



Australian Government

National School Reform Agreement

2022 Annual Report on progress in implementing the national policy initiatives

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National School Reform Agreement: 2022 Annual Report on progress in implementing the national policy initiatives

This report outlines the progress towards implementing the national policy initiatives in 2022 against agreed milestones contained in the *National School Reform Agreement* (the Agreement). It is the fourth annual public report, as required by clause 53.a. of the Agreement, and follows publication of the 2019, 2020 and 2021 progress reports.

The Agreement features three reform directions that focus on supporting students, student learning and achievement; supporting teaching, school leadership and school improvement; and enhancing the national evidence base.

The reform directions are being progressed nationally through the eight national policy initiatives, together with a suite of state-specific activities outlined in bilateral agreements between the Commonwealth and states or territories.

The national policy initiatives are being developed in close consultation and collaboration with government and non-government education authorities and broader education stakeholders including, but not limited to, teachers, school leaders and parents.

- On 15 December 2022, Education Ministers made key agreements to the following national policy initiatives:
 - A(i) and A(ii) Online Formative Assessment Initiative: Education Ministers agreed to a suite of actions to share existing assessments and assessment items. The assessment resources will be made available to all teachers nationally on an opt-in basis through the establishment of a national bank of formative assessments.
 - C(i) Unique Student Identifier: Education Ministers agreed on a model to roll-out the Unique Student Identifier (USI) nationally to all school students. Ministers also agreed that a baseline use of the schools USI will be to support the transfer of student information when they move between schools and systems through the inclusion of the USI in the agreed data set under the Student Data Transfer Protocol once operating.
- By 31 December 2022, three projects under national policy initiative C(iii), improving the evidence base, neared completion:
 - The final report for the School Readiness Project will be circulated to ministers in early 2023;
 - The final report for the Post-School Destinations proof-of-concept data linkage project is expected to be circulated to ministers in mid-2023;
 - The *Student Wellbeing Project* has been completed as commissioned under the Agreement. Updated advice will be provided to Education Ministers over 2023.

Australia's Education Ministers continue to collaborate and implement the remaining national policy initiatives throughout the remainder of the Agreement (expected to be to 31 December 2024, subject to agreement of First Ministers).

An independent review was commissioned on behalf of Education Ministers in accordance with clauses 29-32 of the Agreement, which included an assessment of the effectiveness of the national policy initiatives and the appropriateness of the measurement framework. The review was conducted by the Productivity Commission and the final report was released publicly in January 2023. The review will help inform an expert panel that will provide advice on the development of the next National School Reform Agreement.

Under clauses 51-55 of the Agreement, all parties have committed to reporting on progress in implementing agreed national policy initiatives outlined in Schedule B to give the community confidence that Education Ministers are making efforts to improve the quality and equity of Australia's schooling system. Table 1 of this report reflects progress as at 31 December 2022 against revised National School Reform Agreement Schedule B milestones approved by Education Ministers on 4 September 2020.

Table 1: Progress in implementing the national policy initiatives against milestones in Schedule B of the *National School Reform Agreement* (up to 31 December 2022)

National Policy Initiative	Milestone	Timing	Has the milestone been met? Y/N, partially, or not yet applicable	If no, or partially, the reason is:
<p>Note: A(i) and A(ii) are being progressed jointly</p> <p>A (i) Enhancing the Australian Curriculum to support teacher assessment of student attainment and growth against clear descriptors</p>	<p>a) Education Council consider proposal(s) for the development of learning progressions across the Australian Curriculum learning areas and general capabilities, including consideration of existing progressions and development stages, timelines and estimated costs.</p>	<p>Early 2019</p>	<p>Yes.</p>	
	<p>b) Subject to Education Council agreement at a), develop and trial learning progressions and formative assessment capability for learning areas and general capabilities, with priority on literacy and numeracy in the early years of schooling.</p>	<p>Early 2021</p>	<p>Partially.</p>	<p>Trialling was not scheduled to occur until this initiative entered the Beta phase. Ministers were scheduled to consider progression to the Beta phase in mid 2022.</p> <p>In August 2022, Ministers noted advice on the Beta Development Phase and that some jurisdictions had matured considerably in their capability over recent years, especially during COVID-19, and</p>

National Policy Initiative	Milestone	Timing	Has the milestone been met? Y/N, partially, or not yet applicable	If no, or partially, the reason is:
	<p>c) Subject to Education Council agreement to a) and b) above, existing and new learning progressions and formative assessment capability for agreed Australian Curriculum learning areas and general capabilities are progressively made available.</p>	From 2022	No.	<p>that the option to share that material to meet the online formative assessment need should be explored. Ministers agreed not to proceed with the next phase of the project at this stage and to consider advice on whether resources currently available in some states could be used to meet the needs of smaller jurisdictions and a way forward.</p> <p>On 15 December 2022, EMM agreed that the Australian Government, on behalf of AESOC, will work with ACARA, ESA, NSW, Victoria and Queensland to develop a detailed approach to sharing existing assessments and assessment items to establish a bank of assessments and an approach to:</p> <p>a) aligning the assessment/assessment items to Version 9.0 of the Australian</p>

National Policy Initiative	Milestone	Timing	Has the milestone been met? Y/N, partially, or not yet applicable	If no, or partially, the reason is:
				<p>Curriculum, which has aligned and embedded the literacy and numeracy learning progressions;</p> <p>b) developing suitable measurement scales for each learning area linked to the Achievement Standards and learning progressions in the Australian Curriculum;</p> <p>c) identifying the most cost-effective and expedient way to share assessments with teachers/systems across Australia, using existing national agency infrastructure or an existing share platform;</p> <p>d) making the assessments available on an opt-in basis for teachers across Australia to use; and</p> <p>e) ensuring that issues of intellectual property,</p>

National Policy Initiative	Milestone	Timing	Has the milestone been met? Y/N, partially, or not yet applicable	If no, or partially, the reason is:
				assessment security and integrity are adequately addressed.
<p>Note: A(i) and A(ii) are being progressed jointly</p> <p>A (ii) Assisting teachers monitor individual student progress and identify student learning needs through opt-in online and on demand student learning assessment tools with links to student learning resources, prioritising early years foundation skills</p>	<p>a) Education Council consider a proposal for the enhancement of formative assessment capabilities, including consideration of existing IT solutions, online assessment resources and digital learning resources and potential benefits to students, teachers and school leaders. It is expected the proposal will include development stages, timelines, governance arrangements and estimated costs.</p> <p>b) Subject to Education Council agreement at a), Education Council commission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the design, build and piloting of an opt-in formative assessment facility with priority on early years literacy and numeracy. Assessments should be matched to agreed learning progressions (such as English, 	<p>Early 2019</p> <p>Early 2021</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Partially.</p>	<p>As in A(i)(b) above.</p>

National Policy Initiative	Milestone	Timing	Has the milestone been met? Y/N, partially, or not yet applicable	If no, or partially, the reason is:
	<p>mathematics, science and critical and creative thinking), and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the development of supporting professional learning modules to build teacher and school leader capacity and capability to use effective formative assessment practices. 			
	<p>c) Subject to Education Council agreement at a) and b), progressively develop and release nationally available online on-demand formative assessment resources (linked to the development schedule for learning progressions across Australian Curriculum learning areas and general capabilities), refine the online formative assessment facility based on feedback from the pilot and align digital teaching resources to the learning progressions.</p>	<p>From 2022</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p>As in A(i)(c) above.</p>
<p>A (iii) Reviewing senior secondary pathways into work,</p>	<p>a) Education Council agree panel membership and terms of reference for a review of senior secondary education, pathways to work, further education and</p>	<p>Early 2019</p>	<p>Yes. More information is available from the</p>	

National Policy Initiative	Milestone	Timing	Has the milestone been met? Y/N, partially, or not yet applicable	If no, or partially, the reason is:
further education and training	training and consideration of prerequisites for university entry.		Department of Education website.	
	b) Subject to Education Council agreement at a), Education Council receive review report and consider recommendations for any national initiatives to strengthen student pathways, with States and Territories to independently consider recommendations for local response.	June 2020	Yes.	
	c) Subject to Education Council agreement at a) and b), Education Council has implemented, or is progressing, agreed recommendations as appropriate.	End of the agreement	Yes.	
B (i) Reviewing teacher workforce needs of the future to attract and retain the best and brightest to the teaching profession and attract	a) Education Council consider an implementation strategy for the recommendations of the National Review of Teacher Registration.	Early 2019	Yes.	
	b) Education Council begin to develop options for a national teacher workforce strategy.	Mid 2019	Yes.	

National Policy Initiative	Milestone	Timing	Has the milestone been met? Y/N, partially, or not yet applicable	If no, or partially, the reason is:
teachers to areas of need	c) Subject to b), Education Council agree to an option for a national teacher workforce strategy to support decision making of teacher employers and initial teacher education (ITE) providers. It is anticipated the strategy would identify requirements to address workforce issues of supply, demand, retention, attrition, hard to staff schools, specialisation, teaching out of field, rural and remote workforce and any gaps in data identified by Parties and sectors.	September 2020	Yes.	
	d) Subject to Education Council agreement at b) and c), Education Council implement a national teacher workforce strategy to respond to teacher workforce needs of the future and support decision making of teacher employers and ITE providers.	From December 2020	Yes.	
B (ii) Strengthening the initial teacher accreditation system	a) States and Territories ensure that accredited initial teacher education programs require pre-service teachers to have successfully completed an endorsed	From January 2019	Yes.	

National Policy Initiative	Milestone	Timing	Has the milestone been met? Y/N, partially, or not yet applicable	If no, or partially, the reason is:
	final-year teaching performance assessment prior to graduation.			
	b) Commence national quality assurance activities in cooperation with all jurisdictional authorities.	From January 2019	Yes.	
C (i) Implementing a national unique student identifier (USI) that meets national privacy requirements in order to support better understanding of student progression and improve the national evidence base	a) Education Council consider:	Late 2019	Yes.	
	i. a proposal for a national USI to enhance school and system self-review and external quality assurance, including proposed approach and compatibility with existing USIs ii. Governance, privacy protections, national data access protocols and protections and estimates and proposed allocations of costs.	September 2020	Partially.	The governance, privacy protections, national data access protocols and protections and estimates and proposed allocations of costs were broadly considered by the end of 2020 with further development and refinement required.
	b) Subject to Education Council agreement at a), implement the institutional arrangements necessary to support the implementation of a national USI.	March 2021	No	In November 2021, Australia's Education Ministers noted the approach to pilot an option for the USI with SA, NSW, NT, and the

National Policy Initiative	Milestone	Timing	Has the milestone been met? Y/N, partially, or not yet applicable	If no, or partially, the reason is:
				<p>independent and Catholic school sectors within those jurisdictions. The pilot commenced in January 2022 and concluded in June 2022.</p> <p>In December 2022, Education Ministers noted the outcomes of the pilot and agreed to the operating model for the schools USI as the basis for national implementation. Ministers also agreed that AESOC will oversee the development and implementation of a comprehensive workplan on legislative, information privacy, data governance, cybersecurity, technical, stakeholder and costing matters.</p>
	c) Subject to Education Council agreement at a) and b), and subject to meeting national privacy requirements, schools and systems to progressively work to	All students to have a USI by the	Not yet applicable.	

National Policy Initiative	Milestone	Timing	Has the milestone been met? Y/N, partially, or not yet applicable	If no, or partially, the reason is:
	create a national USI for each student from 2021.	end of the agreement		
C (ii) Establishing an independent national evidence institute to inform teacher practice, system improvement and policy development	a) Education Council consider options for an independent national evidence institute, including scope of functions, potential for expansion of existing capabilities, interaction with existing national bodies, funding and governance arrangements.	Late 2019	Yes.	
	b) Subject to Education Council agreement to an option at a), implement the institutional arrangements necessary to support an independent national evidence institute.	Mid 2020	Yes.	
	c) Subject to Education Council agreement at a) and b), the national evidence institute commences operations from 2020, and inter alia, develops and implements a national research and evidence plan.	From 2020	Yes. More information is available from the Australian Education Research Organisation website.	
C (iii) Improving national data quality,	a) Education Council agree equity and proficiency standards (for numeracy and	December 2018 &	Yes.	Education Ministers originally agreed to report by proficiency

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consistency and collection to improve the national evidence base and inform policy development.	literacy assessed by NAPLAN) as part of the scheduled review of the National Measurement Framework for Schooling.	February 2023		standards for NAPLAN results in 2018 through the National School Reform Agreement. In February 2023, Education Ministers agreed to settings and nomenclature for Proficiency Standards to be implemented for NAPLAN 2023. The implementation of these measures was delayed to allow for NAPLAN to transition to Online testing which was completed in 2022.
	b) Education Council consider strategic opportunities to enhance the national evidence base, including options for measures of child development status at school entry, student learning gain, general capabilities, post-school destination information, attainment, retention, wellbeing, post-school outcomes.	Life of the agreement	Partially.	Of the 4 projects underway to enhance the national evidence base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>Post-School Destinations Survey</i> (now known as GENERATION) is on track. • The final report for the post-school destinations proof-of-concept <i>data linkage project</i> is expected to be circulated to

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				<p>Education Ministers in late-2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>National School Readiness Project</i> Final Report was noted by Education Ministers out of session in early 2023. The report will inform preschool outcome measures being progressed through the Preschool Reform Agreement. No further action is required on the project. • The <i>Student Wellbeing Project</i> has been completed as commissioned under the Agreement. A new intergovernmental working group, led by the ACT, has been established to address contextual changes as well as consider commonalities and challenges in measuring student wellbeing. Updated

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				<p>advice will be provided to Education Ministers over 2023.</p> <p>Core objectives of the Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) include generating and presenting high-quality evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AERO’s Research Agenda for 2023, which Ministers endorsed in August 2022, includes wellbeing of children and young people, and continuity of learning and development across early childhood education and care and schools as priority areas for research. AERO’s work in these areas will make important ongoing contributions to enhancing the national evidence base. • In 2022, AERO completed a review into remote and online learning during COVID-19. This was approved for release by

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				Education Ministers in January 2023 and published on AERO website on 22 March 2023.