Public submission made to the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools

Submitter:	Champions Educational Gaming
Submitting as a:	Think tank, other (Champions Educational Gaming)
State:	Tas.

Summary

SUMMARY

Champions is an Australian made innovative learning system.

Champions is inexpensive to implement and use in Australian Schools

Champions incorporates ACARA's Australian School Curriculum

Champions has a unique curriculum Descriptor Chart for teachers

Champions complements NAPLAN

Champions uses fun gamification to help students be smarter, faster

Champions caters to all students learning styles no matter how disadvantaged

Champions includes 360 degree feedback, providing pathways to continual improvements in education

Champions uses Best Practice and full dashboard reporting across all levels

Teachers can track subject performance for individuals or entire classes

Teachers and students can create valuable content adding to the Champions Library and knowledge base.

Champions creates and supports a challenging learning environment.

Champions encourages the joy of personal discovery.

Champions fosters innovation in education.

Champions is ready to make Australian schools smarter.

Main submission

CEG (Champions Educational Gaming) is an Australian based, owned and operated company that creates gamified learning solutions. The Directors of CEG are of the opinion that many current challenges facing the Australian school system can be

innovatively and cost efficiently tackled using technology as an aid, both within and outside the classroom. In an age of ubiquitous global 'online social networks', CEG has spent a cumulative nine years developing an all-inclusive system known as Champions that is friendly and intuitive for both students and teachers alike. Champions success to date has primarily been due to its emphasis on combining gamification and learning to create an 'edufun' environment. CEG believes that Champions forms an important part of the future of learning, where Edufun forms a part of the daily activities for students to explore their boundaries, and challenge themselves in a comfortable and encouraging environment.

Champions is an online, gamified learning system that encourages members to absorb knowledge at their own pace, understand where their capabilities are, but also find pathways to further information. Champions has been built to share a public library of multiple choice quizzes we call 'QuizGames'. They can be played by anyone, anytime; just for fun, or to improve their knowledge on the topic of their choice. QuizGame players get ranked on a global leader board every time they 'play', which allows for understanding of where they fit in the world. There is a pathway tool which enables participants to find further knowledge to increase their capability, at their own pace. Champions QuizGame questions cater to every type of learner, and can utilise text, pictures, audio or even video.

All players get free membership to Champions, which includes a unique member dashboard. This dashboard is customizable and allows members to see detailed analytics and reports on QuizGames and topics that they have played. Champions encourages all members to keep learning about topics of personal interest through ongoing mentoring support, a badge reward system and by providing clear pathways to further study. Once participants reach a level of confidence, they too can create their own QuizGames to challenge their friends/colleagues and even teachers!

Champions has been designed specifically for Australian Schools and seamlessly integrates the changing Australian School Curriculum, which has previously not been possible. Uniquely, Champions uses proprietary algorithms to incorporate the latest set of curriculum descriptors (which are published by ACARA) into every question of every curriculum-based QuizGame on any school subject. All members, including students can create QuizGames for the Champions Library and add to the global knowledge base but only approved teachers can create QuizGames using the descriptors related to the curriculum. This ensures that schools around Australia can confidently use content that is targeted and curriculum appropriate. All QuizGames that are made for students by teachers around the national curriculum have a special 'graduation cap' symbol. The curriculum based QuizGames can be used by all teachers to track the progress of students to ensure they have completed each descriptor as required. Every teacher can easily, within a few clicks, report on the progress of an individual or an entire school linked back to a descriptor.

Champions enables teachers to create unlimited free content for our education system which builds into a valuable national education resource and knowledge base. In a meeting with Robert Randall (CEO) and Dr Stanley Rabinowitz (Assessment General Manager) of ACARA in October 2017, both attendees were suitably impressed with the extended functionality and how Champions has taken the use of descriptors to the next level. Effectively what Champions does, is the heavy lifting for the teachers, allowing them to embed the descriptors of the Australian Curriculum in a format that can easily and succinctly show quantifiable data. The data that Champions captures is so powerful that ACARA could create their own perfectly crafted QuizGames on curriculum subjects, making available a new, high level set of QuizGames that teachers could have total confidence in sharing with their students. The ACARA created content could be delineated by a special cap icon colour e.g.; gold. The owner of the Champions System (The Education Department) can collate information across classes, entire schools, each state or the whole of Australia.

Champions can be utilized in many ways within schools to create better learning outcomes. Some of the best uses are;

Revision of prior learning.

Classroom multiplayer QuizGames that test students on what they have learned in the past week. Teachers see a full report that ranks students and allows for easy, individual assessment.

Rewards for class good behaviour.

Fun QuizGame topics can be played for example, once a week on Fridays, allowing students to bond and competitively show their skills about fun, non-curriculum (e.g.; pop culture) topics. Teachers can make a private, class-specific QuizGame about a class excursion and then test their class the very next day. The students can actually be mentioned in the QuizGame making the experience both targeted and fun.

Tracking of individual student performance.

Teachers can see reports on how a student has improved over the entire school term or year on any subject. Results can be used to direct students into additional learning if required. In fact, Champions is so powerful it actually has direct pathways setup for further learning from their own report and dashboard.

It can be used to by students to create their own QuizGames and 'self-learn'.

Students learn faster when researching and creating their very own QuizGames based on any topic. Teachers can set students a goal to create useful new QuizGame content for the Champions Library. Students gain confidence when Champions notifies them that their QuizGames are being used by others. Many students will fully exploit their free Champions membership in order to learn about topics of their choice in non-school hours. Champions encourages and rewards students for

learning on their own at their own pace. Each QuizGame has a feedback mechanism, and when students create their own QuizGames, upon receiving feedback they can understand why other people may not quite understand the way they have asked the question. This allows for a further level of learning on the best way to frame questions. All the Champions content can be 'tweaked' or completely modified by the creator.

Teachers can ensure students meet their learning targets (learning intentions). Each teacher's Champions dashboard contains a chart of curriculum descriptors for subjects and year level's they are teaching. As teachers share QuizGames with their class, descriptors relating to subject categories are ticked off on the teacher's personal Descriptor Chart. This enables teachers to have an accurate gauge of where they are at any time and to easily find QuizGames that relate to specific areas of the curriculum required for formative assessment. Champions helps to reduce teacher's workload pressures and paves the way for increased job efficiency and satisfaction due to better time management. For example, a curriculum based QuizGame that was set up by a teacher in Tasmania, can be used by a teacher in South Australia to assess their students. This is possible because all created QuizGame content is always available from the shared Champions Library.

What should educational success for Australian students and schools look like?

The educational success of our schools and their student bodies should be based on a range of criteria. Student achievement test data such as NAPLAN testing is the most widely available measure and the one used for accountability purposes, therefore, this is the measure most commonly used to gauge success This is regardless of the goals or demographics of particular schools or programs. Test scores alone, do not often tell the whole story of educational success. It is incumbent upon education designers to create new complementary criteria by which to measure the success of a school and its students. These might include:

Has the school created a challenging learning environment;

Focused on key areas of the national curriculum such as STEM subjects? Students need to feel challenged to succeed as they absorb knowledge. Many students feel held back as facilitators teach to the class median. There should be clear methods of challenging all students within a group to move along at their own pace, no matter their individual potential.

Has the school encouraged the joy of personal discovery;

Where students are rewarded for pursuing new and varied strands of information on all manner of subjects including those on the curriculum? Students should be taught to enjoy learning on their own, at their own pace. The internet and various social media have made finding out about anything at any time almost ubiquitous.

Technology that allows for student's individualised discovery of information should be available and regular use of enabling technologies should be encouraged.

Does the school foster a culture of innovation?

All industries now promote that innovation is at the forefront of their culture and one of the future key exporting capabilities Australia can offer to the world. Candidates for jobs are often chosen based on their ability to demonstrate a history of innovative thinking or achievements. Instilling a desire to innovate in all students should be an important criteria of an improved education system.

While it is difficult to measure a school's success outside of commonly used testing practices, finding a way to measure the less tangible criteria above is essential if we aim to create students that are well equipped for a world where information is so readily available and easily consumed.

The Champions System enables the success criteria outlined above to not only be measured, but also to make each, a regular part of student's learning environment. Students are able to constantly challenge themselves, playing tailored QuizGames at a level of their choosing. More gifted students will create and play content suitable to their needs. Teachers can guide impaired learning students to useful content or let Champions 'suggest' a course appropriate to each individual's needs.

Our schools should be fostering the desire to learn. Champions takes students on their own journey in which they are encouraged to search, discover, play and learn. Mixing non-curriculum topics with curriculum subjects allow students to wander through an endless selection of thoughtfully created QuizGames, rounding out what will be a broader educational experience. Metrics gathered on student QuizGame topic choices could help direct future changes in ACARA's curriculum subjects, giving vital feedback to help shape the future of Australia and the way in which it learns.

Champions fosters innovation, allowing students to shape the way they learn, customise their own personal dashboard and create their own content. Built on international Best Practice, Champions won the Australian ITSMF Innovation of the Year Award in 2013.

What can we do to improve and how can we support ongoing improvement over time?

Schools in Australia often complain that they are under resourced. There is limited funding to fulfil what seems an ever increasing list of 'wants'. The government is forced to make difficult calls supporting one school over another and even closing many 'non performing' institutions. More tools are needed that can be rolled out to all schools, city based, rural and those in remote locations. Champions is a very low cost option to offer a level playing field. Wherever there is internet (any connection), students can connect on a daily basis to play, check their results and get motivated

to learn all over again. In most schools, IT infrastructure already in place, will mean that Champions requires no additional funding and will complement existing platforms such as My Schools and NAPLAN. Champions is an important tool for students, teachers and parents to foster good practice in learning and information retention. Champions can be customised to plug in and interact with existing systems that are working well.

Disadvantaged students in poorly funded schools can share resources (PC or tablet) in order to get their regular 'Champions time'. Champions has a proven track record of significant impact on learning outcomes for ALL students at any age and whatever their economic circumstance.

Importantly, Champions has 360 degree feedback, which means that students can give feedback throughout the system which teachers, principals and the government can use to actively improve educational delivery.

Regular feedback from students and teachers is useful to governments but has never been easy to gather. Champions invites user feedback in all areas and then collates the various forms of feedback for easy regular review by system administrators. Now all stakeholders can have a conversation around the way they are learning with quantifiable as well as subjective data, to help better shape Australia's learning future.

When used in adult learning (Such as Global Best Practice ITIL training courses), Champions was able to gather valuable feedback regarding exam questions which enabled changes to be made at a high level. Such feedback can prevent costly errors and makes for more satisfied users that feel in control of their learning. When used for revision training, Champions also improved overall score results and significantly improved student's information retention. In almost all cases, students said this was due to the fact that Champions seemed like a "fun game". As they didn't see it like it was traditional, boring learning, they were able to remember more and learn faster while playing a fun, colourful game in friendly competition with their fellow students.

To date, the only barrier to a Champions driven success story within the Australian Education system is the lack of will to roll out innovative, Australian solutions. Champions could be customised, owned and controlled by the government's own Education Department. Champions boasts Best Practice with customisable compliance options around cyber security, user privacy and system reporting. Volumes of useful data could be gathered and stored in what could be Australia's largest, ongoing knowledge base. It could be seen as a fun version of NAPLAN that could be used every day. Australia's lofty goals in global education relies on innovation and Champions is the key to Australia's smarter schools.