Equity loading for English language proficiency
RAM 2015 – Information sheet 6

The loading for English language proficiency is a resource allocation to support the additional learning needs of students who are developing their English language proficiency. This is a new equity loading for 2015 based on new methodology.

How is the loading calculated?
This loading is calculated using each school's reported level of English language proficiency need, using the English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) Learning Progression instrument. This instrument, developed by The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), is used by schools to assess each student's level of English language proficiency and to report on the school's overall need for English as an additional language support.

In this survey, English language proficiency is described using four phases of learning:

1. Beginning
2. Emerging
3. Developing

The loading provides funding for students in all four phases of English language proficiency. The level of funding for each phase is calculated using evidence-based weightings: the greater a student's level of need, the higher the weighting and the higher the level of resources provided. For example, students identified as being at the 'beginning' phase attract the highest weighting because they require more intensive support. Those students in the 'consolidating' phase attract the least amount of resourcing, as their English language support needs are relatively lower.

Each student's reported EAL/D phase is moderated by the length of time they have been in an Australian school.

The loading also takes into account that limited English language proficiency has a greater negative impact on student outcomes in high school, as opposed to primary school.

What is the minimum amount of funding given to schools under this loading?
A minimum of $400 (equivalent to approximately one teacher relief day) will be provided to a school. This ensures that a school receives a meaningful level of funding that could be used by teachers to access professional learning about how to support students to develop their English language proficiency.

What is the maximum level of funding a school may receive under this loading?
A maximum of $600,000 will be allocated to any one school to ensure that resources for this loading can be provided to all schools with students with English language proficiency needs.

How will the funds be allocated to schools?
Schools will receive their equity loading for English language proficiency as staffing and/or a flexible funding component. The introduction of a flexible funding component enables a more equitable allocation of resources and ensures that all schools with students learning English as an additional language receive an English language proficiency resource allocation.

For example, if the new English language proficiency loading determines a school will receive $110,000 and the standard cost of a teacher is $100,000 then the school will receive:

- Staffing component equivalent to one full-time employee (FTE) = $100,000
- Flexible funding component = $10,000.
The introduction of the flexible funding component ensures that schools with only small numbers of students requiring support to learn English as an additional language receive a level of resourcing.

**What does this mean for schools in 2015?**

The equity loading for English language proficiency will deliver resources to more than 145,000 students in 1,250 public schools. The current allocation of 896 FTE school-based ESL (English as a second language) teacher positions will not change.

Schools with new arrivals and refugee students will continue to receive additional resources through the targeted (individual student) support component of RAM.

Intensive English Centres and Intensive English High Schools will continue to have their own resourcing arrangements separate to the resources allocated under this equity loading.

**Will the amount of funding that schools receive change from year to year?**

Schools are resourced according to need so it is anticipated that under this loading there will be a degree of change from year to year as students progress through the phases of learning English.

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**How will schools use the funding to support students?**

Principals will consult with staff, parents and carers to determine the best way to support the needs of students learning English as an additional language.

The way schools use their funding will vary based on local needs. Some support will be for the entire school, and some will be for particular groups of students or individual students. Schools may choose to combine their equity funding to maximise opportunities and support for students.

All schools have a school plan in which they must show the school community how they propose to use the funds to support students. Accountability for how the funds have been used will occur through the annual school report.