

NSW Department of Education and Communities

Schooling Research Priorities

The NSW Department of Education and Communities welcomes high quality research that supports the goals and strategic directions of the Department. The Department encourages research which:

- supports the work of schools and demonstrates effective strategies for circulating outcomes to teachers, researchers and other parties
- contributes to knowledge and practice in education by extending existing knowledge
- appreciates inquiry into what works well, so schools can learn from successful experiences or cases and
- improves the wellbeing of learners e.g., research into positive psychology.

The following priorities guide students and researchers seeking ideas for research studies in schooling. The guidelines for applications to conduct research in schools can be found at: [Research Guidelines 2014](#).

RESEARCH PRIORITIES

The research priorities are derived from Departmental Priorities, the kinds of research supportive of the realisation of these priorities and research gaps in relation to these priorities.

National Priorities

The Melbourne Declaration

In December 2008, all Australian Education Ministers agreed to the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*. These goals are:

- Goal 1 Australian Schooling promotes equity and excellence.
- Goal 2 All young Australians become:
 - successful learners
 - confident and creative individuals and
 - active and informed citizens.

Successful learners

- are able to think deeply and logically and obtain and evaluate evidence in a disciplined way as the result of studying fundamental disciplines
- are creative, innovative and resourceful and are able to solve problems in ways that draw upon a range of learning areas and disciplines and
- are able to make sense of their world and think about how things have become the way they are.

Confident and creative individuals

- are able to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual and physical wellbeing are enterprising, show initiative and use their creative abilities.

- develop personal values and attributes such as honesty, resilience, empathy and respect for others
- have the knowledge, skills, understanding and values to establish and maintain healthy, satisfying lives and
- relate well to others and form and maintain healthy relationships.

Active and informed citizens

- act with moral and ethical integrity
- appreciate Australia's social, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity and have an understanding of Australia's system of government, history and culture
- understand and acknowledge the value of Indigenous cultures and possess the knowledge, skills and understanding to contribute to and benefit from reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians
- are able to relate to and communicate across cultures
- work for the common good, in particular sustaining and improving natural and social environments and
- are responsible global and local citizens.

There is little research on the best ways to realise these goals. The Department welcomes research in these areas for the realisation of these goals. The Melbourne Declaration can be accessed at:

[National Declaration on the Educational Goals for Young Australians](#)

Australian Curriculum

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is developing a draft Australian curriculum guided by the Melbourne Declaration. The Department welcomes research related to the implementation of an Australian Curriculum. The Authority's Website is at [ACARA](#).

General capabilities are a key dimension of the Australian Curriculum. They play a significant role in realising the goals set out in the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (MCEETYA 2008). The Australian Curriculum includes seven general capabilities. They are:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Information and communication technology capability
- Critical and creative thinking
- Personal and social capability
- Ethical understanding
- Intercultural understanding.

With the exception of literacy and numeracy, there is little research on how these general capabilities might be cultivated and assessed.

New South Wales Priorities

The Department's Five Year Strategic Plan 2012-2017 identifies three priorities:

Quality teaching and leadership

Quality teaching is essential to the success of our students, including improving literacy and numeracy for all children in our schools. We'll develop our teachers and leaders in education and increase their capacity to deliver our outcomes.

High expectations, closing the gaps

We'll have high expectations for all and focus on closing gaps in achievement in areas of disadvantage. We'll ensure everyone has the opportunity to achieve their potential and participate fully in our society.

New and better ways of doing business

We'll innovate and undertake continual improvement to respond to the changing needs of the people of New South Wales. We'll develop our staff and support them in delivering excellence. We'll form strong partnerships with others including parents and families, industry, and nongovernment education providers. We'll be open and accountable in both our day-to-day business and strategic outcomes.

Public Schools NSW – Strategic Directions 2015-2017

1. Raising expectations and enhancing the quality of student learning

Every student in our care to be actively engaged in meaningful, challenging and future-focused learning experiences to achieve and thrive as learners, leaders and responsible, productive citizens.

2. Fostering quality teaching and leadership

Build workforce capacity through focused professional learning and development that creates a culture for schools where every staff member is engaged in ongoing, relevant and evidence-based learning and practice at an individual and collective level.

3. New and better ways of delivering public education

All staff demonstrate systems leadership and innovation within a culture of organisational improvement through a collaborative approach to decision making that is accountable, transparent and reflects local and systemic priorities.

The Department welcomes research supporting the realisation of these priorities.

Schooling Research Priorities

Schooling Research Priorities are:

- cultivating general capabilities for all (in particular, using digital learning environments)
- enhancing partnerships between schools and their culturally and linguistically diverse communities to increase student engagement and retention
- reforming systems to improve equity in student learning outcomes, particularly by closing the divide between rural, regional and metropolitan students
- cultivating students' wellbeing and happiness
- improving teacher quality by enhancing the effectiveness of teacher education courses and using digital learning environments to enhance teacher professional learning
- engaging front-line staff in evidence-based practice
- encouraging research that promotes the development of innovative practices and approaches to meet the changing needs of the people of NSW.