentor and supervisor training**

This training will encompass planning, communication and skill building for the delivery of effective performance feedback.

- **Comprehensive leadership development systems based on national frameworks**

The ACT will develop a structured orientation program for new School Leaders and continuing professional learning for current School Leaders. Elements of this program will be applicable for cross-sector involvement. Current sector-based School Leadership Frameworks will be enhanced to incorporate targeted mentor programs and networks.

- **'Whole-of career' continual professional learning**

The continual improvement program for teachers will focus on the key stages of the teaching career: pre-service teacher, improved teacher induction and new teacher programs and professional learning for experienced teachers and school leaders.

- **Innovative partnerships and networks between schools**

The ACT will develop innovative school partnership and networking opportunities within and between sectors to facilitate the sharing of highly effective teaching practice.

Reward Reform 6: Indigenous teachers' and school leaders' engagement with community members

The ACT will develop cross-sector professional learning modules for all teachers and school leaders to facilitate learning and reflection around cultural awareness, understanding and attitudes, specific leadership and teaching strategies and high quality curriculum approaches geared to improving the outcomes of Indigenous students.

These modules will link to existing teacher and school leader induction and orientation programs and will be incorporated into cross-sector professional learning opportunities. The program is aimed at building partnerships and pathways to improve outcomes for Indigenous students with a focus on:

- Leadership
- Partnerships
- Transitions.

FACILITATION AND REWARD MILESTONES

Department specific, Catholic sector specific and cross-sectoral actions are referenced in the following tables by the codes [D], [C], and [XS] respectively.

Timeline	Milestones
	<i>Facilitation</i>
2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-sector coordination committee established for development of ACT Implementation Plan and objectives (XS) • Teacher Education Committee established (XS)
	<i>Reward</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision for National Professional Standards Framework for Teachers career dimensions included in salary scale (D) • Agreement to performance progression and common increment date (D)
	<i>Facilitation</i>
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoping of the Teacher Quality Institute (XS) • Workforce data collection and analysis tools implemented (XS) • Initial School Centre of Teacher Education Excellence established (D) • Renewal strategy for performance management developed and implemented (XS)
	<i>Reward</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous Education embedded into Principals Induction programs and teacher professional learning modules (XS) • Classroom teacher salary progression structure process determined and implemented (D) • Advisory Committee established to guide increased school-based recruitment and staffing (D)

Timeline	Milestones
	<i>Facilitation</i>
2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial Better Pathways training program implemented (XS) • Initial New Pathways program implemented (D) • Training program for Mentor Teachers and Mentor Network established (XS) • Teacher Quality Institute established (XS) • ACT teacher education courses accredited through Teacher Quality Institute (XS) • Additional School Centres of Teacher Education Excellence established (XS) • Placement of Indigenous education worker graduates into ACT schools (D)
	<i>Reward</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers accessing accredited professional learning (XS) • Mentor and supervisor training developed and implemented (XS) • Selection process for teachers with national certification implemented (XS)
	<i>Facilitation</i>
2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration and certification of ACT teachers through Teacher Quality Institute (XS)
	<i>Reward</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of teacher transfer process improvements (D)(C) • Teachers with national certification placed in selected schools (XS) • Revised procedures for filling vacancies implemented (D)
	<i>Reward</i>
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers with national certification available for all schools (XS)

EVALUATION

The first four years of the NP (2008/9-2011/12) is funded by facilitation funding provided by the Australian Government and ACT co-investment funding allocated from school sectors. In the final two years of the NP (2011/12-2012/13) funding is provided on a reward basis according to achievement of agreed milestones, as assessed by the Council of Australian Governments Reform Council (CRC). Reward milestones are to be further defined once the ambit for reward funding has been determined following the achievement of facilitation milestones.

A total of \$1.7m of facilitation funding has been allocated to the ACT. A total of \$6.3m of reward funding is available to the ACT in the final two years of the program.

LINKS TO OTHER NATIONAL REFORMS

A quality teaching workforce is crucial to the successful implementation of any reform in schooling. This NP underpins the delivery of the Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities National Partnership and the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership.

Under the Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities NP, schools will be supported through measures to attract, retain and support school teachers and leaders. These schools will be given increased flexibility to fill key teaching and leadership positions within the school and will be priority schools for ongoing placement of accomplished and leading teacher positions.

Under the Literacy and Numeracy NP, schools will be supported through reforms to lift teacher quality, with specific measures to improve classroom practice such as school based professional learning and leadership development.

The ACT views all three Smarter Schools National Partnerships as a significant opportunity to contribute to the achievement of national policy and reform objectives as part of the National Education Agreement.

