2012

ACER 2011-2012 Annual Report

Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)

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IMPROVING LEARNING

Pictured: Students from Penbank School, Melbourne. Photo by Guy Lavoliere
The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) is an independent not-for-profit organisation. 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.

ACER is involved in the collection, analysis, interpretation and use of reliable information to assist educational decision makers – from individual teachers to system leaders and policy makers – in two ways: to help them help learners by identifying educational progress and challenges, and to help them identify and implement effective policies and practices on the basis of good evidence.

ACER’s focus is on supporting learners and their needs, supporting the learning professionals who work with those learners, supporting those who maintain the educational institutions and systems in which learners and learning professionals work, and supporting our learning society.

Find out what that looks like in our day-to-day work in the following pages.

GOALS

1. **Learners and their needs**  
   *Every learner engaged in challenging learning opportunities appropriate to their readiness and needs*

2. **The learning profession**  
   *Every learning professional highly skilled, knowledgeable and engaged in excellent practice*

3. **Places of learning**  
   *Every learning community well resourced and passionately committed to improving outcomes for all learners*

4. **A learning society**  
   *A society in which every learner experiences success and has an opportunity to achieve their potential*

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 and 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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FROM THE CEO

Seth W. Masters
During 2011-12 ACER continued work under Strategic Plan 2010-13. The plan identifies four broad aspirations for the current triennium. These aspirations are to contribute through our research and development to ensuring that:

- every learner is engaged in challenging learning opportunities appropriate to their readiness and needs;
- every learning professional is highly skilled, knowledgeable and engaged in excellent practice;
- every learning community is well resourced and committed to improving outcomes for all learners; and
- all groups in society have equitable access to quality educational opportunities and experience success.

Among our major activities for the year, ACER conducted the third cycle of the National Assessment Program – ICT Literacy for the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority.

Delegates at the 2011 ACER research conference, Indigenous Education: Pathways to Success, held in Darwin in August discussed research into effective strategies for improving educational outcomes for all Indigenous students. Delegates at the 2012 National Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Conference held in Melbourne in May addressed issues around the assessment of language, literacy and numeracy and implications for effective vocational and workplace education and training.

In the higher education sector, ACER continued to manage the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement; led the OECD’s Assessment of Higher Educational Learning Outcomes study; and conducted the University Experience Survey for the Australian Government Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education.

For the fourth year, ACER worked with the National Australia Bank and the Foundation for Young Australians on the NAB Schools First national program to recognise outstanding school-community partnerships.

Internationally, ACER managed Australia’s participation in the OECD’s Programme for International Student Assessment, and undertook the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies, also for the OECD. Work continued on the United Arab Emirates (UAE) National Assessment Program for the UAE Ministry of Education, on the International Computer and Information Literacy Study for the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, and on the international reports for the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study.

The stories told in this report illustrate how ACER is making a difference by creating and promoting research-based knowledge, products and services that can be used to improve learning across the lifespan.

Professor Geoff Masters
ACER Chief Executive Officer
LEARNERS AND THEIR NEEDS

EVERY LEARNER ENGAGED IN CHALLENGING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES APPROPRIATE TO THEIR READINESS AND NEEDS

TOP END INNOVATION

If there’s one word to describe ACER’s Online Monitoring and Assessing Early Learning project, it’s innovative. The project for the Northern Territory Department of Education and Training will assess Year 1 students’ literacy and numeracy online from 2013.

Research Fellows Danielle Anzai, Sandra Knowles and colleagues Nicola Andrews, Naomi Sermon and Ray Philpot, led by Annie Brown in ACER’s Assessment and Reporting research program, developed and piloted the assessment in schools in remote and urban schools in the NT in May.

‘The key is to make the most of the computer-based features and not have the navigation itself become too much of a task for students. If a question can’t be asked in a manageable way onscreen using a click or drag-and-drop approach, we’re not asking it.’

Research Fellow, Ms Danielle Anzai
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING IN SCHOOLS

ACER’s Social-Emotional Wellbeing (SEW) Survey enables schools and systems to gauge the social and emotional wellbeing of their students at any point in time. It is used by school and system staff, and also by researchers to collect information on social and emotional wellbeing before and after an intervention. ‘Surveysing students pre- and post-program enables educators and researchers to identify a program’s impact,’ explains SEW Survey Project Director, Ms Sarah Elder.

‘We deliver the SEW Survey in large independent schools, small regional government schools, urban and remote, primary and secondary schools, so I’m constantly communicating closely with staff in schools from Camberwell to the Kimberley,’ Sarah says.

‘The survey enables schools to identify students’ social-emotional needs, evaluate the effectiveness of intervention programs, target resources to specific areas of need and review their wellbeing policies.’ SEW Survey Project Director, Ms Sarah Elder

www.acer.edu.au/tests/sew

PROFILING AN EXTRAORDINARY SCHOOL

For the first time, ACER Press has been involved in producing and distributing a documentary, called Dare to be Different. The documentary, based on An Extraordinary School, edited by Sara James, explores the fully serviced schooling model at Melbourne’s Port Phillip Specialist School. ACER has provided crucial initial funding, as well as in-kind support from ACER Press, marketing and communications.

‘An Extraordinary School and Dare to be Different show how learning professionals meet the very diverse needs of their learners, and they show what a school that’s passionately committed to improving outcomes for all learners looks like.’ ACER Press General Manager, Ms Annemarie Rolls (until June, 2012)

For details about An Extraordinary School, visit shop.acer.edu.au/acer-shop/product/A5240BK
improving language learning

The annual Assessment of Language Competence (ALC) testing program – for Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Italian and Japanese, with Arabic and Spanish tests in the pipeline – supports best practice in language teaching and improved learning outcomes for students.

As ALC Project Director, Ms Bernadette Brouwers, explains, ‘The ALC testing program is all about improving language learning, enabling language teachers to deliver the most appropriate learning opportunities for their students, using reliable data for program evaluation in schools and promoting language learning in our global society.’

‘The value of the ALC,’ adds ALC Project Officer, Ms Jaclyn Bates, ‘is that it enables language students to experience success and lets them see how they’re performing in relation to other students.’

‘The ALC testing program allows language teachers to acknowledge excellence and celebrate success.’

Ms Bernadette Brouwers

www.acer.edu.au/tests/alc

assessment and benchmarking in india

ACER India has supported India’s National Council of Educational Research and Training in a World Bank-funded project to assess 15-year olds in the domains of reading, mathematical and scientific literacy in Himachal Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

ACER India staff members were also responsible for training personnel involved in school coordination at the selected sample schools, as well as for training field administrators and coders.

‘It’s vital for education in India that teachers and school leaders use good assessments, but also that they understand the importance of using data to inform their classroom teaching.’ Research Officer Mr Umesh Kumar

Photo copyright Kailash K Soni and Shutterstock
ICT FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

ACER’s Digital Education Research Network (DERN) focuses on research that really shows the impact of digital technology on teaching and learning.

‘There’s been an enormous gap when it comes to research into information and communication technology in education, because the research focus has been on the digital technology, not on teaching and learning,’ explains Dr Gerry White, a Principal Research Fellow in ACER’s Teaching, Learning and Transitions research program.

That’s a problem for two reasons, first because a focus on technology often reduces to a fascination with gadgetry, whether or not it’s having an impact on actual teaching and learning, but second and more importantly because the technology is developing so rapidly that the research is quickly out of date. You have to start with teaching and learning.’

‘Our aim through DERN is to make research on ICT in education and training available to practitioners “at the coalface”, but also to reach and influence educational researchers in this area.’ Dr Gerry White

ACEReSEARCH

ACEReSearch, maintained by the Cunningham Library, is an online, publicly accessible, searchable and free repository. As Ms Katie McDowell, a librarian in the Cunningham Library, explains, ‘It’s not just about open access, though; it’s also about grouping and linking research in useful categories, like higher education, say, or vocational education, but because it’s an archive of ACER-related research our categories also refer to ACER research areas like policy analysis and program evaluation, Indigenous education, transition and the like.’

‘ACEReSearch is one of the ways ACER provides educators with research to support their evidence-based interventions and strategies.’

Ms Katie McDowell

research.acer.edu.au

www.dern.org.au
THE LEARNING PROFESSION

EVERY LEARNING PROFESSIONAL HIGHLY SKILLED, KNOWLEDGEABLE AND ENGAGED IN EXCELLENT PRACTICE

A LEARNING GROUND

The Indigenous Education Research Database

ACER’s Indigenous Education Research Database can facilitate excellent practice in the learning profession by providing resources to learning communities committed to improving learning for all learners.

The approach has been to build on the foundation of Indigenous education research in Australia and New Zealand that supports ACER’s work. The vision is to create a database of Indigenous education research from around the globe.

‘We’re well placed to undertake this work because we understand the issues, we undertake so much of the research and we can bring all the available research together to inform policy and practice.’ Indigenous Liaison Officer, Ms Gina Milgate

opac.acer.edu.au:8080/ierd/index.html
SUPPORTING PSYCHOLOGISTS

As the Manager of Psychology Sales at ACER Press and a registered psychologist, Ms Eirini Lammi works with psychologists, psychiatrists, paediatricians, allied health professionals and teachers, which puts her and her team – fellow psychologists Ms Marian Power and Mr Blair Heading in Melbourne and Ms Marika Conomos in Sydney – in a unique position. ‘We provide practitioners with statistically and technically sound products that best serve their needs,’ explains Eirini, ‘but we’re also in a position to inform our colleagues in ACER Press about developments in the field and products that we might consider publishing.’

‘Because we’re constantly in touch with practitioners we understand their needs, and we’re involved in the development and licensing of products to meet those needs.’ Manager, Psychology Sales, Ms Eirini Lammi

HELPING SCHOOLS MAKE GOOD USE OF DATA

ACER Assessment Services is helping the learning profession become highly skilled, knowledgeable and engaged in excellent practice.

As schools gain access to more data, the critical issue is how they might best use it to improve learning. To address that, ACER has developed the Schools Data Analysis and Reporting Service to help schools understand and use data in ways that benefit their students by identifying and addressing their learning needs.

Through the Schools Data Analysis and Reporting Service, ACER is able to create longitudinal reports that show growth in learning over time for individual students and cohorts, and identify strengths and weaknesses in terms of student achievement.

‘We’re able to help schools make good use of data so they can take specific measures to address identified needs.’ Schools Data Analysis and Reporting Service Senior Project Director, Ms Robyn Hall
BUILDING PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY

The ACER Institute is committed to building the professional skills, knowledge and practice of educators and school leaders through high-quality professional learning opportunities.

The ACER Institute provides research-based professional learning through more than 100 scheduled professional learning workshops a year, plus the Leading Thinkers’ Seminar Series, five graduate programs, with a sixth in development, a Professional Learning Association – and the annual ACER Research Conference.

Underpinning every offering is a relentless focus on the use of data to support evidence-based policies and practices.

“We’re constantly drawing on ACER’s capabilities in terms of research to build capacity and improve learning.” ACER Institute Manager of Programs and Projects, Ms Lynda Rosman

ON TRACK IN THE POST-SCHOOL TRANSITION

Keeping track of school leavers’ outcomes helps policy makers to provide learners with challenging learning opportunities appropriate to their readiness and needs.

ACER’s On Track longitudinal research on post-school transition is providing broad data on student outcomes after the completion of schooling, but more specifically to help educators in post-schooling institutions to support school leavers who are experiencing a difficult transition.

‘While many school leavers follow a “simple” path, a longitudinal study allows us to look more carefully at those whose initial pathways are more complicated.’ Principal Research Fellow, Dr Sheldon (Sam) Rothman

www.acerinstitute.edu.au
HELPING INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

Reliable assessments like the International Schools’ Assessment (ISA) help teachers ensure each learner is engaged in challenging learning opportunities appropriate to their readiness and needs.

ISA papers are developed annually for some 58,000 students from Grades 3 to 10 in schools around the world. ISA items are subjected to careful scrutiny through extensive panelling and trialling in order to produce a balanced, reliable means of assessing student ability.

The ISA assesses students’ progress in reading, mathematics and writing, individually and by class or other groupings over time. And because the ISA is modelled on the OECD’s Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), schools are also able to compare their students’ performance against international standards.

Detailed reports give teachers valuable information about student progress on an item-by-item level. Teachers can see which questions were answered correctly and any misconceptions or gaps in learning their students may have, so that they can best meet their needs.

Administering an international test across time zones is a major logistical exercise. ‘The total sheets of paper scanned for a cycle of ISA if laid end to end would stretch half way from Melbourne to Sydney,’ explains ACER’s Manager of Project Services, Mr Jim Carrigan.

Adds Coordinator of Marking Operations, Ms Christine Lennie, ‘Good team work, careful organisation, meticulous record keeping, support and encouragement are fundamental to maintaining the smooth running of ISA marking – and our 20 or so other marking operations each year.’

‘The end result,’ says ISA Senior Project Officer, Ms Michelle Chung, ‘is a series of reports with information at the level of individual students, classes and schools as well as sub-groups identified by, say, gender or language background, alongside like-schools comparisons, international normative information and information about growth over time. The ISA helps educators around the world to monitor and improve educational outcomes, and doing that is a huge team effort.’

‘Classrooms are incredibly busy places, so having a robust, well-researched suite of assessment items on hand to help teachers make judgements about student progress is truly invaluable.’ Research Fellow, Ms Stavroula Zoumboulis

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PLACES OF LEARNING

EVERY LEARNING COMMUNITY WELL RESOURCED AND PASSIONATELY COMMITTED TO IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR ALL LEARNERS

SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS WITH IDEAS

Tender Bridge, a national research and development service of ACER, is ensuring that our schools are well resourced for the purpose of improving student outcomes. The purpose of Tender Bridge, explains Project Director, Dr Michelle Anderson, is to help get resources into schools for educational projects.

Tender Bridge also offers web-based resources, workshops, one-on-one tutorials and an editing service. 'Essentially we try to help schools connect with the wider community in the interest of addressing a local education-related need, by providing school leaders with the option to initiate a potential partnership rather than react,’ Michelle explains.

'Tender Bridge does all the searching, maintaining a dynamic database of funds offered by businesses, philanthropics, not-for-profit organisations, as well as governments at all levels, using a sophisticated search strategy.' Tender Bridge Project Director, Dr Michelle Anderson

tenderbridge.acer.edu.au
www.acer.edu.au/lleap
EVALUATING HIGHER EDUCATION

Imagine a global test that evaluates what higher education graduates know and can do. Imagine it’s valid across diverse cultures, languages and institutions. Now imagine that, rather than rank institutions, it actually evaluates the quality of teaching and learning in higher education.

ACER with consortium partners has shown such a test is feasible. ACER’s work on an ambitious project, the Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO), led by Hamish Coates and Sarah Richardson, will test the discipline-specific and generic skills of final year economics and civil engineering students.

Fieldwork ended in June 2012 and comprised 25 field implementations in 17 countries, involving 23,000 final-year university students and 5000 academics across 252 institutions.

‘The process to develop and manage AHELO is huge.’
Senior Research Fellow, Dr Daniel Edwards

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

ACER is helping to ensure that every school is well resourced and passionately committed to improving outcomes for all learners.

In 2008 ACER Chief Executive Professor Geoff Masters was commissioned by the Queensland Department of Education and Training to review primary school education in Queensland. One result of that work was the development of the Teaching and Learning School Improvement Framework, an evidence-based tool that enables schools and school systems to take detailed and objective measurements of school practices in areas shown by international research to have a direct impact on teaching and learning outcomes.

The framework was used as the basis for an audit of every government school in Queensland in 2010.

It also underpins further research, consulting and review work undertaken by Professor Masters, and Drs Gabrielle Matters and Siek Toon Khoo, and school improvement work with independent schools, Catholic school systems and government school regions across the nation by Tony McGruther, Manager of Leadership Projects at ACER.

‘Many schools have undertaken some kind of self review and strategic planning, but through our use of the framework, ACER is able to systematise the process and introduce a common, shared language for school improvement across schools.’
Mr Tony McGruther
INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH INTO TEACHING AND LEARNING

How do the attitudes of Australian teachers and school leaders compare with those of colleagues in other education systems? How does the workload in Australia compare? The desirability of teaching? The usefulness of professional development? These are some of the questions being answered in the second cycle of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS).

‘TALIS provides robust international indicators and analyses about teachers, school effectiveness, teacher professional development, systems of feedback and appraisal, and school leadership,’ says Research Fellow, Ms Kate O’Malley, who is working on the Australian component of TALIS.

‘TALIS fills important information gaps in the international comparisons of education systems and provides some fascinating insights into the experiences and perspectives of teachers and principals in Australian schools.’ Ms Kate O’Malley

EDUCATIONAL MONITORING IN EUSKADI

ACER is working with local partners in Spain on a longitudinal study in the northern Spanish region of Euskadi – or Basque Country – to compare the reading, maths and science achievement of students in bilingual and trilingual classes.

With partners Grupo Medida y Evaluación de Sistemas Educativos at the Complutense University of Madrid and the European Foundation Society and Education, ACER is conducting a three-year study to compare student achievement in schools with bilingual instruction in Spanish and Basque, and trilingual instruction in Spanish, Basque and English.

‘In the third year of the study in 2013 we’ll also be drawing on test items from the International Schools’ Assessment, which will help us to relate the outcomes in this study to the OECD’s Programme for International Student Assessment results.’

Senior Research Fellow, Dr Tom Lumley
FIT FOR PURPOSE: MEDICAL ADMISSIONS TESTS

Many universities use ACER’s assessments to assist in selecting appropriate students for medical and health science courses.

With a yearly candidature of 30,000 or so students, ACER’s Undergraduate Medicine and Health Sciences Admission Test (UMAT), Health Professions Admission Test (HPAT–Ireland) and Graduate Medical School Admissions Test (GAMSAT) programs assist 33 universities to select competent and appropriate students for medical and health science courses at the undergraduate or graduate level.

With 20 of the universities in Australia and two in New Zealand, plus six in Ireland and five in the United Kingdom, delivering UMAT, HPAT–Ireland and GAMSAT is a global effort.

ACER’s new online system now accommodates registrations, manages candidates, and delivers practice materials and sample tests, as well as providing results to candidates and universities.

‘Like ACER, our partners in the UMAT and GAMSAT Consortium universities are committed to research on the effectiveness of the tests in the selection of students wishing to pursue a career in the medical and health professions to ensure they’re fit for purpose.’ Ms Veronica Vele

[Links]
- [www.acer.edu.au/tests/umat](http://www.acer.edu.au/tests/umat)
- [www.acer.edu.au/tests/gamsat](http://www.acer.edu.au/tests/gamsat)
A LEARNING SOCIETY

A SOCIETY IN WHICH EVERY LEARNER EXPERIENCES SUCCESS AND HAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO ACHIEVE THEIR POTENTIAL

TESTING – SYSTEMWIDE AND WORLDWIDE

Working on the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), Mr Phillip Arthur is busily ensuring that ACER’s expertise in testing supports a learning society.

As the Manager of Systemwide Testing in ACER’s Assessment and Psychometric Research Division, Phillip’s responsibilities take him around the world, so while he works on NAPLAN he’s also supporting Mr Alan Egbert, the manager of ACER’s Middle East operations, by managing marking centres in the United Arab Emirates for the Programme for International Student Assessment and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study.

‘ACER is a very distributed organisation, and that’s essential to my work.’ Mr Phillip Arthur

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS

ACER monitors trends in student performance in the key areas of mathematics, science and reading through the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study. ‘Having such data allows us to investigate the influences of changes to policy, such as the age of entry to school in Western Australia and the future provision of kindergarten to all four-year olds, and the impact of such changes on the performance and attitudes of students,’ says Ms Marina Schmid, Research Fellow in the National Surveys research program of ACER’s Educational Monitoring and Research Division.

‘Our work helps policy makers and educators to compare the performance of Australian students with students in other countries.’ Ms Marina Schmid
TOP MARKS: ACER HELPS AFL’S WINNERS

ACER’s human resources assessments inform good decision making on the basis of valid and reliable evidence – even on the football field. Some AFL clubs now have a lot of psychometric data, including data on premiership players and Brownlow medalists, to use in their search for the next premiership winning team.

It’s absolutely critical that AFL clubs, like other organisations, collect quality information in order to make sound human resources decisions, according to ACER Human Resources Consultant, Mr Gerard Ferrara.

‘Making good human resources decisions is all about using valid and reliable evidence,’ says Gerard, ‘and that’s no different for an AFL club than, say, a mining company, government department or bank.’

‘A little evidence and analysis goes a long way, and on the last Saturday in September that means a lot.’
Mr Gerard Ferrara

www.acerhr.com.au
THE POLICY IMPACT OF ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS

International and national assessments enable governments to evaluate their education systems, but what’s the impact of such assessments on educational policies? Dr Petra Lietz and Ms Mollie Tobin are investigating exactly that through an AusAID-funded systematic review, The Impact of National and International Assessment Programs on Educational Policy in Developing Countries.

‘Generally speaking, the closer the link between an assessment program and education policy makers, especially in the design phase, the greater the impact of assessment on educational policy making.’
Dr Petra Lietz

PISA: TEACHERS REMAIN THE KEY

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the internationally standardised assessment of 15-year-olds in the domains of reading, mathematical and scientific literacy, collects data to explore and address students’ needs. Delivered by ACER for the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, PISA is a massive collaborative effort involving five consortium partners and national PISA centres in 67 countries.

‘PISA results tend to show that, whatever other policies are in place, countries with good educational outcomes are those where teachers are well respected and well remunerated. PISA shows that the teacher remains the key.’
Senior Research Fellow, Ms Nora Kovarcikova
ASSESSMENT IN BANGLADESH

ACER is currently working on a World Bank project to support the Bangladesh government in developing a robust and systematic assessment program. The work by Principal Research Fellow, Ms Jocelyn Cook, involves close collaboration with Mr Daniel Urbach from the Psychometrics and Methodology research program in Melbourne, and Ms Ratna Dhamija and the team in ACER’s office in India. ‘It’s an exciting project,’ Jocelyn says. ‘With the involvement of Ratna and the team in India, ACER has been able to provide significant face-to-face support for the primary assessment program and for the introduction of the secondary assessment program in Bangladesh.’

‘Our work in Bangladesh, as well as in India, Nepal and the Pacific, is helping teachers to better help students by identifying and addressing their learning needs.’ Ms Jocelyn Cook

LINKING RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

When researchers from a consortium of 10 universities came to ACER Press with a publishing proposal, they simply hoped to publish the report from their Mathematical Thinking of Preschool Children in Rural and Regional Australia study, but for ACER Press, the project is more than academic; it’s an opportunity to link research and practice.

As ACER Press Project Editor, Ms Amanda Coleiro, explains, ‘ACER Press saw the value in publishing the report online, but alongside a book for early childhood educators and parents, Young Children Learning Mathematics, and the Pattern and Structure Assessment in Early Mathematics, which we’ve linked to PATMaths so there’s an integrated program of assessment.’

‘It’s about adapting research to suit a wider readership.’
Ms Amanda Coleiro

shop.acer.edu.au/acer-shop/product/A5255BK
www.acer.edu.au/tests/patmaths
ACER BY NUMBERS

7 OFFICES

126 PROJECTS

57 BOOKS, BOOK CHAPTERS, REPORTS AND REFEREED JOURNAL ARTICLES BY STAFF

1510 MEDIA MENTIONS

205 733 FULL TEXT DOWNLOADS FROM ACER RESEARCH REPOSITORY

1115 DELEGATES AT ACER RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2012

4500 LINES OF PRODUCTS FOR SALE, INCLUDING BOOKS, TESTS AND OTHER RESOURCES

30 833 MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES ADMISSIONS TESTS ADMINISTERED
340+ STAFF

I22 STAFF WITH MASTERS DEGREES

63 STAFF WITH DOCTORATES

I20 STAFF WITH TEACHING QUALIFICATIONS

$63.7M TOTAL ASSETS
RESEARCH PROJECTS

NATIONAL PROJECTS

AUSAID
• Options and analysis paper on development and management of evaluation programs
• Options paper on Annual Synthesis and Quality Assurance
• Research into the financing of Technical and Vocational Educational and Training (TVET) in the Pacific
• Review of scholarships selection
• Systematic review on the impact of national and international assessment programs on educational policy, resource allocation and learning practices in developing countries

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)
• NAPLAN 2010 Central Analysis and Reporting
• NAPLAN 2010 School Level Reporting
• NAPLAN 2011 School Level Analysis
• NAPLAN 2012 Equating Study
• NAPLAN 2012 Item Development
• NAPLAN 2013 Item Development
• NAPLAN 2013 Trialling
• NAPLAN Civics and Citizenship Item Development
• Review of Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
• Literacy and Numeracy Requirements for Entry to Initial Teacher Education Programs

Australian Institute of Family Studies
• Longitudinal Survey of Australian Children

Australian National University
• The Australian Legal Profession: Education, Training and Career Outcomes

Australian Science Innovations
• Development of items for BIG Science Competition

Australian Securities and Investments Commission
• Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2012 National Financial Literacy

Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
• Analysis of Indigenous Higher Education
• Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO) National Project Manager
• Assessment of School Improvement
• Australian School Teachers and Leaders Survey
• Empowering Local Services Evaluation
• Evaluation of Sporting Chance program
• Evaluation of Teach for Australia initiative
• Guide to Evaluation of School-Business Relationships
• Indigenous Higher Education Review
• Investigation changes in the performance and equity in Australia 2000-2009
• Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership Targets – Technical Guidelines
• National School Improvement Framework
• OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2009 and 2012 national component (also funded by state and territory education departments)
• OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (Australian component)
• Primary and Secondary Teacher Work Study 2012-2014
• Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) National Study 2011
• School Evaluation and Rewarding School Improvement Project
• Staff in Australia’s Schools 2010 survey of Teachers and School Leaders
• Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) 2010
• University Experience Survey
Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

- Evaluation of ‘Enhancing Education’ in Northern Territory Emergency Response prescribed communities
- Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children
- Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children Resilience

Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (now known as Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood)

- Civics and Citizenship 2010
- Longitudinal Literacy and Numeracy Study
- Survey of ICT Literacy 2011

National VET Equity Advisory Council

- Disadvantaged Learners in VET

Productivity Commission

- Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage Report

Undergraduate Medicine and Health Sciences Admission Test (UMAT) Consortium

- Convergent validity of UMAT
- Establishing the criterion validity of UMAT

World Vision

- Evaluation of the second phase (years 4 and 5) of the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust (WETT) Early Childhood Care and Development Program

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

ACT Department of Education

- ACT Scaling Test

Primary Industries Education Foundation

- Development of a survey for students’ understanding of primary industries

NEW SOUTH WALES

Department of Education and Communities

- NSW Indigenous Community Consultation Paper

Department of Education and Training

- NSW Selective High Schools Test
- NSW Test for Year 5 Opportunity Classes
- Online training program for teachers to experience the application of the 2011 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) Writing Task Rubric

Screenrights

- Evaluation of the National Educational Video On Demand Archive (NEVODA) Pilot

SEMA (main client NSW DET)

- Essential Secondary Science Assessment

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Department of Education and Training

- Monitoring and assessing early learning

QUEENSLAND

Queensland College of Teachers

- Analysis of Year 12 OP data Queensland

Queensland Department of Education and Training

- Flying Start
- Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Tool

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Department of Education and Children’s Services

- Trial of the engagement matrix
- Western and eastern suburbs transitions research project
Origin Foundation
• Tenderbridge – Leading Learning in Education and Philanthropy (LLEAP)

University of South Australia
• Evaluation of Supporting Improved Literacy Achievement project

VICTORIA
Allen Consulting
• National Schooling Recurrent Resource Standard (NSRRS) Performance Index

Ardoch Youth Foundation
• Ardoch Western Linking Communities and Schools (WLinCS) program evaluation

Department of Family and Community Services
• Longitudinal Survey of Australian Children

Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE/Wodonga Institute of TAFE
• Integrated Data Collection Project

Ian Potter Foundation
• Tenderbridge – Leading Learning in Education and Philanthropy

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

Murdoch Children’s Research Institute
• Evaluation of Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) Database

National Australia Bank
• Schools First

National VET Equity Advisory Council
• Disadvantaged Learners in VET

RMIT
• Development of new components of the English Language Skills Quiz

Royal Australasian College of Surgeons
• Data Analysis of Exam results and Production of Reports

TVET Australia
• Providing Support for Disadvantaged Learners in the Australian VET System

VicRoads
• Development of Car Driver Learner Permit Test

Victorian Auditor General’s Office
• Student Safety

Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA)
• Design of an assessment structure for the proposed VCE Extended Investigation Study
• Sample Assessment of VELS – Creative and Critical Thinking
• Victorian General Achievement Test

Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
• Assessment of English in the Early Years of Schooling
• Combining Study and Structured Workplace Learning Research project
• Early Years Diagnostic Assessments of English
• Entitlement and Skills Reform research project
• ESL Assessment Tools and Advice
• Evaluation of Schools Centres for Teaching Excellence
• Evaluation of the 2011 Access and Equity Service Models
• Evaluation of the Numeracy Intervention Programs
• Evaluation of the Primary Mathematics and Science Specialists Initiative
• Gippsland Tertiary Education Plan
• Karreeta Yirramboi Traineeship and Scholarship Program
• Learning Needs Assessment: Deaf Education Sector
• Mapping AusVELS onto the EOI Scale
• On Track
• Principal for a Day
• Sample Assessment of VELS

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Department of Education and Training
• Western Australian Monitoring Standards in Education (WAMSE) Science
• Western Australian Monitoring Standards in Education (WAMSE) Society and Environment

INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS

Cambridge Education
• Improving Quality, Access and Governance in Education in Pakistan

Diagnostico en Educacion (Spain)
• PAT-ESP-EUS – reading, maths and science instruments, using Spanish and Basque versions of Progressive Achievement Tests and International Benchmark Test items, contributing to a study of achievement in bilingual and trilingual programs

Instituto Colombiano para la Evaluacion de la Educacion
• Consultancy work for Citizenship Competency Assessment in Colombia
• ICFES Training Project

International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement
• International Civic and Citizenship Education Study
• International Study of Computer and Information Literacy

International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement/Michigan State University
• Teacher Education Development Study

International Baccalaureate (IB) Organisation Asia Pacific
• IB – International Schools’ Assessment (ISA)

New Zealand Council for Educational Research
• Adult Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Tool: Recalibration and Review of Numeracy and Reading item pool
• Provision of Services for a Writing Assessment Tool

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
• Additional Round of PISA 2009 (PISA 2009+)
• Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO)
• OECD PISA for Schools
• OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2012 – international component
• PISA 2012 Assessment of Financial Literacy

Prometric
• Speaking Test Development

Standards and Testing Agency UK
• Level 3-5 and Level 6 English Reading Item Writing item development
• Level 3-5 Science Item Writing

UAE Ministry of Education
• PISA 2009+ Main Study Report
• UAE National Assessment Program
• UAE PISA 2012 Main Study

UNICEF
• Social Norms Review
• South Africa Formative Evaluation of Workbooks and Textbooks
• Zimbabwe Early Learning Assessment Program

World Bank
• Assistance with Primary and Secondary Assessment in Bangladesh
BOOKS AND REPORTS


Marks, Gary N.; Underwood, Catherine; Rothman, Sheldon; Brown, Justin (2011). *Career moves: expectations and destinations of NSW senior secondary students*. Melbourne: ACER.


McLean, Philippa; Perkins, Kate; Tout, David; Brewer, Kath; Wyse, Linda (2012). *Australian Core Skills Framework*. Canberra: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.


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Purdie, Nola; Reid, Kate; Frigo, Tracey; Stone, Alison; Kleinhenz, Elizabeth (2011). *Literacy and numeracy learning, lessons from the Longitudinal Literacy and Numeracy Study for Indigenous Students*. Melbourne: ACER.

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Radloff, Ali (Ed.); van der Meer, Jacques; Comer, Keith; Brogt, Erik; Byrnes, Giselle; Marshall, Stephen; Harris, Trudy; Coll, Richard; Krantenburg, Ineke; Poskitt, Jenny; Rees, Malcolm; Suddaby, Gordon (2011). *Student engagement in New Zealand universities*. Melbourne: ACER.


Tatto, Maria Teresa; Peck, Ray; Schwille, John; Bankov, Kiril; Senk, Sharon L.; Rodriguez, Michael; Ingvarson, Lawrence; Reckase, Mark; Rowley, Glenn (2012). *Policy, practice, and readiness to teach primary and secondary mathematics in 17 countries: findings from the IEA Teacher Education and Development Study in Mathematics (TEDS-M)*. Amsterdam: International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA).


Timms, Michael; Ketelhut, Diane Jass; Gobert, Janice; Clements, Douglas H.; Lester, James; Reese, Debbie Denise; Wiebe, Eric (2012). *New measurement paradigms*. United States: CADRE.

http://cadrek12.org/sites/default/files/NMP%20Report%20041412_0.pdf

**CHAPTERS IN BOOKS**


REFEREED JOURNAL ARTICLES


Brown, Gavin T. L.; Lake, Robert; Matters, Gabrielle (September 2011). New Zealand and Queensland teachers’

Brown, Robert; Scull, Janet; Nolan, Andrea; Raban, Bridie; Deans, Jan (2012). Young Learners: Mapping the beliefs and practices of early childhood teachers in relation to early literacy development. *Australian Educational Researcher*, v.39 n.3 p.313-331. http://www.springerlink.com/content/g735775064l60q/?MUD=MP


Ingvarson, Lawrence (September 2011). Trust the teaching profession with the responsibilities of a profession. *Teaching Science*, v.57 n.3 p.7-10.


Purdie, Nola; Reid, Kate; Buckley, Sarah (October 2011). Literacy learning: what works for young indigenous students? Lessons from the Longitudinal Literacy and Numeracy Study for Indigenous Students. *Literacy Learning: the Middle Years*, v.19 n.3 p.51-59.


Roberts, Gehan; Quach, Jon; Gold, Lisa; Anderson, Peter; Rickards, Field; Mensah, Fiona; Ainley, John; Gathercole, Susan; Wake, Melissa (June 2011). Can improving working memory prevent academic difficulties? A school based randomised controlled trial. *BMC Pediatrics*, v.11. http://www.biomedcentral.com/content/pdf/1471-2431-11-57.pdf

Scalise, Kathleen; Timms, Michael; Moorjani, Anita; Clark, LaKisha; Holtermann, Karen; Irvin, P. Shawn (November 2011). Student learning in science simulations: design features that promote learning gains. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, v.48 n.9 p.1050-1078. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/tea.20437


RESEARCH BRIEFINGS AND POLICY PAPERS


**OTHER PERIODICALS AND NEWSPAPERS**


Raban, Bridie (June 2012). Early literacy: audience, context and purpose. *Practically Primary*, v.17 n.2 p.4-5.

### Statement of Comprehensive Income

**for the year ended 30 June 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td>63 117 894</td>
<td>71 836 018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes in inventories and WIP</td>
<td>393 767</td>
<td>(422 321)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchases and consumables</td>
<td>(3 063 243)</td>
<td>(2 091 306)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee benefits</td>
<td>(37 041 295)</td>
<td>(38 871 905)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation and amortisation</td>
<td>(1 255 140)</td>
<td>(1 483 499)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freight and carriage</td>
<td>(616 922)</td>
<td>(856 319)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>(116 161)</td>
<td>(238 657)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer expenses</td>
<td>(958 404)</td>
<td>(1 319 552)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent and occupancy</td>
<td>(1 032 793)</td>
<td>(1 004 135)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultancies</td>
<td>(9 297 138)</td>
<td>(11 835 862)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing and stationery</td>
<td>(2 065 181)</td>
<td>(2 328 424)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royalties</td>
<td>(254 962)</td>
<td>(315 384)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repairs and maintenance</td>
<td>(379 565)</td>
<td>(438 440)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>(2 476 196)</td>
<td>(2 394 607)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance costs</td>
<td>(521 477)</td>
<td>(710 785)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other expenses</td>
<td>(4 086 945)</td>
<td>(4 802 322)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxation</td>
<td>(10 318)</td>
<td>(6 474)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surplus net of tax</strong></td>
<td>335 921</td>
<td>2 716 027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net gain on revaluation of land and buildings</strong></td>
<td>692 566</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of hedge</strong></td>
<td>1 345 613</td>
<td>(264 907)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net adjustment of foreign currency translation reserve</strong></td>
<td>38 138</td>
<td>(9 290)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total comprehensive income for the year</strong></td>
<td>2 412 238</td>
<td>2 441 829</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Statement of Financial Position

**as at 30 June 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASSETS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>17 909 488</td>
<td>13 577 428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade and other receivables</td>
<td>7 882 145</td>
<td>9 429 871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventories</td>
<td>2 245 598</td>
<td>2 628 611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial assets</td>
<td>831 833</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-current assets</td>
<td>5 443 518</td>
<td>7 207 178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total current assets</strong></td>
<td>34 312 582</td>
<td>32 843 088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LIABILITIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current liabilities</td>
<td>513 780</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-current liabilities</td>
<td>28 886 572</td>
<td>28 878 025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL ASSETS</strong></td>
<td>63 712 934</td>
<td>61 721 113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EQUITY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserves</td>
<td>6 312 815</td>
<td>4 876 820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accumulated surpluses</td>
<td>31 716 551</td>
<td>30 740 308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL EQUITY</strong></td>
<td>38 029 366</td>
<td>35 617 128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Statement of Cash Flows

**for the year ended 30 June 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cash flows from operating activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receipts from customers</td>
<td>73 397 213</td>
<td>78 618 884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payments to suppliers and employees</td>
<td>(65 343 897)</td>
<td>(71 246 010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest received</td>
<td>387 055</td>
<td>304 125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest paid</td>
<td>(528 213)</td>
<td>(695 744)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income taxes paid</td>
<td>(6 131)</td>
<td>(6 474)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net cash provided by operating activities</strong></td>
<td>7 906 027</td>
<td>6 974 781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cash flows from investing activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redemption of term deposits</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>188 374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proceeds from sale of plant and equipment</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquisition of property plant and equipment</td>
<td>(573 967)</td>
<td>(1 274 223)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net cash used by investing activities</strong></td>
<td>(573 967)</td>
<td>(1 083 208)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repayment of borrowings</td>
<td>(3 000 000)</td>
<td>(4 000 000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net cash used by financing activities</strong></td>
<td>(3 000 000)</td>
<td>(4 000 000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net increase in cash held</strong></td>
<td>4 332 060</td>
<td>1 891 573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cash at beginning of the financial year</strong></td>
<td>13 577 428</td>
<td>13 577 428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cash at the end of the financial year</strong></td>
<td>17 909 488</td>
<td>13 577 428</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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MSc(AppStat) Swin
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MAE Melb

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DipEd SCAE

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November 2012

Australian Council for Educational Research