2010

ACER 2009-2010 Annual Report

Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)

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The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) is one of the world’s leading educational research centres with a strong reputation as a provider of reliable support and expertise to education policy makers and professional practitioners.

ACER was established in 1930 and is a not-for-profit organisation independent of government. The company receives no direct financial support and generates its entire income through contracted research and development projects and through products and services that it develops and distributes.

ACER is a leader in the provision of quality educational research, both within Australia and internationally. As a national, independent research body, ACER brings a high level of expertise and objectivity to its work. Researchers bring many years of experience and expertise to their projects, covering a range of disciplines and research methods.

ACER develops and provides a range of research-based products and services to support the work of professional practitioners. In addition, ACER provides fee-for-service assessment services for schools, universities, employers and other clients within Australia and internationally.

ACER recognises the importance of equipping students, teachers and school leaders with the skills necessary to thrive in a global environment. ACER provides support through commissioned research projects, consultancies, professional development, and the provision of high quality assessment services and products to numerous countries and international clients.

Mission

ACER’s mission is to create and promote research-based knowledge, products and services that can be used to improve learning across the life span.

Underlying this mission is our belief in the importance of ongoing, lifelong learning both for the fulfilment of individuals and for the well-being of society, and our commitment to the use of systematic investigation, evaluation and critical reflection in the search for ways to improve learning.

Values

- **Expertise** – producing high quality, innovative research and research-based services and materials to improve learning
- **Innovation** – taking a creative, flexible and bold approach to the development of knowledge, services and materials
- **Independence** – providing advice and commentary that is informed through research, is authoritative, and non-aligned
- **Integrity** – being ethical, honest and trustworthy in all our relationships and interactions
- **Responsiveness** – anticipating, understanding, meeting and exceeding client and customer expectations
- **Reflection & improvement** – being self-reflective and listening to and learning from others in order to improve the quality of our work, our efficiency and productivity
- **Positive relationships** – creating an organisational environment characterised by respect, fairness, openness and support of physical and emotional wellbeing
- **Individual fulfilment** – encouraging personal contribution and achievement, and the pursuit of excellence
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During 2010 ACER celebrated its 80th anniversary as a leading international educational research institute. An important development during the year was the finalisation of our Strategic Plan for the next triennium. The plan spells out how we intend to pursue ACER’s mission — to create and promote research-based knowledge, products and services that can be used to improve learning across the life span — over the next three years. Through our research and development work we aim to contribute to four broad aspirations: ensuring that every learner is engaged in challenging learning opportunities appropriate to their readiness and needs; ensuring that every learning professional is highly skilled, knowledgeable and engaged in excellent practice; ensuring that every learning community is well resourced and passionately committed to improving outcomes for all learners; and promoting an equitable society in which all groups have access to quality educational opportunities and experience success.

Our global work and contributions grew during the year, including through our involvement in large international achievement studies such as the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), IEA International Civic and Citizenship Education Study, IEA International Study of Computer and Information Literacy, Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). The year also saw an expansion of the activities of ACER India and growing work through our office in Dubai.

Domestically, the year saw the announcement of the first set of award-winning schools under the Schools First program: an initiative of ACER and the Foundation for Young Australians with funding from the National Australia Bank. The program recognises schools that have established outstanding partnerships with local community organisations or businesses to improve opportunities and outcomes for students.

Professor Geoff Masters
ACER Chief Executive Officer
ACER celebrated its 80th anniversary in 2010. In 1930 ACER’s first office was established in central Melbourne with chief executive Ken Cunningham and a secretary. By the end of the 1930s ACER’s staff had expanded to five. Eight decades later, ACER has grown into one of the world’s leading educational research bodies, with more than 300 staff in offices in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide, Dubai and Delhi.

ACER’s revenue grew by eleven per cent in 2009–10 to just over $66 million, with a surplus of more than five million dollars being achieved on this income. Both income and surplus were at record levels and reflect strong ongoing business growth in a number of areas of our work. This is a very pleasing outcome in the global financial context of the last year.

In 2010 ACER developed a Strategic Plan for 2010–13, focussing on:

- **Learners and their needs** – every learner engaged in challenging learning opportunities appropriate to their readiness and needs
- **The learning profession** – every learning professional highly skilled, knowledgeable and engaged in excellent practice
- **Places of learning** – every learning community well resourced and passionately committed to improving outcomes for all learners
- **A Learning society** – a society in which every learner experiences success and has an opportunity to achieve their potential

In 2010 the new ACER Institute replaced the learning programs of the Centre for Professional Learning with a series of ACER designed, developed and delivered professional learning modules. The Graduate Program modules focus on the key areas of Assessment of Student Learning and the Teaching of Reading. The ACER Institute also continues to deliver seminars and conferences, and customised programs to schools and systems.

The 2009 ACER Research Conference held in Perth in August was very successful, with 670 delegates gathering to explore the theme of Assessment and Student Learning. The conference covered issues relating to assessing and reporting student learning and using assessment information to inform classroom practice and to monitor school and system performances.

ACER continues to be involved in large international achievement studies. ACER has been working on the data and reporting for the 2009 OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), and have begun work on developing the 2012 assessment. In May ACER released a report about factors influencing the achievement of Australia’s Indigenous students in PISA.

ACER has also had international involvement in the IEA International Civic and Citizenship Education Study, and the IEA International Study of Computer and Information Literacy. ACER is also working on the national...
components of the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS).

ACER has been involved in various aspects of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). ACER undertook all the test development for NAPLAN 2010 and 2011, and was also involved in marking and data analysis.

In late 2009 the state and national award winners for the first year of the Schools First program were announced. ACER has been working with NAB and the Foundation for Young Australians (FYA) on the program, which provides financial recognition of success in establishing effective school-community partnerships, and financial support to build stronger school-community partnerships. Following a proposal from ACER for a national award scheme to recognise outstanding school-community partnerships, NAB made available $15 million over three years in award money for schools.

ACER has seen impressive growth in international work, with the volume of work growing in ACER’s international offices in Dubai and Delhi. This includes assisting governments to participate in international achievement studies. ACER also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Indian Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) to collaborate in research and assessment programs.

This year saw ACER Press release a new school assessment resource, PATScience, following more than two years of development and trial testing. The new addition to the Progressive Achievement Tests series complements PATReading and PATMaths, which are now widely used in Australian schools. PATScience fills an identified need for better classroom information about the progress students make in their science learning between Year 3 and Year 10.

ACER received a Fair and Flexible Employer Recognition Award for 2009-10, presented by Workforce Victoria and the Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development. The award recognises ACER’s innovative programs that improve the work and family balance of their employees.

The new role of Indigenous Liaison Officer was created to raise the profile of Indigenous issues and effective practices that can improve outcomes for Indigenous young people. The Indigenous Liaison Officer will assist in identifying opportunities for ACER to contribute to this, and promote ACER as an Employer of Choice for Indigenous people.

As part of ACER’s commitment to monitoring and improving sustainable practices, carbon inventory reports have been produced, based on emission sources including electricity gas, company vehicle travel, air conditioner refrigerant leakage, taxi use and air flight travel. Emissions from electricity consumption and air flight travel contribute approximately 90 per cent of total emissions for ACER.
Teacher professional development

Local and international research suggests that the single most important influence on student learning outcomes is the quality of the teaching a student receives.

Consequently, there is increased interest in research that identifies the features of quality teaching and effective professional learning. Teachers, schools, governments and policy makers invest considerable amounts of time and money in professional development programs. These groups want evidence about the effect that professional learning has, not only on classroom practice, but also on student learning outcomes. Providers of professional development are also looking for research that can guide them in designing programs that are more likely to lead to significant and sustained improvement in teachers and their students.

Effective professional development

Effective professional development programs focus learning on pedagogical approaches that have a strong research and theoretical base. This increases the likelihood that teachers incorporating this knowledge into their practice will find that it enhances their teaching.

ACER’s research has identified four areas that professional development can impact upon;

- Teacher knowledge – of content and pedagogy,
- Teacher practice – teaching and learning strategies used in the classroom,
- Teacher efficacy – ability to reflect on and evaluate one’s own practice, and
- Student learning outcomes.

Professional development programs that positively impact on teachers and on student learning contain the following ‘opportunity to learn’ features:

Content focus

Professional learning is most likely to improve students’ learning outcomes if it increases teachers’ understanding of the content they teach. This understanding includes how to represent and convey the content in meaningful ways, and how students learn that content.

Follow up

Teachers need opportunities to practice their new learning as well as ongoing assistance in their school or classroom to help them implement changes advocated in the program.

Feedback

Effective professional development programs provide teachers with feedback from a coach or supporting teacher during the critical and difficult implementation phase when they are trying out new practices in their classroom.

Collaborative examination of student work

Teachers gain a great deal of valuable learning from opportunities to examine student work in collaboration with colleagues – especially their own students’ work, and in relation to standards for what students should know and be able to do.

Active learning

Effective professional development programs draw teachers into an analysis of their current practice in relation to professional standards for good practice. This feature holds particular currency, as work is underway to implement a national teaching standards framework across all Australian states and territories.

Standards guided professional learning

A National Education Agreement established by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) came into effect on 1 January 2009. Among the policy directions outlined in the agreement was a commitment to improving teacher and school leader quality. The agreement detailed a reform direction to attract, train, place, develop and retain quality teachers and school leaders.

To successfully implement these reforms, COAG must create real incentives for professional learning by building a stronger link between
advanced standards of practice that are associated with specialisation, such as radiologist or surgeon. Teaching also has specialisations which need to be taken into account when developing professional standards for teachers. For example, the standards for accomplished primary teaching are significantly different from those of secondary school science teaching and the professional learning required to reach those standards will also differ.

Consensus on a national teaching standards framework will lead to substantial gains for teacher professional development. A national certification system based on high professional standards, recognised by employing authorities for career progression, has the capacity to engage many more teachers in the kind of professional learning that leads to improved learning outcomes for students.

ACER Institute

ACER has recently established the ACER Institute to replace the previous Centre for Professional Learning. ACER Institute delivers a range of professional development activities based on principles of effective professional learning. These activities include conferences, seminars, interactive workshops and customised programs for schools, clusters of schools, regions and systems locally and internationally.

ACER Institute is currently developing Graduate Programs in Literacy, Numeracy and Assessment of Student Learning. These rigorous, evidence-based courses will be available nationally, enabling Australia’s classroom teachers to draw on ACER’s knowledge and expertise while engaging in effective university-recognised and accredited professional learning.

The ACER Institute programs are research based and practice focused,
providing educational practitioners and school leaders with expertise in teaching and learning, curriculum development and implementation, effective pedagogical strategies, assessment and reporting and educational leadership.

Teachers are provided with clear directions on relating the new knowledge gained to effective classroom practice and improved student learning outcomes. The professional development activities delivered by ACER Institute are supported by the wide variety of resources available through ACER Press.

ACER Institute’s recent work included delivery of a five day program on the Cognitive Attributes of Mathematics and English Test Items to senior officers from the Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board, and a four day program on School Based Assessment for the Hong Kong Curriculum Development Institute. Locally, the ACER Institute in conjunction with the Mathematics Association of Victoria and the University of Melbourne has successfully developed and delivered a five day program for the newly appointed Victorian education department Primary Mathematics Specialists and developed 12 professional learning modules for their ongoing use as well as two Victorian state-wide programs for primary and secondary teachers of mathematics.

The annual ACER Research Conference, managed by the ACER Institute, is now in its fifteenth successful year. It brings together key researchers, policy makers and teachers from a broad range of educational contexts from Australia and overseas to stimulate conversation about key educational issues. Recent conference topics include Assessment and Student Learning: Collecting, Interpreting and Using Data to Inform Teaching, and Teaching Mathematics? Make it count. Conference attendees hear the latest international and local research and explore how this knowledge can be used to inform and enhance their own educational practices.

The effective and practical professional learning offered by the ACER Institute is highly valued by educational practitioners at all levels of education with programs being attended by over 2000 educators annually.

ANNIE TAYLOR – Classroom teacher

Classroom teacher Annie Taylor understands the benefits to be gained from teacher professional development, having recently attended an ACER Institute Literacy program.

After three years teaching Prep at a primary school in Melbourne’s south-eastern suburbs, Annie wanted to draw on the experience of others to learn new and different ways of introducing the letters of the alphabet.

One particular boy in Annie’s classroom motivated her to attend the ACER Institute professional development program.

‘I wanted to learn some activities that were targeted at certain problems that students face and learn how to overcome them,’ Annie said. ‘For example, what do you do when certain kids can’t achieve an activity’s expected outcome?’

While participating in the workshop Annie could immediately see how the practices and pedagogy covered in the program could be used to improve teaching and learning across her whole classroom.

‘They were really good, simple things that I could do on a daily basis to help my kids understand that all letters have a name and make a sound,’ Annie said.

Annie feels that the appeal and success of the ACER Institute professional development program is due to its interactive format and practical focus; something she rarely encountered at university.

‘We were getting out of our seats and doing hands on activities,’ Annie said.

‘It was a nice mixture between sitting down, hearing new information and then getting to apply that information.’

Annie said the presenters at ACER Institute were very current in their knowledge and understanding of teaching.

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ACER works in an increasingly international context, providing research and assessment services, consultancy, support and professional development to governments and educational organisations in numerous countries. In addition, ACER develops, implements and evaluates regional, national and international assessment programs for a broad range of international clients.

Central to the notion of international development is the practice of working in partnership to improve educational outcomes and develop local solutions to local problems.

To better service the needs of our clients in the Middle East and in South Asia, ACER established offices in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and New Delhi, India. These offices provide assessment services, professional learning and leadership training for teachers and principals.

ACER India’s achievement this year of not-for-profit status is important not only for ACER but also for India’s educational development. Any surplus made by the India office will remain in the country and be used to build the work of that office. Following this event, ACER signed a memorandum of understanding with India’s Central Board of Secondary Education to express our intention to work together to implement educational reforms, assessment programs and professional development. This, combined with the newly-established ‘Educational Development in India’ Steering Committee, will significantly increase ACER’s contribution to educational
development and school reform efforts in India and surrounding countries.

Shared responsibility
ACER is engaged in significant collaborative work with prominent organisations such as the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), the World Bank, AusAID, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and with Ministries of Education in countries including Bangladesh, Brunei, Chile, New Zealand and the USA.

Each of ACER’s partners in international development share our commitment towards improving learning across the lifespan.

The World Bank, an organisation that provides low-interest loans, interest-free credits and grants to developing countries for investment in national economic strategies, has funded ACER projects in Cambodia, India, Tajikistan, Vietnam and many African nations. The World Bank believes that education is the foundation of all societies and of globally competitive economies. International educational development is therefore their basis for reducing poverty and inequality, improving health, enabling the use of new technologies, and creating and spreading knowledge.

AusAID, the Australian government agency responsible for managing Australia’s overseas aid program, believes that education is “transformational for individuals, families and societies” because it enables people to participate actively in their societies, increases employment opportunities and delivers benefits in governance, productivity and nation-building.

Together, ACER and AusAID have contributed to numerous projects, including ongoing work since 2006 for the Australian-Indonesian Basic Education Program. Aimed at improving equitable access to higher quality and better governed basic education services, especially in disadvantaged areas, the program was set up to support the government of Indonesia’s commitment to a universal standard of nine years compulsory free schooling.

As part of this program, ACER was engaged to assess the capacity of Indonesia’s National Assessment Centre to provide a high-quality, effective national examination system that allows

A global objective and a local solution to a local problem:
Primary education in Ethiopia

In September 2000 the member states of the United Nations unanimously adopted the Millennium Declaration, a document that affirmed their values and principles and detailed their resolution to end extreme poverty and bring peace, human rights and human development to everyone, everywhere.

The UN identified eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as a supporting framework for the Declaration, challenging member states to achieve quantifiable development targets by the year 2015. MDG number two aims to achieve universal primary school education for all boys and girls.

According to MDG reports, in 2010, two-thirds of the way through the assignment, primary school enrolment is at least 90 per cent in all places except Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Unprecedented progress has, however, been made in these regions.

In Ethiopia, the second most populous country in Africa, primary school enrolment figures grew from 38.5 per cent of primary school-aged children in 2000 up to 72.3 per cent in 2007. This represents a jump in enrolment numbers from 5 million to 14 million.

Such rapid expansion places a heavy strain on resources. Teachers need to be trained, classrooms need to be built and the standard of education in general needs to be carefully monitored.

In 2009, with financial assistance from the World Bank, Ethiopia embarked on a General Education Quality Improvement Project (GEQIP). The project aims to improve student learning outcomes, increase primary completion rates and increase secondary enrolment rates by focusing on the five most critical aspects of quality improvement: (i) Curriculum, Textbooks and Assessment; (ii) Teacher Development Program; (iii) School Improvement Program; (iv) Management and Administration Program; and (v) Program Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation.

ACER was contracted to support the Ethiopian Ministry of Education in informing the design and preparation of student learning assessment activities. After completing a detailed, evidence-based review of the current status of learning assessment activity in Ethiopia, ACER proposed a strategic set of activities and implementation plan that would strengthen the capacity of the ministry to more effectively carry out student learning assessments that are consistent with global experience and best practice; and prepare them to eventually participate in an international assessment exercise.
for diagnostic evaluation and encourages achievement. Following submission of a report and recommendations, ACER provided training on developing test items and scoring examination scripts to assess higher-order levels of thinking and the application of knowledge. ACER also completed a number of other consultancy and research projects for the Australian-Indonesian Basic Education Program before its completion early in 2010.

International assessments

Educational development is not just confined to poor, third-world or developing countries. All nations have a responsibility to continually improve educational practice and performance. This raises the question: how do nations monitor their progress?

The answer lies in international assessments. In recent times there has been growing international interest in how educational standards compare from one country to another and in what can be learned from global experiences about effective educational practices. Widely administered, culturally diverse assessments that are not curriculum specific enable countries to examine their education system against international standards.

ACER leads a consortium of research organisations that manages the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) to assess the mathematical, scientific and reading literacy skills of 15-year-olds in more than 60 countries. Taking place near the end of compulsory schooling, PISA assesses students’ readiness to meet the challenges of today’s information societies by measuring their ability to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned throughout their school lives to real-life problems and situations. According to OECD Secretary General, Angel Gurría, PISA sets ambitious goals for nations by showing that some countries succeed in providing both high quality and equitable learning outcomes.

Since 2000, ACER has been involved in each three-year cycle of PISA, with shared responsibility for test development and translation, training of international participants, survey operations, data analysis and reporting. ACER’s work on PISA includes: leading the development and devising the methodology of procedures required to implement the survey in all participating countries; developing and implementing sampling procedures and assisting with monitoring sampling outcomes across participating countries; leading the development of all assessment instruments in Reading, Mathematics, Science, Problem Solving, Computer-based testing, background and contextual questionnaires; developing purpose-built software to assist in sampling and data capture; and analysing and assisting the OECD to prepare the international report. The international report for the 2009 administration was released at the end of 2010.

ACER’s experience in the development of international assessments enabled the creation of the International Schools’ Assessment (ISA), a test that takes the concepts of PISA and applies them to children in Grades 3 to 10 at schools whose language of instruction is English. The ISA is statistically linked to PISA so that results from each assessment can be compared and used to:

1. measure students’ achievement and progress over time
2. identify and address individual, group or subgroup strengths and weaknesses
3. evaluate instructional programs against objective evidence of student performance
4. diagnose gaps and measure growth in learning between grade levels and from year to year within one grade level
5. provide normative data in relation to the selected population to see “how we are doing”

Over 49 000 students from 260 schools located across six continents participated in ISA 2009-10.

In addition to operating as a co-ordinated, international standardised assessment, the ISA can be adapted or specially developed for international clients. Spain’s largest university, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, is using tests prepared by ACER to assess the mathematics and Spanish reading skills of students in grades four and eight. The tests consist of items from ISA and PISA, ensuring that the results can be related to PISA standards. As well as the test forms and the ISA items, ACER is providing administration training and consultancy on analysis and reporting.

Another adaptation of the ISA was recently used in Mexico as part of an evaluation of their secondary curriculum reform. With ACER’s guidance, the Mexican Ministry of Education tested students in years seven, eight, nine and 10. Spurred by the success of this endeavour, over the period 2010 to 2012, Mexico’s Monterrey Institute of Technology is administering a series of monitoring tests in mathematics and reading, in order to compare the performance of students of teachers who have participated in the Institute’s professional development courses with control groups whose teachers have not undergone this professional development. ACER is preparing tests consisting of ISA items and is also performing training, analysis and reporting functions.
Teachers, parents and policy makers need reliable, objective information about children’s learning. Assessments of educational achievement help measure students’ level of achievement at a particular point in time and help to establish whether or not students are meeting expected standards. Monitoring and benchmarking students’ achievement and growth against appropriate points of reference is important not only in measuring individual students’ knowledge but also in identifying areas where improvement may be needed within a particular classroom or on a system wide or national scale. Large scale international assessments can also help governments measure the ‘health’ of education systems by allowing comparisons with other nations.

Over many years ACER has become a leading provider of reliable support and expertise in monitoring and reporting on student achievement. ACER develops and administers national and international assessments that provide educational decision-makers with information that can be used to inform policy aimed at improving the standard of education.

National sample assessments

To monitor achievement on a national scale and set standards for student achievement, the Australian government introduced the National Assessment Program (NAP). ACER makes a considerable contribution to the implementation of the NAP.

Under NAP, over a three-year cycle a sample of students undertake assessments of Science Literacy, Information and Communication Technology Literacy (ICTL), and Civics and Citizenship assessments. ACER has been contracted to conduct NAP–ICTL 2005, 2008 and 2011 and NAP – Civics and Citizenship 2004, 2007 and 2010. In each of these studies 6000 students at Year 6 and 6000 at Year 10 are sampled across Australia.

Sample assessments involve a representative selection of students and are designed to give a big picture insight into achievement. The sampling approach provides a system-level report about the overall educational performance of students and subgroups of students, such as boys and girls, students
National testing

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) assesses students’ literacy and numeracy, providing the best nationally comparable student data currently available. In contrast to the NAP sample assessments, NAPLAN assesses all Australian students at Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

NAPLAN allows Australian schools and systems to identify areas of specific educational need, to track the progress of particular groups of students, such as Indigenous students or students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds, and to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of literacy and numeracy programs.

NAPLAN provides a systematic basis for identifying individual students who are not meeting national minimum standards in these crucial areas of the school curriculum. NAPLAN plays an important role in focusing the efforts of the education community on ensuring that all young Australians at least meet those standards. ACER contributes to this effort with test development, data analysis and, in some jurisdictions, the marking of NAPLAN tests.

ACER’s work on NAPLAN involves trialling in schools at least twice the number of test items required for the final test. ACER psychometricians then analyse the results, identify the best items and assemble a set of proposed test papers that are submitted to the national stakeholders for approval.

ACER’s involvement in NAPLAN continues after testing is completed and marking of papers begins. In 2009 ACER employed approximately 400 people working daily to mark more than 360,000 NAPLAN tests. With a capacity to provide up to 250 networked computers, ACER’s Sydney facility is specially fitted to cater for such large scale testing and marking activities.

with language backgrounds other than English, and students in provincial and remote parts of Australia.
ACER has joined with the NSW Department of Education and Training to provide teachers with a training program for the NAPLAN narrative writing task. The self-paced, online training materials allow teachers to practice marking and receive immediate feedback so that they can become familiar with the philosophy underpinning the assessment of writing for NAPLAN. When training is complete, teachers can choose to undertake an online certification exercise to show that the level of consistency achieved satisfies the nationally agreed protocols for marking. Due to the high response to the NAPLAN Narrative Marking Certificate, the ACER Persuasive Writing Marking Certificate is currently being developed.

Once NAPLAN has been administered, ACER analyses and prepares the test results for reporting. The statistical methods used to analyse students’ test performances allow results to be compared directly from one year to the next, enabling trends in literacy and numeracy levels to be monitored over time. Because NAPLAN is administered to every student at two-year intervals, it is now also possible to examine change in the results of those students who sat NAPLAN in both 2008 and in 2010.

NAPLAN is constantly evolving. Future modifications are anticipated to align the tests with the new national curriculum. Special attention is paid to making the testing procedure an engaging experience in order to encourage students’ full participation and to bring out students’ best. ACER is committed to ensuring that NAPLAN tests continue to be based on international best practice in educational measurement.

**International benchmarks**

Australia’s participation in two international sample assessments – the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) administered by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) – also forms part of Australia’s National Assessment Program. These global assessments enable Australia’s education system to be examined against international standards.

PISA and TIMSS are international sample assessments conducted every three and four years respectively. ACER is involved in the operation of both of these assessments. PISA was last conducted in 2009 while the next assessment round for TIMSS will take place in 2011.

ACER is responsible for the implementation of PISA and TIMSS in Australia. This includes involvement with the sampling process, liaising with schools, overseeing national data collection, in-depth analysis of data, and producing national reports with a focus on Australia’s standing in an international context.

In addition to implementing PISA in Australia and writing the national report, ACER leads an international consortium of research organisations and educational institutions to deliver the International PISA project on behalf of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Before the 14 000 Australian students, and around 470 000 students worldwide, sat down to tackle the 2009 PISA assessments, each item had been through a rigorous process of development and trial to ensure it could be understood by students from a wide range of language and cultural backgrounds and was based on situations relevant to their current and future lives. All items were then translated into nearly 50 languages to meet the language needs of the 65 participating OECD member countries and partner economies. Item development is just part of the work undertaken by the ACER-led consortium that conducts PISA around the world. Internationally, ACER’s work on PISA includes:

- Leading the development and devising the methodology of procedures required to implement the PISA survey in all participating countries;
- Developing and implementing sampling procedures and assisting with monitoring sampling outcomes across participating countries;
- Coordinating the development of assessment frameworks;
- Leading the development of all assessment instruments in reading, mathematics, science, problem-solving (in 2003 and 2012), financial literacy (in 2012), background and contextual questionnaires, in paper-based and computer-based formats;
- Developing purpose-built software to assist in sampling and data capture; and
- Analysing the data and assisting the OECD to prepare the international report.

PISA examines 15-year-old students’ ability to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned throughout their school lives to real-life problems and situations as they approach the end of compulsory schooling. PISA measures student performance across the three core domains of reading, mathematics and science every three years (and, less regularly, in other areas of interest, such as problem-solving and financial literacy). Results are reported against six ‘described proficiency levels’: descriptions mapped along the measurement scales that encapsulate what students performing at a given level know and can do. PISA is not a test of any particular curriculum. Rather, it reports on 15-year-old students’ ability to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned throughout their school lives to real-life problems and situations as they approach the end of compulsory schooling.

TIMSS, on the other hand, examines how well Year 4 and Year 8 students have mastered the factual and procedural
knowledge taught in the school mathematics curriculum and science curriculum. Student performance is measured internationally at four benchmarks: advanced, high, intermediate and low. TIMSS tests are based on curriculum content common across participating countries.

Australia’s participation in PISA and TIMSS enables the country to examine its educational systems against international standards and determine whether the education we are providing them with is one that will give them a strong base of knowledge and skills and the ability to apply those skills in their future lives.

Professional development and resources

In addition to our work on developing and implementing assessments, ACER aims to be a leader in promoting best practice in monitoring and reporting student achievement and supporting classroom teachers with professional development opportunities and resources. This aim was reflected in the decision to devote our 2009 annual research conference to the theme ‘Assessment and Student Learning: Collecting, interpreting and using data to inform teaching.’ The conference in Perth attracted more than 650 delegates from around Australia and overseas, making it one of ACER’s largest ever research conferences.

The conference explored the information that can be gained from quality classroom and system wide assessments and how effective teachers use that information to guide their teaching. Thirteen Australian and international educational experts gave presentations on key issues related to the effective use of data to support teachers in identifying starting points for teaching, diagnosing errors and misunderstandings, providing feedback to guide student action, evaluating the effectiveness of their teaching, and monitoring individual progress over time.

In November 2009, ACER Press released PATScience, a new addition to the Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) suite of assessment tools that includes PATMaths and PATReading. Science has been identified as an area in need of classroom attention, since the 2006 cycle of PISA reported Australian 15-year-olds’ interest in science subjects is among the lowest in the world. PATScience is designed to assess science knowledge, scientific literacy and understanding of scientific principles, as well as their application. PATScience, like the other PAT tests, is a diagnostic assessment tool that allows teachers to determine the types of questions that individual students are struggling with so that they can address the gaps in students’ learning.

The Queensland Teaching and Learning Audit Tool

Benchmarking is a learning exercise that stems from a desire to improve. It requires self-monitoring and the identification of best practice.

However, the benchmarking process is not just restricted to observing outcomes. It also involves monitoring the systems and practices used on a day-to-day basis to determine if they can be improved.

Following the release of the 2009 report by ACER CEO Professor Geoff Masters, A Shared Challenge: Improving Literacy, Numeracy and Science Learning in Queensland Primary Schools, the Queensland Department of Education contracted ACER to develop a way to examine the status of curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment in every state primary and secondary school.

The Queensland Teaching and Learning Audit Tool is a set of indicators and rating benchmarks against which eight identified domains of highly effective practice can be judged. ACER has trained a team of 16 highly-successful, current school principals in the role of auditors.

Schools are rated against each of the eight domains as outstanding, high, medium or low. As a precaution against the creation of league-tables, no ‘final’, ‘total’ or ‘average’ rating is awarded. Audit reports also detail recommendations, affirmations and commendations for each domain. The school principal has the opportunity to provide feedback on the report and must develop an action plan in response to the recommendations within 10 days of the audit.

The Queensland Teachers’ Union has reported positive feedback from schools, with many identifying the usefulness of the audit findings in developing their four-year strategic plan.

Funding has already been set aside to continue the audit in Queensland on an ongoing basis. Schools will be subject to an audit every four years and also when a new principal arrives, so that the tool can be used to measure growth.

Education Queensland said the audit system is a tool to assist all state schools to monitor their practice and focus on continuous improvement.

ACER has opened the availability of the Audit Tool to all schools as part of the Committed to Excellence School Improvement Program. Further information about the program is available on the Teaching and Learning School Improvement Framework website www.acer.edu.au/c2e.
As the developed world becomes more and more reliant on knowledge as a vital part of economic growth and development, the importance of highly skilled workers who can create, disseminate and use new knowledge becomes integral. With the bachelor degree now being the passport to a professional career, many systems are taking active steps to increase access to higher education, to monitor and improve students’ academic experience, and to ensure that sufficient people achieve high-quality graduate outcomes.

Sustaining quality in times of growth requires ongoing analysis and innovation. Researchers need to work with leaders and practitioners to define, measure, monitor and improve the things that count. To do this ACER works across a wide range of areas. Work spans tertiary admissions, teaching quality, student engagement, graduate outcomes, workforce planning, and management and leadership. This work involves developing quality assurance and improvement processes, helping institutions generate and use evidence to drive change, and designing programs and evaluations.

**Improving participation**

In 2009 the Australian government set a target for 40 per cent of 25- to 34-year-old Australians to have attained a bachelor-level qualification by the year 2025. ACER has conducted research into the implications this policy will have on growth, supply and demand in the higher education sector, as well as
the implications for students, teachers, institutions and other stakeholders.

In late 2009, ACER provided the Victorian government’s Higher Education Expert Panel with the findings of research to project overall attainment numbers, identify the size and components of attainment numbers, and estimate university completion/commencement numbers in Victorian universities from now to 2025.

This research showed that in order to reach the national targets for university attainment levels, Victorian enrolments will need to begin to increase immediately and maintain a high and sustained level in comparison to the volumes of students currently enrolled. These findings have been used extensively by the Higher Education Expert Panel in their comprehensive report to the Victorian government with recommendations relating to the future of higher education provision.

Another of the Australian government’s targets is that 20 per cent of undergraduate students should be from low socioeconomic backgrounds by the year 2020. To reach this target it will be necessary to identify people with the intellectual capacity to succeed at university who have so far been overlooked by the traditional selection methods, namely, Year 12 achievement in curriculum based exams.

One way to offer the opportunity of university education to traditionally underrepresented groups is with the use of carefully constructed aptitude tests such as ACER’s Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT) and uniTEST. For over 15 years, STAT has been used to assess university candidates who may not have completed high school or did not do so recently. uniTEST was introduced in 2007 after the Government contracted ACER to pilot a Year 12 aptitude test to assist university admission decisions. National research studies have shown that these tests do help ensure that all capable students, independent of background, can participate in university study.

Reliable, valid and efficient university admissions processes, such as STAT and uniTEST, will help to optimise the fairness of higher education in Australia and enable more people to fulfil their tertiary education goals.

Supporting academic involvement

Growth in the number of higher education students must be balanced with increases in the number of academics in the system. This is important, as a substantial amount of research has shown that the contact students have with staff are among the strongest influences on positive learning outcomes. Yet results from the 2009 Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE) revealed that Australian and New Zealand students’ level of interactions with staff is considerably lower – between 10 and 20 per cent lower – than USA students’ level of interactions. Further research in this area is necessary to better understand student-staff interactions and to lead to improvement.

Investigations into academic work have featured strongly among ACER’s recent research projects. A report on the supply, demand and characteristics of the higher degree by research population, prepared by ACER for the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, suggested that if completion rates remain static, by 2020 the supply of domestic university doctorate completions will fall short of what is needed to provide enough skilled people to meet the level of growth projected in the workforce.

Work is currently underway on a national study into higher degree by research students’ career intentions – especially their interest in pursuing academic work. ACER has collaborated with the University of Melbourne’s Centre for the Study of Higher Education to conduct a survey of Australian-based higher degree by research students. The outcomes of this survey will provide evidence to assist in better planning for the future of the academic workforce.

In response to the growing number of postgraduate research students in Australia, ACER Press has published a collection of essays designed to guide current and prospective doctoral candidates and doctoral supervisors through study. The third book in the series, Beyond Doctorates Downunder: Maximising the impact of your Doctorate from Australia and New Zealand, by Denholm and Evans (ACER Press, 2009) helps final-year doctoral students and recent graduates maximise the benefits of completing a doctorate by communicating its research and using their doctorates in their lives and careers.

Similarly, An Academic Life: A handbook for new academics by Cantwell and Scevak (ACER Press, 2010) addresses the key areas of academic work: teaching and learning; research, research training and publication; administration and community service; and the social and cultural aspects of academic life, in an effort to orient new academics to the increasing demands and expectations placed upon them.

Measuring success

Of course it is one thing to focus on students and teaching staff in an effort to transform higher education, but it is another thing altogether to determine whether higher education has added value to graduates and broader economic and social systems.

In 2006, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Ministerial Conference recognised that, globally, the quality of higher education must be improved.
From this discussion, the OECD formed an initiative to assess knowledge, skills and learning outcomes of university students on an international scale, regardless of culture or language.

The OECD has chosen ACER to head a feasibility study into that initiative; the Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO). More than 200 higher education institutions from 15 countries will participate in the feasibility study. Due for completion in 2011, results from the study will inform design and implementation of a full-scale AHELO.

ACER provides a bi-annual Higher Education Update and further information on its website: www.acer.edu.au/highereducation. In 2010, ACER launched a new higher education research program.
Indigenous education

Use of Terms
Throughout this section, the terms Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander are used when referring to Australia’s First Nations people. ‘Indigenous’ is used when referring to another source that uses this term.

Improving Indigenous learning
ACER is proud to be contributing to research on Indigenous education and aims to be a national leader in promoting research and development that focuses on improving Indigenous learning. ACER’s program of research in Indigenous education has developed over many years and is informed by its Standing Committee on Indigenous Education comprising of prominent Indigenous educationists and academics from across Australia. The Standing Committee provides expert advice on the areas of Indigenous education most in need of research and the ways in which ACER expertise could be put to best use.

Much of ACER’s Indigenous education research to date has focused on understanding the factors that influence the outcomes of schooling for Indigenous students, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy.

ACER recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and youth may be faced with challenges that are not encountered by non-Indigenous children and youth and is committed to improving educational outcomes and facilitating smooth transitions to school, further education and employment through targeted research, educational resources and quality learning programs for teachers and school leaders. By actively pursuing these objectives, ACER hopes to help close the gap between the educational outcomes of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

In 2010 ACER appointed its first Indigenous Liaison Officer after recognising the importance of cultural intelligence, relationship building and community engagement to ensure integrity when undertaking research in Indigenous education. The role of the Indigenous Liaison Officer is to work closely with staff on projects that focus on Indigenous issues and provide leadership and direction in identifying opportunities for ACER to contribute to the Indigenous education agenda.

What the research says about achievement
ACER CEO Professor Geoff Masters’ review of Queensland’s performance in literacy, numeracy and science discussed Indigenous and non-Indigenous students’ academic results. He found that it is well established, nationally, that Indigenous students have lower average levels of school achievement than non-Indigenous students; students living in remote locations have lower average levels of achievement than students living in metropolitan and provincial centres; and students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds have lower average levels of achievement than students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. Within these student groupings, there can be enormous variability in student achievement, and these groupings are not mutually exclusive.

According to a 2009 ACER report about the achievement of Indigenous students in the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the distribution of Indigenous students by socioeconomic background is substantially skewed, with 44 per cent of Indigenous students classified in the lowest socioeconomic group, compared to 25 per cent of students overall in Australia. The report brings together analyses of the achievement of 15-year-old Indigenous students in reading, mathematical and scientific literacy in each of the three cycles of PISA conducted in 2000, 2003 and 2006 to show that the performance of Indigenous students has not improved over this time.

Across the three PISA cycles, Indigenous students performed at a substantially lower average level in reading, mathematical and scientific literacy than their non-Indigenous peers. In each domain, the average for Indigenous students was more than 80 score points (or more than one proficiency level) lower than non-Indigenous students and more than 50 score points lower than the OECD average. This represents a gap of around two years of schooling between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Additionally, more than one
third of Indigenous students did not achieve a proficiency level in reading, mathematics and science literacy considered to be the minimum level necessary to meet the challenges faced in life beyond school.

Indigenous transitions
In 2009, ACER reviewed research and practice on young Indigenous people transitioning from school to further education, training or work, and identified effective models for Indigenous students in metropolitan and regional areas of Victoria. This project involved speaking with Indigenous students across Victoria about the factors that were important to them for continuing school and transitioning into the workplace or re-engaging in the education system. A consistent theme across the interviews was the significance of teachers who believed in students’ ability, and education settings that were supportive of students’ needs, both academically and culturally.

Keeping school leavers on track
The On Track 2009 survey of Victorian school leavers, managed by ACER for the Victorian government, shows that Indigenous school leavers make different transition patterns from school to work or study in comparison to non-Indigenous school leavers. When surveyed in the April after they left school, greater proportions of Indigenous school leavers were looking for work and were not in the labour force, education or training compared to their non-Indigenous peers. Indigenous early school leavers had lower rates of employment; however, Indigenous school completers were more frequently employed than their non-Indigenous peers.

Enrolment in VET programs was slightly higher among Indigenous early school leavers than among non-Indigenous early leavers, however Indigenous early leavers were less frequently in higher-level courses. Fewer Indigenous early school leavers were in apprenticeships compared to non-Indigenous leavers, but a higher proportion had entered traineeships. Indigenous Year 12 or equivalent completers were more likely than non-Indigenous completers to engage in VET programs at both entry-level and Certificate IV or above, or to enter an apprenticeship or traineeship. Among Indigenous completers, 28.8 per cent were enrolled in university. Although this is an increase from 22.4 per cent in 2008, it is still substantially lower than the 45.6 per cent of non-Indigenous completers who enrolled in university in 2009.

School attendance and retention
Educators are encouraged to use, and therefore must be able to identify, those strategies that have been shown to work. In December 2009 the Australian government commissioned ACER to write an issues paper on school attendance and retention of Indigenous Australian students. The paper reviews the strategies for improving school attendance and retention and identifies gaps in the research. Findings indicate that few high-quality evaluations have been conducted and there is no clear evidence about the success of the programs other than claims and opinion, unsupported by credible evidence.

Understanding the disparity
A 2010 ACER report about the contextual factors that influence Indigenous student achievement suggests that student attitudes, behaviours and backgrounds could provide some of the keys to understanding Indigenous student outcomes.

The report used the results from PISA 2000–2006 to examine the psychological factors that can affect student achievement, and found that Indigenous students on average have lower levels of confidence, lower levels of motivation and engagement with reading and higher levels of anxiety about education than non-Indigenous students. However, they still put in as much effort and reported similar levels of persistence with learning and felt similar levels of general engagement with school as their non-Indigenous peers.

However, the report also found that Indigenous students on average reported lower levels of access to home educational resources, generally have parents with lower levels of experience of education than non-Indigenous students, are less likely to attend preschool, and are more likely to be late to school on a regular basis, to miss consecutive months of schooling and to change school several times.

The report recommends that programs to improve Indigenous education should address students’ attitudes, engagement, motivation and beliefs. It also suggests that funding to schools with high numbers of Indigenous students could allow for a higher level of resources to help counteract the lack of resources in their own homes. While this report focused on the psychological factors, there are various programs in schools across Australia that acknowledge and support the complexities and diversity of Indigenous children, families and communities.

Community engagement
An initiative that is providing educational opportunities for Indigenous children and students in remote areas is the One Laptop Per Child Program (OLPC). OLPC is an international initiative that provides children in disadvantaged communities with low-cost, low-power, internet-connected laptops with content and software designed for collaborative, fun, self-empowered learning. ACER conducted a review of the OLPC Australia pilot program on behalf of OLPC Australia in 2009. ACER Indigenous Liaison Officer Gina Milgate and ACER Principal Research Fellow Michele Lonsdale travelled to Rawa
Working towards better outcomes for Indigenous students

In 2010 Gina Milgate was appointed as ACER's first Indigenous Liaison Officer. The role involves raising ACER's profile among stakeholder groups in regard to Indigenous issues and effective practices that can improve outcomes for Indigenous young people; disseminating knowledge, skills, ideas, research, services and resources that reflect ACER's commitment to Indigenous education; identifying opportunities for ACER to help improve learning outcomes for Indigenous young people; and ensuring that ACER becomes an Employer of Choice for Indigenous people.

ACER recognises the significant challenges confronting Indigenous children and youth and is committed to improving educational outcomes and facilitating smooth transitions to school, further education and employment through targeted research, educational resources and quality learning programs for teachers and school leaders. Gina provides cultural intelligence and connects with the Indigenous education community to support ACER in pursuing these objectives.

Gina is a proud Aboriginal woman from the Kamilaroi (North Western) and Wiradjuri (Central Western) clans of New South Wales. Gina joined ACER in 2006 as a researcher, working on projects that focused on Indigenous education. Gina has broad experience in the education sector and was an academic at the University of New England for six years. She has led a major project that evaluated training in the delivery of health services to Indigenous people in central Australia. Gina has been involved in projects with a high level of consultation with urban, regional, remote and very remote Indigenous communities. She has provided professional development to schools and communities in Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales focusing on social and emotional wellbeing issues for Indigenous children, families and communities. Gina also has experience in implementing planning strategies that are responsive to fulfilling the needs of Indigenous people and communities in a culturally appropriate manner.

Community School located on the salt lakes of Punmu in Western Australia to engage with the school community and talk about the impact of the laptops in the school.

In 2010, a book on social and emotional wellbeing, Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice, was released. It was developed by ACER and the Kulunga Research Network, Telethon Institute for Child Health Research with funding through the Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing. The book offers a high quality, comprehensive examination of issues and strategies influencing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health and social and emotional wellbeing.

ACER's wider research suggests that high expectations may hold a key to improving student outcomes and the effectiveness of the education system. There are many different programs and initiatives aimed at improving Indigenous students' educational outcomes. Some of these, such as Education Queensland and the Queensland University of Technology’s Stronger, Smarter Leadership Program (reviewed by ACER Research Fellow Jenny Wilkinson in the June/July 2009 edition of ACER’s Teacher magazine), do emphasise the importance of high expectations. The Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School (see page 32), brings two communities together who share a vision to expand horizons and education opportunities for the children and families of both communities.

Promoting school readiness

In 2009, ACER conducted research into the school readiness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, including the role that television may play in preparing children for school. In July 2010, ACER published a report based on a review of literature on the importance of early childhood learning, the nature of Indigenous learning needs, and the role of educational television programs in improving learning outcomes for preschool-aged children. The report provides the evidence base for an initiative to promote school readiness in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Future directions

ACER Institute will host a conference on Indigenous education in Darwin in August 2011. Titled Indigenous Education: Pathways to success, the conference will draw together research-based knowledge about Indigenous education and explore approaches to improving the long-term educational outcomes of Indigenous students.

Through a range of projects, ACER will continue to contribute to research and discussion on improving learning for Indigenous students, and hopes to help close the gap between the educational outcomes of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.
Youth transitions
The educational and occupational pathways of young people as they progress from school into further study, employment and adult life is an important area for policy-makers and educators to understand.

ACER has a long-standing research interest in the area, with studies investigating the labour market and social outcomes of different pathways as well as evaluations of particular policies and programs.

The Australian government recognises the importance of these issues for young people, through the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions, which includes a range of measures to strengthen education, training opportunities and support for young people.

The partnership aims to increase the educational engagement and attainment of young people and to improve their transition to post school education, training and employment through immediate action supported by broader long term reform.

Graduate outcomes

ACER conducted the 2008 Graduate Pathways Survey, the first national study of its kind in Australia. The survey of more than 9000 graduates was designed to gain information on outcomes and pathways of Australian bachelor graduates five years after completing a bachelor degree, how these changed from graduates’ initial outcomes, the pathways taken and the factors that influence outcomes.

Key findings include:

- Graduates can take a few years to establish their careers: the rate of participation in paid work among graduates rose from 84 per cent to 91 per cent between the first and fifth year following graduation;
- At the national level, the median graduate salary rose from $38,000 to $60,000 in the first five years post-graduation – a 58 per cent increase;
- Graduate outcomes and pathways varied for different fields of education, with some graduates taking longer to settle into their careers; and
- Graduates from disadvantaged backgrounds achieved outcomes on par with the general graduate population.

ACER has also provided about a dozen universities with additional data analysis, reports and advice relating to their specific situations.

The data from the large national study has also been used for follow on research relating to specific issues. The studies have investigated university participation in regional areas and outcomes for those graduates; the extent to which education graduates moved into teaching careers; and higher degree by research students’ career intentions, experiences and engagement in training for university teaching.

Tools to help with transition

ACER developed a VET Choice, a secure online testing and reporting service, for identifying the English and maths abilities of apprenticeship and traineeship candidates and vocational education and training students. This service is particularly suitable for identifying those who may require additional monitoring, diagnosis and assistance with literacy and/or numeracy.

Another ACER online assessment and reporting system, the Vocational Indicator (VI) is a secure, standardised system for identifying a candidate’s level of capability in abstract reasoning, literacy, mechanical reasoning and numeracy. The VI can be used as a screening tool to identify ‘best performance’ or a tool to identify knowledge or skill gaps and to provide information about how assistance could be offered to candidates in these areas. ACER designed the VI to assess a candidate’s readiness for vocational study and training. It focuses on skills deemed to be important for the study of a vocational qualification and associated future workplace skills.

Against the odds

Students who are high achievers at school generally have successful post-school outcomes, while low achievers do less well and are more likely to leave school early. A recent report by two ACER researchers, Against the odds: Influences on the post-school success of ‘low performers’, focuses on students who are low achievers at school, but who have successful post-school outcomes.

The same students who participated in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2003 were surveyed for the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY). Students whose mathematics achievement in PISA was in approximately the lowest third became the sample for this study.

Low achievement does not necessarily lead to negative outcomes – almost three-quarters of those who were ‘low performers’ at age 15 years went on to make a successful transition into full-time work or study. Motivation is a key determinant of students’ later outcomes, with those who see the value of study such as mathematics for their future success more likely to achieve this success.

Low-performing students from socioeconomically disadvantaged households are less likely to be successful than their more affluent counterparts, suggesting that the degree to which parents can help their children may be a factor. Having some sort of career or strategic plan, such as aspiring to do an
The apprenticeship, is particularly important for determining later success in life. The authors, ACER researchers Sue Thomson and Kylie Hillman, said if factors can be identified, particularly at the school level, which contribute to success, resources and assistance can be allocated towards improving post-school outcomes for those who do less well at school, and who are at most risk of unsuccessful youth transitions.

The definition of ‘success’ used in this project included satisfaction with life, as well as whether young people were fully occupied with education, employment or a combination of these activities. Those who were fully engaged and happy with their lives were designated as having a ‘successful outcome’.

Building better transitions

ACER conducted research into the transitions of Indigenous youth in Victoria. This work contributed to that undertaken by the Victorian Aboriginal Economic Development Group, a body established to provide advice on ways to close the ‘economic gap’ for Indigenous Victorians. The work resulted in a report, *Moonda Wurrin Gree: Pathways to a Better Economic Future*.

ACER has continued to expand its research program within the VET sector by conducting research and policy analysis for a number of clients including Skills Australia, the Australian Qualifications Framework Council, the LH Martin Institute and the National VET Equity Advisory Council. These projects, and others, have focused on funding models, articulation pathways between VET and higher education, leadership in the VET sector; retention of first-year apprentices and exploring good practice to support disadvantaged learners in the VET sector.

Staying On Track

The On Track survey has involved contacting Year 12 completers and early school leavers in Victoria each year since 2003. More than 36,000 young people responded to the survey in 2009. The project is designed to provide a valuable database and tool for guiding policy and practice at government, school, regional and local levels.

On Track offers a referral service for school leavers who appear to be experiencing difficulties in the transition process. On Track also collects background information on students so that the destinations of particular sub-groups can be considered.

In 2009 the data were collected by the Social Research Centre and analysed by ACER. ACER prepared the report for the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Participants are guaranteed confidentiality and it is not possible to identify individual school leavers in any reporting.

The majority of the group (71.4 per cent) continued in some form of education or training in the year following completion of Year 12 or equivalent. Transition to degree-level programs at university was the most common activity (45.4 per cent), followed by entry into advanced diploma or certificate IV level programs in TAFE/VET (14.2 per cent) and entry-level TAFE/VET (3.8 per cent). Apprenticeships and traineeships attracted 8.0 per cent of completers. Approximately 23 per cent of Year 12 or equivalent completers were employed, and 5.1 per cent were in the labour market but unemployed and looking for work.

Becoming a Police Recruit

Ebony Agtof says the On Track Connect program motivated her to aim for her first love - policing.

“I didn’t get the best of ENTER scores and I had no self esteem when I left school so I sat down for three months and didn’t do anything,” the former Norwood Secondary College student says.

“Marie, an On Track project worker with the Outer Eastern Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN), motivated me so much.

“She got me calling up universities and TAFEs and told me all about TAFE courses and how I could better qualify for a course.”

Ebony did the research and decided that nursing was the go, but after weighing up the options, she decided it was worth pursuing policing.

“If it wasn’t for Marie, I would still be working two jobs and not knowing what to do for the rest of my life,” Ebony said.

Ebony is now looking forward to completing the TAFE approved Victoria Police education exam prior to applying to become a police recruit, something she says she would not have been able to achieve without the help of On Track Connect.

Case study from Department of Education and Early Childhood Development website.
Effective partnerships between schools and other organisations in the community can improve student outcomes. ACER is working on several projects to assist schools in developing relationships with the broader community.

The importance of school-community partnerships is highlighted in Beyond the Classroom: Building new school networks, by Ros Black (ACER Press 2008). The message from the research is that “tinkering around the edges of schooling will not provide solutions to the widening gaps in education that limit opportunities for too many young Australians. Instead, we need new models of schooling that recognise the future of children and young people is the responsibility of the whole community.”

The 2008 Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians, developed by the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs to set the direction for Australian schooling for 10 years, identified developing stronger partnerships as an area for action. The declaration says:

Partnerships between students, parents, carers and families, the broader community, business, schools and other education and training providers bring mutual benefits and maximise student engagement and achievement. Partnerships engender support for the development and wellbeing of young people and their families and can provide opportunities for young Australians to connect with their communities, participate in civic life and develop a sense of responsible citizenship. In particular, the development of partnerships between schools and Indigenous communities, based on cross-cultural respect, is the main way of achieving highly effective schooling for Indigenous students.

In 2010 the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations introduced the School Business Community Partnership Brokers program which is focused on building partnerships to support young people to attain Year 12 or equivalent qualifications and reach their full educational and social potential. The program is designed to foster a strategic, whole of community approach to improving education and transition outcomes for all young people through a national network of partnership brokers that create new partnerships and enhance existing partnerships.

**Rewarding effective partnerships**

As a way of fostering effective school-community partnerships, ACER instigated a national awards scheme for schools. ACER is working on the Schools First awards program with the Foundation for Young Australians and National Australia Bank. The National Australia Bank is providing $15 million in award money for schools over the three year project.

In 2008 ACER conducted a literature review to identify the key characteristics of outstanding school-community partnerships and developed the criteria for the Schools First Awards.

While it can be difficult to establish a direct link between such partnerships and improved student outcomes, the research shows that school-community partnerships can help bring about increased skills, greater engagement with learning, more positive attitudes to schooling, and improved transitions into the workforce, further education or training.

School-community partnerships can enable students, teachers, parents and community and business groups to draw on a wide range of skills and expertise. For students, an effective school-community partnership can provide links to the community that will help them feel more connected and less isolated.

ACER’s review of research showed that successful school-community partnerships are typically characterised by:

- an identified need or opportunity that the partnership is set up to address
- a mission to improve student outcomes
- a strong, committed leader and leadership team
Maroochydore State School partners with SunnyKids

Maroochydore State School was the 2009 winner of the Schools First Queensland State Impact Award.
The Supporting Children in Primary Schools (SCIPS) program responds to a clear need to connect disengaged students and their families to support services within the local community.

Maroochydore State School has a very high turnover rate with many transitory families. The presence at the school of a SCIPS project worker, who is employed and managed by SunnyKids, means families can be linked quickly to the services they need.

The SCIPS program has established an information and referral hub located within the school and provides an interface between families and support services.

The parents or carers of students who are identified by teachers as needing support are contacted by the school principal and informed that the SCIPS project worker is available to assist both child and family.

The aim is not to provide the actual services such as counselling, but to empower families to better ‘own’ their situation and to intervene and break systemic disengagement with education before it affects the next generation.

(Schools First Magazine, 2010 edition)

The search for funds

The Tender Bridge, an initiative of ACER, gives subscribers access to a comprehensive, searchable database of government, philanthropic and other funds. The database is tailored specifically to the needs of schools.

Dr Michelle Anderson, Project Director for The Tender Bridge had the idea for the service from comments of school leaders involved in her PhD study. “People had great ideas for improving the learning conditions for students but they had less knowledge in how to fund an idea, where to look to identify suitable funding options and what was required to secure and use effectively the funds,” Dr Anderson said.

In 2008, ACER conducted a scoping study to assess the need for an education specific service. People were asked about their current practices and what they perceived were key barriers to seeking and using additional funding opportunities.

Among other things, the study identified that two key disincentives for school leaders are the time it takes to identify funding options, and weighing up whether it is worth applying for a grant.

The Schools First Awards provide an excellent opportunity for ACER to help schools build highly effective partnerships to improve outcomes for young people.

ACER conducted the background research which highlighted the characteristics of excellent partnerships, developed the criteria for evaluating proposals and managed the process of judging the applications. In 2009 there were 55 judges involved in assessing 1532 applications. Schools received customised feedback provided as part of the judging process.
“The Tender Bridge can make it quicker and easier for schools to sort through possible funding options relevant to their school context. Schools can then be supported in understanding eligibility requirements from funding bodies and what makes a ‘good’ submission,” Dr Anderson said.

Partnering in education

ACER has contributed to an innovative partnership between Wesley College and Fitzroy Valley community in the Kimberley in Western Australia. The Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School opened in July 2010 after years of planning. Students in Years 10-12 from the Kimberley and from Wesley College in Melbourne will be able to learn together to complete secondary schooling with a combination of academic and industry learning and personal and social development. The industry learning will focus on the Australian cattle industry, agri-business, eco-tourism, mining management and the arts. It is the first time that full time study for Years 11 and 12 will be available in the Fitzroy Valley. ACER has designed a new senior years curriculum that will be delivered at Yiramalay during the dry season and in Melbourne for the remainder of the year.

Principal for a Day

The Principal for a Day program aims to increase and strengthen relationships between the private sector and education. Partnerships between key leaders in education, business and the wider community are especially important. Principal for a Day commenced in Australia in 2001 and is currently held annually in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria.

ACER manages the program, where the Principal for a Day ‘shadows’ the school principal and participates in normal day-to-day school activities. The principal and Principal for a Day discuss the challenges and current issues each is facing in their leadership role. Participants attend a forum after the event to share their experiences, observations and knowledge.

Principal for a Day aims to: increase understanding and awareness between schools, business and the wider community; provide business and community leaders with first hand and current experiences of schools; enable principals to develop on-going relationships with successful leaders in business or the community; and increase opportunities for schools and the private sector to work together in mutually beneficial ways.

There are already many effective collaborations among schools, communities and businesses. ACER supports the development of school-community partnerships in a range of ways. When schools link with their local community, businesses or other organisations, amazing things can be achieved.
Research projects ...........................................................34
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Organisational structure .............................................48
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09–10
Research projects

INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS

International
Educational Testing Service
Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)

International Association for Educational Assessment
Member of IAEA Executive Committee

International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement
International Civic and Citizenship Education Study
PIRLS Web-based Reading Survey
IEA Test Development
International Study of Computer and Information Literacy
Teacher Education Development Study (in collaboration with Michigan State University)

International Baccalaureate Organisation
Report on the analysis of ISA data for PYP and MYP schools

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2006 and 2009 - international component
PISA 2009 Optional Electronic Reading Assessment
Additional Round of PISA 2009 (PISA plus)
PISA 2012 Assessment of Financial Literacy
Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO)
Tertiary Engineering Capability Assessment

Brunei
Ministry of Education, Brunei
National Study of Student Competencies in Mathematics and English 2010

Colombia
Ministry of Education, Colombia
Assistance and training in item development for GSA generic skills exams

Dubai
The Knowledge and Human Development Authority
PISA+ 2009 Main Study in Dubai
TIMSS and PIRLS Dubai

Ethiopia
World Bank
General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP)

India
World Bank
PISA+ field trial

Indonesia
AusAID
Quality of Education in Madrasah
World Bank
National Examination Assessment of ESA Indonesia

Mexico
Mexican Ministry of Public Education
SEPISA, a sample assessment of reading and mathematics for secondary students in Mexico
Evaluation of Secondary Curriculum Reform in Mexico (ESCRiM)

Bangladesh
World Bank
Review of report on Bangladesh Assessment of pupils in Grades 3 & 5 2008
Tecnológico de Monterrey
- Assessment of reading and mathematics for 15-year-old students

New Zealand
New Zealand Council for Educational Research/Tertiary Education Commission (primary contractor)
- Development of Adult Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Tool

Papua New Guinea
AusAID
- Services and reporting associated with PNG Curriculum Standards Monitoring Test

Spain
Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Departmento de Metodos de Investigacion y Diagnostico en Educacion
- ESP-ISA 2010 - use of Spanish language versions of the ISA tests at years 4 and 8

Solomon Islands
PCRU Solomon Islands
- Evaluation of One Laptop per Child in the Solomon Islands

Tajikistan
World Bank
- Design of National Testing Centre Tajikistan

United Arab Emirates
UAE Ministry of Education
- PISA+ 2009 Main Study
- TIMSS and PIRLS UAE

NATIONAL PROJECTS

ACT
ACT Department of Education
- ACT Scaling Test

Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
- OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2006 and 2009 National component (also funded by state and territory education departments)
- AQTF Employer and Learner Quality Indicators
- Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) 2010
- Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2011 National component
- Australian School Teacher and Leaders Survey
- OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) Australian Component
- Study of Employment Outcomes Five Years after Graduation from University
- Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership
- Evaluation of literacy and numeracy diagnostic tools currently in use in Australian Schools
- Services for EAS Cooperation Workshop Research
- Evaluation of Teach for Australia Initiative
- Supplementary analysis of teachers using the Graduate Pathways Survey data
- Career Pathways and Teacher Training of Higher Degree by Research Students
- Student involvement in regional higher education
- Development of a National Teaching Professional Framework and Standards
- Analysis of the performance of Indigenous students in PISA
- Literacy and Numeracy trajectories
Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health
- Indigenous Mental Health Textbook

Graduate Careers Council of Australia
- Analysis and Reporting of Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) and the Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire (PREQ)

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
- Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children
- Analysis of PISA Data for Indigenous Students

Ministerial Committee on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA)
- Longitudinal Literacy and Numeracy Study (LLANS)
- Indigenous LLANS
- Survey of ICT Literacy 2011
- Civics and Citizenship 2010

Australian Agency for International Development
- Independent Review of Bridge Program

Australian Council for Private Education and Training
- Review of Student Engagement and Outcomes
- Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
- NAPLAN 2009 Central Analysis and Reporting
- NAPLAN 2009 School-level Data Analysis
- 2010 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) – Test Development and Trial
- 2011 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) – Test Development and Trial

Australian Institute of Family Studies
- Longitudinal Survey of Australian Children

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- Preparation of an issues paper on school attendance and retention for Closing the Gap Clearinghouse

Australian Science Innovations
- Development of items for BIG Science Competition

COAG Analyses 2010
- Analyses of Performance Information against National Education Agreement Outcomes

National Catholic Education Commission
- Measurement of Educational Disadvantage

National VET Equity Advisory Council
- Equity in VET
- Providing support to Disadvantaged Learners in the Australian VET System

Teaching Australia
- Leading Australia’s Schools

UMAT Consortium
- Establishing the Criterion Validity of UMAT
- Convergent Validity of UMAT

NSW

Business Council of Australia
- Policy Issues in Higher Education

Department of Education and Training
- NSW Test for Year 5 Opportunity Classes (OCP)
- NSW Selective High Schools Test (SHSET)

Microsoft Partners in Learning
- School Connections

Department of Corrective Services
- Development of Test items and Test Administration: Applicants for Correctional Officer Positions

SEMA (main client NSW DET)
- Essential Secondary Science Assessment
- National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy test marking NSW

Department of Education and Training
- Online Training Program for Practicing Teachers to experience the application of the 2009 NAPLAN Writing Task Rubric

Macquarie ICT Centre
- Consultancy for the Macquarie ICT Innovation Centre

NSW Institute of Teachers
- Research Digest for Teachers

University of Western Sydney (Principal client: Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education)
- Academic Leadership Capabilities for Higher Education

University of New England
- Changing Academic Profession

QLD

Brisbane Catholic Education Office
- Who’s Coming to School?

Queensland College of Teachers
- Analysis of Year 12 OP data QLD

Queensland Department of Education and Training
- Queensland Education Performance Review
- Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Tool

SA

Australian Principals Association
- Whole School Matters
- Assistance with Teaching and Learning Booklet
Evaluation of Mind Matters
Consulting for engaging of Indigenous communities

National Centre for Vocational Education and Research
Success Despite the Odds? Outcomes for low-performing students in Australia
Education and training and the avoidance of Financial Disadvantage

Trinity College
Qualitative evaluation of Trinity College survey data

University of South Australia
Evaluation of SILA

Victoria
Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
Assessment of English in the Early Years of Schooling
On Track
An Integrated Approach to Improving Student Outcomes in a Community
Integrated birth to 18 Learning and Development: Research, Policy, Practice
TIMSS 2007 Study of High Achieving Countries
Kindergarten subsidy impact review
Micro Analysis on variations in patterns of Student Achievement
ESL assessment tools and advice
0–18 Integrated Assessment Strategy

Department of Justice
Gambling and Young People

Department of Planning and Community Development
Indigenous Youth Transitions
Centre for the Economics of Education and Training (CEET)
Funding for Tertiary Education and Training – Briefing Paper and Online Survey

Curriculum Corporation
National Assessment Program – Analyses Literacy and Numeracy 2008
NAPLAN 2009 Central Analysis

Department of Family and Community Services
Longitudinal Survey of Australian Children

Ed Partnerships International
Delivery of assessment instruments for SparkL program

LH Martin Institute for Higher Education
Leadership Capabilities for Australian Higher Education and Training

MEGT Institute
Apprentice Retention Evaluation

Monash University
Categorisation of TIMSS items per VELS framework

Murdoch Children’s Research Institute
Hosting and Development of Australian Early Development Index

National Australia Bank
Schools First

Peter Noonan Consulting
Investment in VET

Philips KPA
Tertiary Education Advice for Growth Area Framework Plans

Royal Australasian College of Surgeons
Data analysis of exam results and production of reports

University of Melbourne
Teaching Quality Indicators in Higher Education

VicHealth
Evaluation of Streets Ahead: Supporting children to get active in their neighbourhoods

VicRoads
Revision to Car Driver Learner Permit Test

Victorian Auditor General’s Office
Audit of Student Services
Managing Teacher Performance

VicRoads
Revision to Car Driver Learner Permit Test

Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA)
Victorian General Achievement Test
Sample Assessment of VELS – Health Knowledge and Physical Education

Melbourne Development International
Assistance with design, development, implementation and support for AusAid Educational Resource Facility

Ballarat and Clarendon College
Conducting Years P-2 literacy and numeracy assessments and reporting results

WA
Department of Education and Training
Western Australian Monitoring Standards in Education (WAMSE) Science
Western Australian Monitoring Standards in Education (WAMSE) Society and Environment
Evaluation of Aboriginal Literacy Strategy
Development of a Framework for a Nationally Consistent Dataset Concerning the Teaching Workforce across Australia
09–10
Staff publications

BOOKS AND REPORTS


CHAPTERS IN BOOKS


REFEREED JOURNAL ARTICLES


RESEARCH BRIEFINGS AND POLICY PAPERS


OTHER PERIODICALS AND NEWSPAPERS


Dinham, S. (2010). ‘This is not a Blame Game!’, *EQ Australia, Summer*, 37–38.


Financial report

Directors' report

30 June 2010
The Directors of the Australian Council for Educational Research Limited and controlled entities present the following report together with the financial statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2010.

Directors
The names of each person who has been a director during the year and to the date of this report are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Directors</th>
<th>Finish date</th>
<th>Board Meetings during the year</th>
<th>Audit and Finance Committee Meetings during the year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eligible to attend</td>
<td>Number attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robyn Baker, BSc MEd</td>
<td>Since – Jan 2006</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Caldwell, BSc BEd MEd PhD</td>
<td>Since – July 2003</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Croke, BA DipED DPhil Fellow, Australian Humanities Academy</td>
<td>Since – Nov 2003</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janet Davy, BEd, MEd</td>
<td>Since – Oct 2009</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie Grantham, BA, BEd, MEd</td>
<td>Since – Nov 2009</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthony Mackay, BEdc BEd MA</td>
<td>Since – Dec 2004</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geofferey Masters, BSc MEd PhD FACE</td>
<td>Since – Nov 1998</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trish Mercer, PhD (History)</td>
<td>Since – July 2006</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paige Porter, BA MA PhD</td>
<td>Since – Jan 2000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Robinson, Bachelor of Agricultural Economics, Post Grad Diploma of Social Security</td>
<td>Since – Nov 2006</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheldon Rothman, BA MAT MEd EdD</td>
<td>Since – Dec 2004</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geoff Scott, BA DipEd MEd EdD FACE</td>
<td>Since – Mar 2008</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The principal activities of the company during the financial year were educational research and development, publication and sale of educational and psychological books, tests and materials, and the provision of assessment and educational services. During the financial year there was no significant change in the nature of those activities.
Directors’ report

30 June 2010

The company’s short and long term objectives are to:

- to promote the cause of, and provide leadership in, research and development in education;
- to conduct research, undertake development and provide services in any matters affecting education both through its own staff and in co-operation and collaboration with other bodies or organisations in Australia and internationally;
- to publish and disseminate and to assist financially or otherwise in the publication and dissemination of the results of any such research or development or any other research or development in education which in the opinion of ACER requires such action.

The company has prepared a strategic plan for the period 2010–2013 which outlines specific initiatives designed to achieve the objectives set out above. The company operates domestically within Australia and through a branch office in the United Arab Emirates. The company also conducts activities in the United Kingdom and Ireland through a UK domiciled subsidiary and in India through an Indian subsidiary company. Details of these operations are contained in the financial report.

Within Australia, the company performs its functions through four divisions, offering products and services in the field of educational research and development, educational assessment, services and publications. The company offers a similar range of services in the United Arab Emirates and India whilst the main activity in the United Kingdom and Ireland is assessment services.

The company is incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001 and is an entity limited by guarantee. If the entity is wound up, the constitution states that each member is required to contribute a maximum of $20 each towards meeting any outstanding obligations of the entity. At 30 June 2010 the collective liability of members was $200 (2009: $200).

Auditor’s Independence Declaration

The lead auditor’s Independence declaration for the year ended 30 June 2010 has been received and can be found on page 3 of the directors’ report.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.

P PORTER - Director

G MASTERS - Director

Dated this 24th September 2010
Auditor’s Independence Declaration

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2010 there have been:

(i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the Corporations Act 2001 in relation to the audit; and

(ii) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Saward Dawson Chartered Accountants

[Signature]

Peter Shields

Dated 24 September 2010
Blackburn VIC
Statement of Comprehensive Income
For the year ended 30 June 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
<td>$66,662,623</td>
<td>$59,823,175</td>
<td>$64,562,214</td>
<td>$57,896,455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change inventories of finished goods &amp; work in progress</td>
<td>$(417,089)</td>
<td>$(256,362)</td>
<td>$(417,089)</td>
<td>$(256,362)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchases and consumables used</td>
<td>$(2,209,223)</td>
<td>$(2,245,765)</td>
<td>$(2,209,223)</td>
<td>$(2,245,582)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee and contractor benefits expense</td>
<td>$(35,674,784)</td>
<td>$(32,508,478)</td>
<td>$(35,625,707)</td>
<td>$(32,223,706)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation and amortisation</td>
<td>$(1,462,006)</td>
<td>$(1,466,420)</td>
<td>$(1,459,821)</td>
<td>$(1,466,099)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freight and cartage expense</td>
<td>$(797,531)</td>
<td>$(710,249)</td>
<td>$(794,170)</td>
<td>$(709,854)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising expense</td>
<td>$(175,823)</td>
<td>$(193,298)</td>
<td>$(175,743)</td>
<td>$(193,298)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer expense</td>
<td>$(800,043)</td>
<td>$(758,621)</td>
<td>$(742,141)</td>
<td>$(709,737)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent and occupancy expenses</td>
<td>$(890,625)</td>
<td>$(788,693)</td>
<td>$(866,441)</td>
<td>$(761,401)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultancy expense</td>
<td>$(8,060,358)</td>
<td>$(6,235,056)</td>
<td>$(7,749,522)</td>
<td>$(6,139,872)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing and stationery expenses</td>
<td>$(1,814,930)</td>
<td>$(1,876,054)</td>
<td>$(1,787,701)</td>
<td>$(1,875,900)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royalty expense</td>
<td>$(372,603)</td>
<td>$(362,667)</td>
<td>$(372,603)</td>
<td>$(362,667)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repairs and maintenance expenses</td>
<td>$(389,676)</td>
<td>$(377,596)</td>
<td>$(386,424)</td>
<td>$(374,483)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel expense</td>
<td>$(2,461,803)</td>
<td>$(2,378,191)</td>
<td>$(2,445,427)</td>
<td>$(2,365,388)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance costs</td>
<td>$(824,349)</td>
<td>$(920,999)</td>
<td>$(824,344)</td>
<td>$(920,999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign exchange loss</td>
<td>$(139,857)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$(169,054)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other expenses</td>
<td>$(4,952,740)</td>
<td>$(5,054,288)</td>
<td>$(3,419,302)</td>
<td>$(3,804,071)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surplus before income tax</strong></td>
<td>$5,219,183</td>
<td>$3,690,438</td>
<td>$5,117,502</td>
<td>$3,487,036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income tax expense</strong></td>
<td>$(43,501)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surplus after income tax</strong></td>
<td>$5,175,682</td>
<td>$3,676,239</td>
<td>$5,117,502</td>
<td>$3,487,036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other comprehensive income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net loss on revaluation of non-current assets</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$(1,654,502)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$(1,654,502)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net gain / (loss) on revaluation of hedge</td>
<td>$217,201</td>
<td>$(380,832)</td>
<td>$217,201</td>
<td>$(380,832)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net adjustment on foreign currency revaluation reserve</td>
<td>$(11,097)</td>
<td>$(19,642)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total comprehensive income for the year</strong></td>
<td>$5,381,786</td>
<td>$1,621,263</td>
<td>$5,334,703</td>
<td>$1,451,702</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Statement of Financial Position
As at 30 June 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>$11,685,855</td>
<td>$10,622,599</td>
<td>$11,239,824</td>
<td>$9,472,331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade and other receivables</td>
<td>$11,504,086</td>
<td>$6,763,810</td>
<td>$11,403,110</td>
<td>$6,681,140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventories</td>
<td>$2,602,936</td>
<td>$2,405,728</td>
<td>$2,602,936</td>
<td>$2,405,728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial assets</td>
<td>$453,282</td>
<td>$201,365</td>
<td>$468,000</td>
<td>$216,082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other assets</td>
<td>$8,079,830</td>
<td>$5,250,661</td>
<td>$7,605,954</td>
<td>$5,238,976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total current assets</strong></td>
<td>$34,325,989</td>
<td>$25,244,163</td>
<td>$33,319,824</td>
<td>$24,014,257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-current assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade and other receivables</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$652,404</td>
<td>$944,178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial assets</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$20,087</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$20,087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property, plant and equipment</td>
<td>$29,088,950</td>
<td>$29,106,884</td>
<td>$29,068,865</td>
<td>$29,105,785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total non-current assets</strong></td>
<td>$29,088,950</td>
<td>$29,126,971</td>
<td>$29,721,269</td>
<td>$30,070,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL ASSETS</strong></td>
<td>$63,414,939</td>
<td>$54,371,134</td>
<td>$63,041,093</td>
<td>$54,084,307</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| LIABILITIES                 |                   |                   |             |             |
| **Current liabilities**     |                   |                   |             |             |
| Trade and other payables    | $11,134,021       | $8,314,880        | $10,836,032 | $8,053,209  |
| Short-term provisions       | $5,466,285        | $4,682,691        | $5,458,832  | $4,678,856  |
| **Total current liabilities**| $16,600,306       | $12,997,571       | $16,294,864 | $12,732,065 |
| **Non-current liabilities** |                   |                   |             |             |
| Borrowings                  | $13,000,000       | $13,000,000       | $13,000,000 | $13,000,000 |
| Other long-term provisions  | $639,327          | $580,043          | $639,327    | $580,043    |
| **Total non-current liabilities** | $13,639,327   | $13,580,043       | $13,639,327 | $13,580,043 |
| **TOTAL LIABILITIES**       | $30,239,633       | $26,577,614       | $29,934,191 | $26,312,108 |
| **NET ASSETS**              | $33,175,306       | $27,793,520       | $33,106,902 | $27,772,199 |

| EQUITY                      |                   |                   |             |             |
| Reserves                    | $5,331,154         | $4,524,849        | $5,333,725  | $4,516,324  |
| Retained earnings           | $27,844,152        | $23,268,671       | $27,773,177 | $23,255,875 |
| **TOTAL EQUITY**            | $33,175,306        | $27,793,520       | $33,106,902 | $27,772,199 |
Directors’ declaration

The directors of the company declare that:

1. The financial statements and notes, as set out on pages 4 to 53, are in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001 and:
   (a) comply with Accounting Standards and the Corporations Regulations 2001; and
   (b) give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June 2010 and of the performance for the year ended on that date of the company and consolidated group.

2. In the directors opinion, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.

Director .................................. Director ..................................

Dated 24 September 2010
Independent Auditors Report

To the members of the Australian Council for Educational Research Ltd and Controlled Entities

Report on the financial report
We have audited the accompanying financial report of Australian Council for Educational Research Ltd (the company), Australian Council for Educational Research Ltd and Controlled Entities (the consolidated entity), comprising the Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 30 June 2010, the Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2010 and the directors’ declaration of the consolidated entity comprising the company and the entities it controlled at the year’s end or from time to time during the financial year.

The Responsibility of the directors for the summarised financial report
The directors are responsible for the preparation and presentation of the summarised financial report.

Auditor’s Responsibility
Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the summarised financial report based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements.

Auditor’s Opinion
In our opinion, the information reported in the summarised financial report is consistent with the annual statutory financial report from which it is derived. We expressed an unmodified auditor’s opinion on that financial report in our auditor’s report dated 24 September 2010.

For a better understanding of the scope of the audit, this report should be read in conjunction with our audit report on the annual statutory financial report.

Saward Dawson Chartered Accountants

Peter Shields
Partner

Dated 24 September 2010
Blackburn VIC
Organisational structure

ACER is an independent, not-for-profit company, the members of which are the ten members of the ACER Council. For a list of the Members of ACER Council, see page 49.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deputy CEO (Research)</th>
<th>Deputy CEO (Professional Resources)</th>
<th>Director International Development</th>
<th>Director Assessment Services</th>
<th>Director Human Resources</th>
<th>Director Corporate Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Ainley</td>
<td>Geoff Masters (acting)</td>
<td>Peter McGuckian</td>
<td>Deirdre Jackson</td>
<td>Andrew Corbett</td>
<td>Wayne Dawes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment and Reporting</th>
<th>ACER Press</th>
<th>School Education</th>
<th>Higher Education</th>
<th>Corporate and Vocational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Margaret Forster</td>
<td>Annemarie Rolls (acting)</td>
<td>Ralph Saubern (acting)</td>
<td>Manita MacMahon Ball</td>
<td>Larry Foster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching, Learning and Leadership</th>
<th>ACER Leadership Centre</th>
<th>Cunningham Library and Record Services</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steve Dinham</td>
<td>Neil Carrington</td>
<td>Lance Deveson</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National and International Surveys</th>
<th>ACER Institute</th>
<th>Corporate Communications</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Ainley</td>
<td>Kerry-Anne Hoad</td>
<td>Louise Reynolds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Analysis and Program Evaluation</th>
<th>Systemwide Testing</th>
<th>School Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adrian Beavis</td>
<td>Chris Freeman</td>
<td>Ralph Saubern</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transitions and Post-school Education and Training</th>
<th>Corporate and Vocational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phil McKenzie</td>
<td>Larry Foster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychometrics and Methodology</th>
<th>Corporate Communications</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Khoo Siek Toon</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Information Technology</th>
<th>Legal and Commercial Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anita Sheean</td>
<td>Daryl Nguyen</td>
<td>Rhonda Farkota</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finance</th>
<th>Project Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gary Kelly</td>
<td>Jim Carrigan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Members of ACER
Board of Directors

Chair
Professor Paige Porter

Deputy Chair
Professor Brian Caldwell
Robyn Baker
  MEd University of Victoria, Wellington, Dip Teaching
  Christchurch College of Education, BSc Otago
  Director, New Zealand Council for Educational Research
Professor Brian Caldwell (Deputy Chair)
  BSc, BEd Melb., MEd, PhD Alberta, MEd University of Victoria,
  Wellington, Dip Teaching Christchurch College of Education,
  BSc Otago
  Managing Director, Educational Transformations Pty Ltd
Dr Brian Croke
  BA(Hons), DipEd Macquarie, DPhil Oxford
  Executive Director, Catholic Education Commission, New
  South Wales
Janet Davy
  BEd, MEd Sydney
  Group Manager, National Curriculum, Assessment and
  Reporting, Department of Education, Employment and
  Workplace Relations (DEEWR)

Julie Grantham
  BA, BEd, MA(Ed)
  Director General, Department of Education and Training
  Queensland

Mr Anthony Mackay
  BEd, BEd Monash, MA (Ed) London
  Executive Director, Centre for Strategic Education (CSE)

Professor Geoff Masters
  BSc, MEd WA, PhD Chicago, FACE
  Chief Executive Officer, ACER

Professor Paige Porter (Chair)
  BA Missouri, MA PhD Stanford
  Director, UWA Institute for International Development,
  University of Western Australia

Dr Sheldon Rothman
  BA Massachusetts, MAT New Mexico State, MEd (Hons I)
  UNE, EdD Harvard
  Principal Research Fellow, ACER

Professor Geoff Scott
  BA, DipEd, MEd, EdD, FACE
  Pro Vice-Chancellor (Quality) and Provost, Quality Office
  of Planning and Quality, University of Western Sydney
Members of ACER staff

Chief Executive Officer
Masters, Geoff, BSc, MEd UWA, PhD Chicago, FACE

Executive Assistant to the CEO
O’Shannassy, Catherine, BA (Hons) Deakin, GradDip Mgt RMIT

Senior Research Fellow
Wenn, Maurice (to Jul 2009)

Indigenous Liaison Officer
Milgate, Gina, BCom(Mkt & Mgt), GradDipBusStud(Mkt & Mgt), GradCertHighEd UNE (from Feb 2010)

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Director of International Development
McGuckian, Peter, BAgSc, DipEd Melb

Senior Project Officer
Ismail, Leila, BA, LLB (Hons) (from Nov 2009)
Nugroho, Dita, BA, MPubPol ANU (to Nov 2009)

Manager, ACER India
Dhamija, Ratna

Project Officer – Administration & Operations India
Mathur, Sakshi

Project Officer - Research Projects
Kumar, Umesh

Manager, ACER Branch Office Dubai
Egbert, Alan

Project Officer, Dubai
Ali, Zainab Taher
Hussain, Chandni (from Jan 2010)

Project Officer (Arabic), Dubai
Abdulrazek, Israa

Administrative Officer, Dubai
Pangan, Lou Jean

CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT

Director of Corporate Development (to Sep 2009)
Moore, Robert, BCom Melb

Director, Human Resources
Corbett, Andrew, BBus RMIT, GradCertBus (Training Management) Swinburne (from Aug 2009)

Professional Learning Manager
McSweeney, Fiona, BA (Hons) Melb, GradDip IR/HRM RMIT

Human Resources Operations Officer
Jacobsen Britt, BBus Griffith (to Mar 2010)
Baxter, Siobhan BBusMgmt Trinity, MMarkStrat Trinity, Dip Public Relations MPRII (Nov 2009 to May 2010)

Human Resources Advisor
Mottau, Daniel, BAppSci (Psych) RMIT, Cert IV Training & Assessment VU (from Apr 2010)

Human Resources Administrator
McGrath, Jahnika (from May 2010)

CORPORATE SERVICES

Director of Corporate Services
Dawes, Wayne, BBus Monash, FCPA, ACIS

Manager, Legal and Commercial Service
Farkota, Rhonda, DipTeach, BEd Melb, MEdSt Monash, EdD Monash

Corporate Communications

Corporate Publicity and Communications Manager
Reynolds, Louise, BA (Hons) La T, MA (Communications) Monash, GradDip (Journalism) Deakin, Cert Public Relations RMIT

Journalist
Leech, Rebecca, BA (Hons) Deakin (to Dec 2009)

Journalist/Communications Officer
Morey, Raelene, BA (Journalism & CompSci) UTAS (from Dec 2009 to Apr 2010)

Corporate Publicity and Communications Officer
Robinson, Julia, BA (Journ) RMIT, GradCert (Mgt) Deakin

Online Services Coordinator
Telliler, Gulay, BAppSci(IT) RMIT
Senior Project Officer
Kruse, Julie

Facilities
Facilities and Services Manager
Sheean, Anita
Receptionists
Smith, Laura
Van Grunsven, Maryanne (from May 2009)
Administration Assistant
Dudley, Michelle
Smith, Laura (Acting from May 2009 to Jan 2010)
Despatch & Maintenance Officer
Williams, Morgan
General Officer
Koglin, Dianne

Finance
Financial Controller
Kelly, Gary, BBus(Acc) Monash, FCPA, GAICD
Divisional Financial Controller
Cameron, Andrew, BCom. Deakin, CPA
Project Accountant
Thomas, Alison, BBus(Acc) Bendigo, CPA
Payroll & Superannuation Manager
Harvey, Warwick
Payroll Administrative Officer
Rafton, Denise
Corporate Accountant
Kuek, Jeanie, BBus (Acc) & (Banking & Finance) Monash, CPA
Financial Accountant
Trembath, Stewart, BBus, GradCert (Acc/Fin) Swin
Assistant Accountants
Guzowska, Anna, BEco Warsaw
Accounts Payable Supervisor
McLean, Sophie
Accounts Payable Officer
Couttie, Rebecca (to Feb 2010)
Accounts Receivable Officer
Bedford, Tracy
Car, Lyn
Di Giovine, Cesira (to Oct 2009)
Graduate Accountant
Lin, Trista, BComm (Acc/Fin) Melb

Information Technology
Manager
Nguyen, Daryl, BIS Monash
Software Development Manager
Daws, Alisdair, BSc (Hons) Grad Dip (Internet & Web Comp),
PhD M Tech (Internet & Web Comp)
Senior Software Engineers
Chan, Phooi Lai, BComp (Hons) Monash
Haldane, Samuel, BCS Melb (to Apr 2010)
Rainsford, David, BA (Hons) Economics Essex, M Tech RMIT
(to May 2010)
IT Security Analyst
Rainsford, David, BA (Hons) Economics Essex, M Tech RMIT
(from May 2010)
Software Engineers
Chin, Edward, Grad DipBusSys, MBusSys Monash, BBus Huafan
Ellis, Donal
Pham, Huyen (from Apr 2010)
Oakes, Stephen, BSc (Hons) La T
Singh, Sukjit Sam (to Dec 2009)
Junior Software Engineers
Lam, Winson
Tran, David, BMultimedia, Adv DipCompSci Swin
Software Engineers Level 1
Barbosa, Rovie
Fullarton, Daniel (from Feb 2010)
Wiweka, Yan, BEng Maranatha, MIS Melb (from Jun 2009)
Support Engineer
Huynh, Tai, BCompSci Monash
Network Administrator
Nguyen, Hoai, BCompSci Monash
Helpdesk and Support Manager
Lie, Jafar, DipTech(Comp), BComp Monash
Helpdesk Team Leader/Support Engineer
Morling, Lucas
Desktop Support Officers
Delcourt, Christophe
Lou, Wei Yi (from Jul 2009)
Raats, Robert
Technical Writer
Wright, Karen, Cert IV Assessment & Workplace Training AIM,
GradCertSocSci (Technical Communication) Swin

Project Services
Manager
Carrigan, Jim, MEI Swin
Co-ordinator, Marking Operations
Lennie, Christine, DipTeach Melb, GradDipEduTech
PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES DIVISION

ACER Press

General Manager
Saubern, Ralph, GradDipCompScience (Hons) RMIT, BA, Melb, BEd, Lo T., MTESOL, Monash, CTEFLA Holmes College, AIMM AIM (to Jun 2010)
Rolls, Annemarie, BA (Hons Lit.) Co/C, MA (Communications) Monash, GradCert (Ed & Training) VUT (Acting from Feb 2009)

Sales & Marketing Manager
Rolls, Annemarie, BA (Hons Lit.) Co/C, MA (Communications) Monash, GradCert (Ed & Training) VUT

Marketing Manager
Gotmaker, Yana (from Jun 2010)

Assistant Marketing Manager
Gotmaker, Yana (to Jun 2010)
Stephens, Mandy, BA Monash, GradDipMktg RMIT
Sieradzki, Melissa, BA Lo T, GradPub&Edit Monash (Acting from Jun 2010)

Marketing Coordinator
Moscovitch, Anna, BA (Hons History) Monash (from Sep 2009)
Sieradzki, Melissa, BA Lo T, GradPub&Edit Monash (to Jun 2010)

Promotions Officer
Koch, Josh, Dip Prof Writing & Editing RMIT

Sales Manager
Smith, Barbara, BCom, DipEd, Melb, GradDip (Sec Studies) VicColl, GradCert (Career Counselling) RMIT

Consultant Psychologist
Power, Marian, BA (Hons), MA (App Psych) Melb, GradDip Career Educ RMIT, MAPS, AACC, AusAPT

Sales Consultants, Education
Cornish, Terri, BEd (Hons) Wollongong, Dip Book Editing & Publishing Macleay College
Elvish, Karen, BA, DipEd Flinders
Inglis, Julia, BA Monash, DipEd Rusden
O’Shannassy, Maxine, Dip T, MLC AES, BEd ECU, Cert IV Training and Assessment AIMT (from Jan 2010)
Thompson, Shane, Dip T Kuring-gai, BEd Deakin (to Sep 2009)

Sales Consultants, HR/Psychology
Ferrara, Gerard, BA (Psych/HRM) Swin, GradDip (App Psych) VU, MAPS, AHRI
Lammi, Eirini, BA (Ed), MA (Counselling Psych), PostgradCert (Org Beh)
McFarland, Margaret (Oct-Dec 2009)

Distribution Manager
O’Loughlin, David

Customer Service Coordinator
Higgins, Christine, GradCert (Mgt) Deakin, Cert IV Electronic Publishing Holmesglen

Customer Service Officers
Gardiner, Jan
Keele, Julie, TPTC, Coburg
King, Alex, BEnvSci (Mgt) CSU (to Feb 2010)
Hinrichsen, Sarah (from Mar 2010)
Robinson (Malbon) Megan, BCM Journ, GradDip Ed (Sec) Monash
Marshall, Lexie

Despatch Manager
O’Neill, Steven

Despatch Officers
Choi, Monty
Gilder, Peter
Parsons, Steve
Smith, Ian

Purchasing Officer
Major, Victoria, BA, GradDip Psych Melb

Production Manager
Coates, Jillian, Dip PM

Product Manager (Assessment)
Lim, Li Ai, BSocSc (Hons Psych), MA (App Psych)

Project Editors
O’Keefe, Maureen, BA, GradDip InfoMgt/Librarianship UNSW
Pinches, Amanda, BComm (Public Relations) Monash, Cert Arts & Dip Arts (Professional Writing and Editing) Chisholm, GradDip (Editing & Publishing) RMIT
Webb, Elisa, BA (Hons) Melb, GradDip (Editing & Publishing) RMIT, MA (Comms) RMIT (from Feb 2010)

Project Officer (Magazines)
Brown, Caro Lynn

Publishing Assistant
Proctor, Holly, BA Swin, GradDip (Editing & Publishing) RMIT
(from Jun 2010)
Production Assistant
Proctor, Holly, BA, Swin, GradDip (Editing & Publishing) RMIT (to Jun 2010)
Webb, Elisa, BA (Hons) Melb, GradDip (Editing & Publishing) RMIT, MA (Comms) RMIT (to Feb 2010)

Publishing Manager, Journals
Holden, Steven BA (Hons), DipEd, MA, PhD Tas

Journalist
Leech, Rebecca BA (Hons) Deakin (from Jan 2010)

Project Publishing Manager
Grose, Craig, Dip Art (Graphic Art) QUT

Senior Desktop Publishing Officers
Jeffrey, Darren, DipArt (Graphic Art) RMIT
Macedo, Luis (from Jan 2010)
McGregor, Wendy
Schubele, Ralph
Wilson, Karen

Bookseller
Stoks, Tracey, BA, MA Canterbury, GradDipPub Whitireia

Bookshop Assistant
Morgan, Sue (from Sep 2009)
Wood, Susan (from Jun 2010)

ACER Leadership Centre

Director ACER Leadership Centre
Carrington, Neil, DipTeach Griffith, BEd QUT, MEd, MEd(Psych) JCU, PhD UNE

Senior Project Leader
Acker; Vivienne

Manager, Leadership Projects (Qld)
McGruther; Tony, MEd, GradDipEdAdmin USQ, BEd CQU, DipTeach NBCAE

ACER Institute
(Formerly Centre for Professional Learning)

Director, ACER Institute
Hoad, Kerry-Anne, MEd Melb, BA Deakin, GradDip Special Ed SCVB, DipTeach IEC 8, Cert IV WorkplaceTrain&Assess Box Hill

Education Consultant
Rosman, Lynda, BEd, GradDip Melb, GradDip Chisholm

Teaching Fellow
Hollingsworth, Hillary (from Mar 2010)

Project Officer
Pye, Brendan, BFA VCA, DipEd Melb

Administrative Officer
Appleby, Gayle
Taylor; Margaret

Library and Information Services

Manager
Deveson, Lance, DipTeach(Prim), DipComp Ballarat, DipLibrarianship Melb, ALIAA, ARMAA

Senior Librarian
Grinston, Tine, BEd Librarianship Melb State Coll
Hughes, Stuart, BA (Hons) Otog, MA Monash, AALIA
Knight, Pat, BA Swin, MLS Loughborough, GradDip Assess & Eval Melb

Librarians
Lissonnet, Sophie, MBus(InfoMgt) RMIT, MIndgStud JCU, GradDipTechCom Swin, BA (Journ) Strasbourg, Cert IV Asst & Wrkpl Training CAE
Spiller, Barbara, BA Melb, GradDiplib UB (from Nov 2009)
Trevitt, Jenny, BA Monash, GradDiplib, MBus Info Tech (Info Mgt) RMIT

Librarian – Collection and Organisation
McDowell, Katie, BA Melb, GradDip(Info Services) RMIT

Library Technicians
Barnes, Cheryl, BEd Librarianship University of Melbourne, VU

Record Services Manager
Fraser, Simon

Record Support Officer
Khan, Shamsun

ASSESSMENT SERVICES DIVISION

Director
Jackson, Deirdre, MBM, Cert Project Consulting RMIT, BA Monash, DipEd Melb

Project Operations Administrator
McErlain, Tanya, BA, GradDiplEd Melb, GradCertBus (Proj Man) Swin

Reserch Fellow
Dick, Wendy, TPTC Frankston Monash, BA Melb, MA Melb

School Education

General Manager, School Education
Saubern, Ralph, GradDiplCompScience (Hons) RMIT, BA Melb, BEd La T, MTESOL Monash, CTEFLA Holmes College, AIMM AIM (from May 2010)

Butler, Adele, BSc (Hons), BEd Monash, DipEd Rusden, GradCert EduLeadership VUT, MEd RMIT, MPD Master
Project Director AIPM (to Oct 2009)

Education Consultants
Morath, John, DipEd, BEd Melb, BA, MA Monash

Senior Research Fellows
Filipi, Anna, BA, MA Melb, DipEd, PhD Monash (to Jul 2009)

Senior Project Director
Soraghan, Barry, BA, GradDipEd Melb, BTheol YTU, Dip Training and Assessment Systems ISIS
Weeding, David, BEd Melb, GradCertBus (Proj Man) Swin

Project Directors
Dodds, Robyn, BA RMIT, GradDipSoc LaT
Mangum, Nicola, BEd Otago, DipTeach Dunedin
Robertson, Glenda, BA (Hons) Canterbury, MA Harvard (from Nov 2009)

Research Officer
Eames, Leanne BA Deakin, MAJIT UQ

Senior Project Officers
Brouwers, Bernadette, BA, GradDipEd, MA (Applied Linguistics) Melb, GradCert (Catholic Studies) ACU
Chung, Michelle, BBus (InfoSystems) RMIT
Elder, Sarah, BA Monash, GradDip (Admin) Chisholm Inst
Good, Susannah (from Dec 2009)
Hindson, Karen, BAppSc, PostGrad Cert BusAdmin Murdoch
Hoeyberg, Mette, BA (Hons) OnlineComms&CultStud Roskilde (to Nov 2009)
Meachen, Janine, CertIII Bus Admin
Robertson, Glenda, BA (Hons) Canterbury, MA Harvard (to Nov 2009)

Project Officer
Cunningham, Sarah, BEd Deakin (from Aug 2009)
Hoeyberg, Mette, BA (Hons) OnlineComms&CultStud Roskilde (to Nov 2009)
Scalzo, Karen

Higher Education
General Manager, Higher Education
MacMahon Ball, Marita, BA (Hons) DipEd Sydney, MA (Communications) Monash

Senior Project Director
Nankervis, Susan, BEd, MEd Melb, GradCertBus (Proj Man) Swin

Project Directors
MacLeod, Kirsty, BEco/BA (Hons) Monash, GradCertBus (ProjMan) Swin, MPM RMIT
Norris, Lisa, BA (Fashion) RMIT, CertBus RMIT, CertPM AIM
Vele, Veronica, BA(German) Melb, M Tech(Internet & Web Comp) RMIT, GradCertMan AIM

Senior Project Officers
Hong, Joyce, BA NUS, PGDipEd NTU, MA(AppLing) Melb, GradCertBus(AppBus) Swin
Mauger, Kellie, BMus (Composition) Qld Conservatorium (to Dec 2009)
Plunkett, Simon, BA ANU, DipEd Canberra, GradCertBus (ProjMan) Swin

Project Officer
McLean, Shelley, BA/BTeach Monash (from Nov 2009)

Corporate & Vocational Education
Manager, Corporate & Vocational Program
Foster, Larry, BA (Hons), MA, PhD Manchester, PGCE/DipEd, MA Melbourne, GradCertMgmt VUT, CertLeadershipDev Arizona, GradCertMgmt CSU, CertIV Assessment and Workplace Training Holmesglen, Certificat de la Langue Francaise Paris

Project Director
Brinson, Laura, AssocDipSocSci (Lib&InfSt) Swin (to Nov 2009)

Project Director/Education Consultant
Camacho, Blanca, BEd Venezuela, MA (Adult Education) Boston University (from Dec 2009)

Project Officer
Good, Susannah (to Dec 2009)
King, Alex, BEnvSci(mgt) CSU (from Feb 2010)
Waring, Kirsty, BA (Hons) Melb, MA Stockholm, GradDip Melb, GradCert Deakin (from Mar 2010)

RESEARCH DIVISION

Assessment and Reporting
Research Director
Forster, Margaret, BA (Hons), DipEd La T, MEdSt Monash, PhD Melb
Fraillon, Julian, BA GradDip Melb, GradDip(Maths) Melb (Acting from Sep 2009)
Mendelovits, Juliette, BA (Hons), DipEd La T, MA(Eng) Melb (Acting from Sep 2009)
Principal Research Fellow and Head, ACER Brisbane
Matters, Gabrielle, BSc, UQ, AMusA QCM, PhD QUT, FACE

Principal Research Fellow and Manager, ACER Perth
Cook, Jocelyn, BA UWA, Teachers’ Cert STCWA

Principal Research Fellows
Fraillon, Julian, BA GradDip Melb, GradDip(Maths) Melb (from Feb to Sep 2009)
McCrae, Barry, BSc (Hons), DipEd Melb, MED Monash
Mendelovits, Juliette, BA (Hons), DipEd La T, MA(Eng) Melb (to Sep 2009)
Rothman, Sheldon, BA Massachusetts, MAT New Mexico State, MED (Hons) UNE, EdD Harvard (to Jan 2010)

Senior Research Fellows
Anderson, Prue, BA, MEDst Monash DipEd La T
Bibby, Yan, BEng Shanghai, MEng Auck, CertIT Newcastle, GradDipAppFinInv SIA (to Jan 2010)
Bovell, Martina BA, DipEd, PostGradDip (Arts), UWA
Bryce, Jennifer, BA, BEd Melb, DipArts VicColl, MSoC RMIT, PhD RMIT
Hambur, Sam, BSc (Hons) Monash, DipEd HIE
Lindsey, John, BSc (Hons), PhD Monash, DipEd Melb
Lumley, Thomas, MA Oxon, DipEd La T, MA PhD Melb
Martin, Ron, BSc, BEd, GradDipEdAdmin Melb, MEnvSci, PhD Monash
McCurry, Doug, BA (Hons) DipEd La T, PhD Monash
Peck, Ray, BSc, BEd Melb, BSpecEd Monash
Stephanou, Andrew, PhD, DipEd Melb, Laurea di Dottore in Finestra Rome (to Jan 2010)
Tout, David, BSc, DipEd, BEd, CertIV Train & Assess, AdvDip Language, Lit & Num PracVET (from Apr 2010)

Research Fellows
Butler, Mark, BSc (Hons) Warwick, PGCE Manchester
Connolly, Nick, BSc, PGCE Hull, BA (Hons) London
Courtney, Louise, BA (Hons) Monash, DipEd Melb
Calvitto, Leanne, BAAppSci (Hons) RMIT (from Sep to Dec 2009)
Duckworth, Daniel, BA (Hons) La T, GradDipEd (Secondary) Melb
Edwards, Jane, BSc (Hons), MSc (Geol) Melb, BEd Deakin
Gallagher, Janelle (to Jan 2010)
Grisdale, Susan (to Jul 2009)
Gross, Roslyn, BA (Hons), DipEd Melb
Hall, Robyn, BA (Hons), BSc Monash (to Jan 2010)
Harding, John, BSc, BEd Monash, DipEd Rusden DipArts Bendigo
Hohlfield, Karin, BA, GradDipEd Monash
Hudson, Ross MSc (Science Education) Curtin, BScEd Melb
Hunt, Malcolm, BSc (Hons), DipEd, PhD Melb
Inglis, Andrea, BA (Hons), DipEd, MA, PhD Melb
Jackel, Brad, BA (Hons), PhD Monash
Justus, Julie-Anne (From Aug to Dec 2009)
Kelly, David, BA (Hons), MA UQ, DipEd Sydney
Kelly, Suzanne, BA, UWA, DipEd UWA, GradCertHR Curtin, CertIV Training & Assessment (from Jan 2010)
Kreibich, Robyn, BSc (Hons), DipEd Monash
Le, Luc, BSc (Hon) Hue, MEd RMIT (to Jan 2010)
Lye, Helen, BSc Melb, DipEd Monash
McGregor, Margaret, BEd(Prim), MEd Studies Monash, TPTC Frankston
McKinnon, Nicola, BEd (Prim) Med Melb
Meehan, Rita (from Mar 2010)
Monckton, Stewart, BSc (Hons) Environmental Studies, MSc Ecology, PGCE York, PGCE (IB Diploma) Melb (from Oct 2010)
Moore, Jacqueline, BEd(Sec) Melb, GradDipTESOL&Linguistics VUT
Nguyen, Van, BSc, Hue, MEd RMIT, MA Psych, PhD Hanoi (to Jan 2010)
Nixon, Judy, BA, DipEd Melb, BA (Hons) Psych Deakin, MPsych Monash
Norris, David, BA Monash, MA, prelim. (archaeology) La T
Perrett, Bill, BA, Melb, DipEd, PhD La T
Philpot, Raymond, BSc (Hons), MSc Melb (from Aug 2010)
Pywell, Sean, BSc (Hons), DipEd, PhD
Raivars, Andrew, BA (Hons), DipEd, BLitt (Hons) Monash, GradDipMathSc MCAE
Reid, Greg, BEd/BA (Hons) JCU, Prep Cert TEFL, International House, London, DST Sydney, GradCertWriting UTS
Sadeghi, Rassoul, BA, MA, PhD UNSW (to Jan 2010)
Searle, Dara, BA, BSc (Hons) Psych Melb
Sendy-Smithers, Lynn, BA, DipEd Monash, COGE UNSW
Tan, Ling, BAppSci (Hons) RMIT, PhD Monash (to Jan 2010)
Taylor, Rebecca, BSc (Hons) Melb, GradDipEd Melb, PhD Melb (from Feb 2010)
Thau, Felicia, BSc, DipEd Melb
Tout, David, BSc, DipEd, BEd, CertIVTrain&Assess, AdvDipLanguage, Lit&NumPracVET (to Apr 2010)
Urbach, Daniel, BCom (Hons) Monash (to Jan 2010)
Zouboulis, Stavroula, BSc/Ed, Monash, GradCertEdStudies(Gifted Ed) Melb

Project Officer
McDonald, Louise (from Feb 2010)

Research Officers
Bates Jarrod, BA (Hons) La T, Postgrad Dip (Editing & Comm.) Melb
Brayeky, Esther, BA (Languages) Monash, CELTA Holmes Institute
Calvitto, Leanne, BAAppSci (Hons) RMIT (to Sep 2009)
Imber, Madeline, BA Monash, DipEd, MEd Melb (from Aug 2009)
Knowles, Sandra, BA (Hons), PhD UNSW
Pearce, Jacob (from Feb 2010)
Pearson, Penny, BSc ANU, DipEd(Sec) Canberra, GradDipLang(Jap) Monash
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Administration Officers
Bates, Carmel
Cubas, Renata
Hind, Kelly, BAppSc, PostGradCertBusAdmin Murdoch

Teaching, Learning and Leadership
Research Director
Dinham, Stephen, DipTeach, Alexander Mackie CAE, BA, MEdAdmin, PhD, UNE, FACE, FACEL, FAIM

Principal Research Fellows
Ingvarson, Lawrence, BSc, DipEd UWA, MA London, PhD Monash FACE
Purdie, Nola, PhD, MEd, BEd, DipPhysEd UWA, TC, Claremont
Rowley, Glenn, BSc, BEd Melb MA, PhD Toronto
White, Gerald, DipT, AdvDipT (Distinction), BEd, MEd Findlers, MACS, FACE

Senior Research Fellows
Anderson, Michelle, BEd Rusden, MEd Melb, PhD London
Kleinhenz, Elizabeth, BA, BEd Melb, EdD, MEd Monash TPTC
Kos, Julie, BA (Hons) Deakin, MA (Clin Psych)/PhD RMIT
Meiers, Marion, BA, DipEd Melb, BEd, MEd Monash, MACE
Scott, Catherine, BA Sydney, DipEd Mitchell CAE,
GradDipChildDev (Hons) FCYS (Foundation for Child and Youth Studies), PhD Macquarie

Research Fellows
Friso, Tracey, BSc La T, DipEd Bendigo,
GradDipAdol&ChildPsych Melb (to Jan 2010)
Hillman, Kylie, BA (Hons) MEd Psych Melb, Psych Reg Board Vic (to Oct 2009)
Ozolins, Clare, BA LLB Monash, BTeach(Prim) Melb (to June 2010)
Reid, Kate, BA BSc (Hons), MPsyCh, PhD Melb (from Jun 2010)
Weldon, Paul, BA (Hons), PhD Deakin (from Jan 2010)
Wilkinson Jenny, BA, BEd Melb, MEdStud, CertGiftEdEd
Monash

Indigenous Education Researcher
Milgate, Gina, BCom(Mkt & Mgt), GradDipBusStud(Mkt & Mgt), GradCertHighEd UNE (to Feb 2010)

Senior Administrative Officer
Mattea, Julia, BBus(HRM), BBA, Deakin, CertIV(TTT)

National and International Surveys
Deputy CEO (Research) and Research Director
Ainley, John, BSc, MEd, PhD Melb, FACE

Principal Research Fellows
Cresswell, John, BSc, BEd UWA, MEd UTas, PhD Curtin
Schulz, Wolfram, Dip-Pol Berlin, PhD (EcoSocSci) Rostock
Thomson, Sue, BAppSci RMIT, DipEd, PhD Monash,
GradDipMathsEd Deakin, MEdSt
Turner, Ross, MSc, DipEd Melb, DipEdPsych Monash

Senior Research Fellows
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Kovaricikova, Nora, DipIng, DipEd Slovak Technical University
Lietz, Petra, BEd Hamburg, MEd Findlers, CTEFLA Cambridge,
MAcc CQU, PhD Findlers
Macaskill, Greg, BSc (Hons) Adel, GradDipComStudies RMIT,
GradDipStatsOR, RMIT
Mellor, Suzanne, BA, DipEd Melb, BEd La T, MEdSt Monash,
MACE
Murphy, Martin, BA, DipEd, MEdStds Monash, GradDipSocStat Swin
Routitsky, Alla, BSc (Hons, Maths), PhD (Maths) Voronezh,
DipEd Melb, DipSocStats Swin
Walker, Maurice, BA (Hons) VUW, MAssessEval Melb

Research Fellows
Buttress, Wei, BBus(Internal Finance), BA(Foreign Languages) Shenyang, DipPrfMgt Swin, MEd (Mgt & Leadership) USYD
Chow, Renee, BBus(Mkt) RMIT, MAssess&Eval Melb
Daraganov, Alexander
De Bortoli, Lisa, BAppSci Deakin, GradDipCounsPsych RMIT
Han, Mee Young
Hillman, Kylie, BA (Hons) MEd Psych Melb, Psych Reg Board Vic (from Oct 2009)
Hong, Jennifer, BA, MSc (App Statistics) Swin
Menyen, Thoa, MSc(Stats) Monash, GradDipHumanServ (counselling) Swin
O'Malley, Kate, BA, BCom Sydney
Tabata, Naoko, BEd (Special Ed) Kyoto University of Education, MEd (Int & Comparative Ed) Indiana-Bloomington, DEd (Program Evaluation) Melb
Van De Gaer, Eva, MPsych, PhD EdSci K.U.Leuven
Wenn, Louise, BA (Hons) Psych Melb (from May 2010)
Wermert, Nicole, BBSc La T, GradDipPsych, MAssess&Eval Melb
Zhao, Yu, BA, MSc (Psychology) Shenyang, DipPrfMgt Swin, MEd(Mgt & Leadership) USYD

Research Officers
Buckley, Sarah, BSc (Hons), PhD Melb
Deerey, Alana, BA (Hons) Psych Melb (to Jan 2010)
Friedman, Tim, BSc (Hons) Psych Monash
Fitzgerald, Kate
Gates, Jesse (from Apr 2010)
Hersbach, Elizabeth
Nicholas, Marina, BA (Psych) VU, Grad Dip (Psych) Deakin
Plotka, Anna
Templeton, Stephanie (from Apr 2010)
Waters, Charlotte
Wenn, Louise, BA (Hons) Psych Melb (to May 2010)
Senior Project Officer
Bates, Susan

Senior Administrative Officer
Zubrinich, Julie, BA UWA, BEd Deakin

Policy Analysis and Program Evaluation

Research Director
Beavis, Adrian, BA CIT, MEd, PhD Melb

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Dowling, Andrew, BA (Hons), GradDip Teach(Sec), MA (Research), Executive MBA AGSM, PhD Sydney (to Dec 2009)

Lonsdale, Michele, BA (Hons) DipEd Melb, GradDipStudentWelfare HIE, MEd, PhD LaT

Rothman, Sheldon, BA Massachusetts, MAT New Mexico State, MEd (Hons) UNE, EdD Harvard (from Jan 2010)

Simons, Robert, BA, MDiv, MTh, PhD CHA, Post-Doctoral Fellowship Harvard GSAS (from Mar 2010)

Research Fellow
Nesteroff, Stefan, MSc (Medical Science) Amsterdam, GCert Teaching & Learning in Higher Education Swin (to Jun 2010)

Nguroho, Dita, BA, MPubPol ANU, PGCert Assess & Eval Melb (from Nov 2009)

Underwood, Catherine, BA, GradCert(SocStats), Swin (from Nov 2009)

Research Officer
Underwood, Catherine, BA, GradCert(SocStats), Swin (from Nov 2009)

Administrative Officer
Bramich, Meredith, BA Melb, GDip SecEd LaT, GDip Info Mgt RMIT

Project Leader (Schools First)
Clerke, Sharon (from Jan 2010)

Psychometrics & Methodology

Research Director (from Feb 2010)
Khoo, Siek Toon, BSc Canterbury, DipEd Singapore, GradDip CompSc La T, MEdSt Monash, PhD UCLA

Principal Research Fellow (to Feb 2010)
Khoo, Siek Toon, BSc Canterbury, DipEd Singapore, GradDipCompSc La T, MEdSt Monash, PhD UCLA

Senior Research Fellow
Le, Luc, BSc (Hon) Hue, MEd RMIT (from Jan 2010)

Stephanou, Andrew, PhD, DipEd Melb, Laurea di Dottore in Fisica Rome (from Jan 2010)

Bibby, Yan, BEng Shanghai, MEng Auck, Cert IT Newcastle, GradDip AppFinInv SIA (from Jan 2010)

Research Fellow
Hall, Robyn, BA (Hons), BSc Monash (from Jan 2010)


Nguyen, Van, BSc Hue, MEd RMIT, MA Psych, PhD Hanoi (from Jan 2010)

Ozolins, Clare, BA, LLB Monash, BTeach (Prim) Melb (from June 2010)

Sadeghi, Rassoul, BA, MA, PhD UNSW (from Jan 2010)

Tan, Ling, BAppSc (Hons) RMIT, PhD Monash (from Jan 2010)

Urbach, Daniel, BCom (Hons) Monash (from Jan 2010)

Research Officer
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Systemwide Testing

Research Director
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Manager, Systemwide Testing
Arthur, Phillip, MEd USQ, BEd ACAE

Assistant Manager, Systemwide Testing
Eveleigh, Frances, MEd, BEd UNSW, DipEd SCAE (from Jul 2009)

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Eveleigh, Frances, MEd, BEd UNSW, DipEd SCAE (to Jul 2009)

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Babet, Jennifer

Transitions and Post-school Education and Training

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McKenzie, Phillip, BEd (Hons), DipEd, MEd, PhD Monash, FACE

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Coates, Hamish, BA (Hons), BSc, MEd Melb

Marks, Gary, BSc (Hons), MSc Melb, PhD UQ

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Brown, Justin, BBus UTS, PGDipEd, MEd Monash

Edwards Daniel, BA (Hons), PhD Monash

McMillan, Julie, BA (Hons), PhD UQ

Richardson, Sarah, BA (Hons) Liverpool, MA (International Relations) Amsterdam, GradCert (Marketing) SIT (from Mar 2010)

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