



# ACER ANNUAL REPORT

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## 2018–19

Australian Council for Educational Research







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## ABOUT ACER

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**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.**

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The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) is one of the world's leading educational research centres.

Since it was established in 1930, ACER has built a strong reputation as a provider of reliable support and expertise to education policymakers and professional practitioners.

The Australian Council for Educational Research Limited is incorporated in Australia with subsidiary organisations in India and the United Kingdom. These three organisations comprise the ACER Group. In Australia, ACER is an independent, not-for-profit research organisation, limited by guarantee. ACER has more than 430 staff located in Adelaide, Brisbane, Dubai, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, London, Melbourne, New Delhi, Perth and Sydney.

ACER generates its entire income through contracted research and development projects, and by developing and distributing products and services, with operating surplus directed back into research and development.

# FROM THE CEO

The 2018–19 financial year was successful for the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER). But ACER does not exist simply to grow its operations – its purpose is to make a difference in the lives of children, young people and other learners everywhere.

ACER's strength, and ability to achieve its goal, lies within its people. We are driven by the ACER values: expertise, innovation, independence, integrity, responsiveness, reflection and improvement, positive relationships, and individual fulfilment.

This year, ACER welcomed Dr Catherine McClellan as head of the Assessment and Psychometric Research Division and Dr Nathan Zoanetti as Research Director, Psychometrics and Methodology, following the retirement of Dr Siek Toon Khoo. We also welcomed Dr Goran Lazendic as Research Director, Systemwide Testing, and head of our Sydney office after the retirement of Chris Freeman. Kris Sundarsagar was appointed as Country Representative for the newly established ACER Representative Office in Malaysia.

The year also saw ACER assume management of Australia's national professional certification for principals, the Certified Practising Principal (CPP) program, with Dr Jillian de Araugo joining our team as Project Director. Following a thorough search, a CPP Board was appointed, chaired by the CEO of the Queensland Education Leadership Institute, Neil McDonald.

ACER also appointed new members of the ACER Council and Board of Directors, Ms Tanya Deery and Dr Geoffrey Newcombe.

This report describes a selection of ways in which the people who make up ACER contribute to efforts to address educational challenges and improve learning.



A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Geoff Masters". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Professor Geoff Masters AO  
**Chief Executive Officer, ACER**



## YEAR IN REVIEW

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Throughout 2018–19, ACER continued to expand internationally. In September 2018, ACER officially opened its first office in Malaysia.

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The opening of the Malaysia office, which is headed by Country Representative Ms Kris Sundarsagar, coincided with the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement with the Kuala Lumpur-based Emerging Markets Innovative Research (EMIR) to collaborate on educational research and development programs that will benefit Malaysia and the broader ASEAN region.

ACER also signed Memorandums of Understanding to collaborate in areas of educational research of mutual interest with the Republic of Uzbekistan State Inspectorate for Supervision of Quality in Education, Universitas Negeri Malang (Malang State University), Universitas Negeri Jakarta (Jakarta State University) and Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (Indonesia Education University). These memorandums enable staff exchange, participation in seminars and academic meetings, and the sharing of educational research, information and expertise.

ACER's high-quality professional learning programs for educators and other professionals have been augmented with the launch of our masters-level course, Understanding Rasch Measurement Theory. Our school and system improvement services were adopted by new clients across Australia and in Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Our expertise in delivering student admissions programs for medical education in Australia, the United Kingdom and Ireland has now expanded to the Middle East, after the launch of the UAE Medical Selection Program in January 2019. Other new assessment services include the development and administration of Australia's Financial Adviser Standards and Ethics Authority (FASEA) exam and the delivery of the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACA) National Examination Paper.

ACER continues to publish and distribute a wide range of resources in the education, psychology, organisational development, special needs and allied health markets. Among the titles published by ACER this year was *A Commitment to Growth* by ACER Chief Executive Geoff Masters. Library and information services developed and managed the Universities Australia Learning and Teaching Repository.

ACER also continued to work on a large number of projects and programs in school education, higher education, the development sector, Indigenous education, early childhood education, and vocational, adult and workplace education.

Major ongoing projects included the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), IEA Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), IEA International Civic and Citizenship Education Study, Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) and Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA).

Many consultancies were also conducted for governments and other organisations, both in Australia and other countries. Some particular highlights of 2018–19 are described in the following pages.

## Research centres

### *Centre for Global Education Monitoring (GEM)*

The GEM Centre is a collaboration between ACER and the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to develop, document and disseminate models of good practice related to



educational assessment and other education initiatives that contribute to improved learning outcomes.

Ongoing projects of the GEM Centre include collaborating with the Global Partnership for Education to develop a toolkit for the analysis of national learning assessment systems; partnering with the Network on Education Quality Monitoring in the Asia-Pacific (NEQMAP) to develop regional capacity; supporting the UNESCO Institute of Statistics to articulate minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics for Sustainable Development Goal 4.1; and supporting the Global Alliance to Monitor Learning. The GEM Centre continues to be involved in the Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (PILNA), which is a large-scale study of the achievement of students in the Pacific Islands region. The GEM Centre has also collaborated on an improved indicator of socioeconomic status for low- and middle-income countries; and a scoping review on the effectiveness of interventions in early childhood education and care in economically developing countries.

### *Centre for Assessment Reform and Innovation*

The ACER Centre for Assessment Reform and Innovation (CARI) is focused on the development of new and better ways to monitor long-term progress in specific areas of learning. One focus area is the assessment of general capabilities or '21st-century skills'. The general capabilities work includes the development of learning progressions, an assessment framework and a set of complex problem-solving tasks that require students to demonstrate collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, information literacy and communications skills.

CARI also continued its work exploring alternatives to the traditional 'school report' used in schools, which often only reports student achievement rather than learning progress. The work is investigating the role of technology in communicating student growth over time in relation to the typical pathway of learning in specific domains.

### *Centre for Education Policy and Practice*

The Centre for Education Policy and Practice promotes the interconnection between research, policy and practice and investigates what works to meet learners' needs and improve learning outcomes. It also examines ways in which research can be informed by a thorough understanding of the perspectives of policymakers and practitioners.

## ACER Foundation

The ACER Foundation is the charitable arm of ACER. The Foundation's mission is to work in collaboration with external partners to initiate, develop and manage projects that address the needs of educationally disadvantaged groups in the community.

Ongoing ACER Foundation projects include development of *Little J & Big Cuz*, the Logie-Award winning television series that supports the home-to-school transitions of young Indigenous children, and coordination of the annual

Australian STEM Video Game Challenge, which seeks to address the disparity between the representation of male and female students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics-related fields.

A new ACER Foundation project is targeting the significant problem of mathematics anxiety among students and their teachers. The Mathematics Anxiety and Engagement Strategy (MAES) builds on ACER's previous and current research on mathematics anxiety to break down the barriers to students' positive engagement with maths, especially in the early years. MAES will have both a prevention and intervention focus. As part of the prevention focus, MAES will work with pre-service primary and early childhood teachers to understand and address mathematics anxiety before these educators enter the workforce. For its intervention focus, MAES will work with early childhood centres, primary schools and parents to improve mathematics engagement and decrease maths anxiety. It will equip teachers to be better able to identify and address maths anxiety in their students and build positive engagement with mathematics. It will also train early childhood teachers to better develop children's early mathematics skills.

## Project highlights

### *Education Expenditure in Australia*

ACER released the first report to capture data on Australian education expenditure at all levels of education – from early childhood to higher education – and from all funding sources. The report showed Australia spent AUD\$111.8 billion on education in 2015, the most recent year for which the full dataset was available. While this was an increase of nearly 80 per cent since the year 2000, spending as a proportion of GDP increased by less than one percentage point over the same period.

ACER's analysis drew from the annual expenditure data that the Australian Government, Department of Education submits for the joint UNESCO Institute for Statistics, OECD and Eurostat (OUE) data collection on education statistics. It accounted for the transfer of contributions by government sources to other funding sources at different points in the funding cycle, such as from federal government to state, territory and local government.

### *NSW Curriculum Review*

ACER Chief Executive Professor Geoff Masters AO is leading a comprehensive review of the New South Wales K–12 school curriculum, the first major review of the entire NSW school curriculum in 30 years. The review aims to ensure that the curriculum prepares students to meet the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. The review process included extensive public consultations, both before and after the 2019 interim report. The final report is due for release in 2020.

### *Learning Through Play at School*

A white paper produced by ACER and the LEGO Foundation investigated the role and impact of learning through play in the primary school classroom. Learning through Play at School explored eight different approaches to teaching and learning, or 'integrated pedagogies', commonly used in primary school education that are the 'older siblings' of learning through play.

The report described how these approaches can positively impact learning outcomes across a range of areas, including cognitive, social, emotional, creative and physical skills. The success of integrated pedagogies depends on implementation quality, with educational value found when play is joyful, meaningful, actively engaging, iterative and socially interactive.

### *Research Conference 2018*

Research Conference 2018 was held in Sydney in August on the theme 'Teaching practices that make a difference: Insights from research'. Keynote speakers John Hattie, Geoff Masters and Eckhard Klieme were complemented by 15 concurrent speakers.

### *International Mathematical Modeling Challenge*

Teams from Brisbane Boys College and Canberra's Lyneham High School were deemed Australia's highest achievers in the 2019 International Mathematical Modeling Challenge (IM2C), while a team from Perth Modern School received an honourable mention. The team from Brisbane Boys College went on to receive a 'meritorious achievement' award at international judging. The award was presented at a ceremony in Hong Kong.

Coordinated in Australia by ACER since 2016, IM2C is a mathematical modelling competition that invites teams of up to four secondary school students to visualise, understand and apply mathematics in order to develop an original mathematical model that solves a real-life problem.

### *Westmead Feelings Program*

The Westmead Feelings Program received the Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) 2019 Advancement Award for projects that 'demonstrate leading practice elements, successes and positive outcomes for the autism community' and seek to 'shift current practice paradigms'.

Developed by the Developmental Psychiatry Research Team at the Kids Research Institute at the Children's Hospital at Westmead, the program aims to help children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and mild intellectual disability express and manage their emotions. ACER publishes the program's resource kits and distributes the facilitator certification course through its online learning platform.

### *International Benchmark Tests (IBT)*

IBT has enabled schools to compare student performance globally since 2005 and the uptake of this assessment continues to grow. In 2018, Reasoning and

English as a Second Language assessments were added to the program of English, Mathematics, Science and Arabic Reading tests.

ACER India conducted a pilot of IBT assessments in Hindi across six schools in Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Karnataka, while ACER's Malaysian, Indonesian and UAE offices expanded the use of the program in those regions.

#### ***Australian Journal of Education***

Established in 1957, the *Australian Journal of Education (AJE)* is an international peer-reviewed journal that publishes research conducted in Australia and internationally. It informs educational researchers, as well as educators, administrators and policymakers, about

issues of contemporary concern in education. *AJE* is edited by ACER and published by SAGE.

In 2018, *AJE* published its first special issue on Indigenous education, 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women of Higher Degree: Standing on the Shoulders of Giants' guest edited by Dr Melitta Hogarth and Professor Tracey Bunda. Reflecting the theme of the 2018 National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week – 'Because of Her, We Can' – the special issue celebrated how the achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women build on the persistence and support provided by those who came before them.





## FOCUS ON ... LEARNING ASSESSMENTS

Learning assessments gather information on what students know, understand and can do, and their progress. From classroom assessments to large-scale assessments at the national, regional or international level, learning assessments are used to monitor educational outcomes to inform evidence-based policymaking, and improve teaching and learning practice.

### **Analysis of National Learning Assessment Systems**

The Global Partnership for Education commissioned ACER to develop a toolkit to help developing countries analyse their national learning assessment systems, with the aim of identifying areas for improvement. The Analysis of National Learning Assessment Systems (ANLAS) framework and toolkit was piloted in Ethiopia, Mauritania and Vietnam before being launched in 2019. The ANLAS model integrates the three dimensions of the assessment system: context, quality of assessment programs, and coherence. It also incorporates the cross-dimensional element of application of knowledge and 21st-century skills to promote the use of assessment data in education policy and practice, with the ultimate aim to improve learning.

### **Supporting first-time PISA participants**

The OECD has engaged ACER to support the new countries participating in the 2021 cycle of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). ACER is assisting countries with the successful preparation and implementation of PISA during all stages of the assessment, from planning and contextualisation to implementation, analysis and reporting. In 2019, five

countries enlisted in the PISA 2021 Core E – Country Preparation and Implementation Support program: El Salvador, India (Chandigarh), Mongolia, Panama and Uzbekistan. ACER is assisting these countries to complete a capacity needs analysis, capacity building plan and project implementation plan.

### Learning assessment knowledge platform

ACER India has collaborated with Community Systems Foundation in the United States to establish a knowledge platform to support and facilitate knowledge sharing and exchange relevant to developing and implementing learning assessments. Funded by UNICEF, the platform addresses the role of assessment in improving teaching and learning in South Asia, but draws on lessons learnt from other regional initiatives. The platform includes publications and reports, assessment data, instruments, tools and software, accrued from different sources and linked to specific assessment phases and activities. The initiative will build a knowledge base and trigger dialogue around learning assessment with the final goal of improving the quality of education.

### Building learning assessment capacity in South Asia

ACER India is supporting a number of states to build capacity in implementing learning assessments. In Chhattisgarh, 150 teachers were involved in the development of standardised instruments for Grades 4, 6 and 7 as well as high-quality item banks for school-based assessments. A team of data analysts also received training in advanced data analysis techniques.

In Bangladesh, ACER India supported the Ministry of Education to build capacity to independently conduct its biannual Learning Assessment for Secondary Institutions. ACER India conducted workshops to familiarise teachers, teacher trainers and curriculum experts with best-practice test development processes. ACER India previously developed all test materials and related documents, such as the assessment framework, but has progressively transferred responsibility for development of the assessment framework and assessment materials to local stakeholders.

### Classroom-based learning assessments

ACER's Progressive Achievement suite of classroom-based learning assessments now includes PAT Inquiry and Problem Solving in STEM Contexts, and PAT Vocabulary Skills. They join the existing PAT Mathematics, Reading, Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar, Science and Early Years Mathematics tests. In 2019, ACER delivered more than 5 million progressive achievement assessments in thousands of schools in Australia and other countries.

In Dubai 2019, more than 7000 students participated in the launch of the Progressive Achievement Scales for the Middle East (PASME). Designed for schools that follow an Indian curriculum, PASME measures Reading Comprehension, Mathematics and Science for students in Grades 3–10. The Essential Learning Metrics (ELMS), developed by ACER for schools in the United Kingdom, were also made available to schools in Dubai that follow a British curriculum.

The Scottish Government commissioned an ACER-led consortium to develop and deliver the Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA) to gather data on children's literacy and numeracy progress at key points in their education, including data on differences between those from the least and most deprived geographic areas. ACER works with the Scottish Government, in partnership with Twig and SCHOLAR. The assessments are online and adaptive, and the resulting reports focus on providing tools to enable schools to better-target future learning and teaching. Since 2017, more than one million assessments have been completed.

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#### Analysis of National Learning Assessment Systems

[www.globalpartnership.org/content/toolkit-analysis-national-learning-assessment-systems-anlas](http://www.globalpartnership.org/content/toolkit-analysis-national-learning-assessment-systems-anlas)

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#### Programme for International Student Assessment

[www.oecd.org/pisa](http://www.oecd.org/pisa)

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#### Progressive Achievement Tests

[www.acer.org/au/pat](http://www.acer.org/au/pat)

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#### Essential Learning Metrics

[elms.acer.org](http://elms.acer.org)





FOCUS ON ...

## TERTIARY AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

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Learning is important throughout the lifespan. ACER's research and consultancy work in tertiary, vocational and adult education covers policy, admissions, student engagement, performance measurement, graduate destinations, core skills, and adult language, literacy and numeracy.

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### **Medical student selection, assessment and training**

ACER has launched a new Medical Selection Program (MSP) developed to meet the needs of medical and health sciences colleges in the Middle East and North Africa. The MSP assesses students' capacity to undertake high-level studies by evaluating abilities and skills in problem-solving, critical thinking and writing. Universities and colleges decide how the tests and results are used. The assessment is based upon ACER's extensive experience in delivering medical education selection programs in Australia, the United Kingdom and Ireland.

In Australia, ACER has assisted a number of colleges of medical specialists to enhance the quality of examinations. ACER worked with the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists to reform their examination processes, giving trainees confidence that the examinations they take will be fair, transparent and consistent. It also assists the College in developing any new exams.

ACER's support for the medical profession has also included the development and administration of the annual Australian General Practice Training program's National Registrar Survey. As well as measuring satisfaction levels, the survey collects information about general practitioner registrars' demographics, training context and other aspects of their training experience. The survey results are used to ensure that training continues to be fit for purpose and meets the specialist medical training standards determined by the Australian Medical Council.

### Intentions for further study

Results from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) reveal a smaller proportion of Australian teenagers expect to go to university or TAFE than they did 15 years earlier. ACER's report, based on 2015 data, *PISA Australia in Focus Number 2: Educational Expectations*, also revealed the proportion of Australian 15-year-olds expecting to go to university (54%) was higher than the OECD average (44%), and students in Ireland (46%) and New Zealand (45%), but lower than those in Canada (64%) and the US (76%).

There were further disparities related to disadvantage such as Indigeneity, low socioeconomic background and rurality. Higher proportions of students from an immigrant background (both first-generation Australians and second-generation), compared to students born in Australia to Australian-born parents, expected to go to university.

### Understanding tertiary student experiences

ACER has been assisting the Australian Government to better understand tertiary student experiences. ACER's revision of the Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire responded to previously low response rates and a lack of information about candidates' professional development experiences and interactions with industry. Another review, of the Learner Engagement Scales administered to first and final year undergraduate students, has led to a more accurate measure of engagement among domestic off-campus students.

ACER also investigated the experiences of students undertaking Vocational Education and Training (VET) programs delivered to offshore locations by Australian registered training organisations and their delivery partners. To do this, ACER developed the first-ever global survey of students enrolled in Australian VET courses overseas and conducted focus groups with students located in two Chinese provinces.

### Regional, rural and remote student transitions

The Australian Government engaged ACER to develop and pilot an assessment of the support services

universities offer to regional and remote students on their transition to university. The assessment measured universities against a number of indicators relating to resourcing, sense of belonging, communications and effectiveness. Data were collected through a self-reported university survey, and through the national Student Experience Survey. The pilot assessment offers a tool with the potential to more comprehensively understand the range of support services offered by universities, and the extent to which they are understood and used by students. It also has the potential to offer universities an opportunity to reflect on their service provision for transitioning regional, rural and remote students.

### Teacher and assessor professional development

Victoria's VET workforce has benefited from an ACER evaluation of professional development programs for teachers and assessors. The VET Development Centre engaged ACER to gather feedback from program participants on initial reactions, the skills and knowledge acquired and the extent to which these skills and knowledge have been applied in their work, and provide recommendations for program enhancement. A follow-up evaluation will measure the revised program and better understand the medium-to-longer term impact of participation in the workshops.

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#### Medical Selection Program

[www.acer.org/au/medical-selection-program](http://www.acer.org/au/medical-selection-program)

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#### PISA Australia in Focus Number 2: Educational Expectations

[research.acer.edu.au/ozpisa/31](http://research.acer.edu.au/ozpisa/31)

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#### Assessment of university support services for regional and remote students on transition to university

[docs.education.gov.au/node/52511](http://docs.education.gov.au/node/52511)

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#### AGPT National Registrar Survey

[www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/agpt-program-national-report-on-the-2019-registrar-satisfaction-survey](http://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/agpt-program-national-report-on-the-2019-registrar-satisfaction-survey)





## FOCUS ON ... 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY LEARNING

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Globalisation, technological advances and the changing nature of work all have far-reaching implications for the work of schools in the 21st century. ACER is helping teachers to develop general capabilities such as collaboration, critical thinking and creative thinking.

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### **General capabilities assessment framework**

The ACER Centre for Assessment Reform and Innovation has developed an assessment framework for measuring and monitoring 21st-century skills in the classroom. Through a combination of curriculum-orientated assessment tools, resources and professional development, the aim is to equip teachers to integrate the teaching and assessing of general capabilities into their regular classroom teaching practice. The assessment tools, which can be easily adopted and adapted to a variety of curriculum topics, involve a complex problem-solving task in which students need to demonstrate collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, research, and communication skills. Learning progressions have been proposed for each of the skills to support identification of levels of proficiency in each of the skills.

### **Information and computer literacy**

ACER is the international study centre responsible for the development and implementation of the International Computer and Information Literacy Study on behalf of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). Every five years, the study measures students' ability to use computers to investigate, create,

and communicate in order to participate effectively at home, at school, in the workplace, and in the community. More than 46 000 students and 26 000 teachers from 12 countries and two benchmarking education systems participated in the 2018 study, which found that just two per cent of students demonstrated an ability to critically assess information found online. Overall, the results suggest that in order for students to be taught how to use computers effectively, teachers need to be supported in their own use of information and communications technology in teaching.

## Civics and citizenship education

ACER is also the international study centre leading the development and implementation of the IEA International Civic and Citizenship Study. Conducted every seven years since 2009, the study reports on students' knowledge and understanding of concepts and issues related to civics and citizenship, as well as their beliefs, attitudes and behaviours. The study also collects contextual data on the organisation and content of civics and citizenship education in the curriculum, teaching practices and the school environment. Development of the assessment framework for the 2022 study began in late 2018, ahead of assessment development in 2019 and field trials in 2020. The 2022 study will address recent challenges in civic and citizenship education, and will consider issues such as the increase in populist movements, authoritarian government practices and issues related to climate change.

## Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)

The need for expertise in STEM-related fields and disciplines is growing, but the number of Australian primary and secondary school students studying to embark on careers in these areas has been steadily declining, creating a skills shortage between workforce demand and the talent available in Australia. A related challenge is the underrepresentation of women in STEM-related senior school subjects, tertiary courses and careers.

Data from international assessments suggest that mathematical or scientific ability is not biologically determined, as gender differences in achievement vary across countries. For example, in PISA 2018, Australia was one of 30 countries in which there was no significant difference between the average scientific literacy achievement of boys and girls, while girls outperformed boys in 21 countries and boys outperformed girls in two countries.

The Australian STEM Video Game Challenge aims to inspire a genuine interest in further study, and ultimately successful careers, in STEM-related fields. Facilitated by the ACER Foundation, the challenge invites students to work in teams to use technology creatively, experiment and solve problems, and combine imagination with innovation. The challenge also seeks to address the

underrepresentation of women in STEM and, in 2018, equal numbers of female and male teams won the challenge's six categories. Through designing and building an original video game, the challenge helps equip students for the future, preparing them to innovate, create and adapt to their rapidly changing world.

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### Assessing general capabilities

<https://www.teachermagazine.com.au/articles/teaching-and-assessing-general-capabilities>

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### IEA International Computer and Information Literacy Study

[www.iea.nl/studies/iea/icils](http://www.iea.nl/studies/iea/icils)

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### IEA International Civic and Citizenship Study

[www.iea.nl/studies/iea/iccs](http://www.iea.nl/studies/iea/iccs)

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### STEM: What's holding females back?

[www.teachermagazine.com.au/columnists/sue-thomson/stem-whats-holding-females-back](http://www.teachermagazine.com.au/columnists/sue-thomson/stem-whats-holding-females-back)

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### Australian STEM Video Game Challenge

[www.stemgames.org.au](http://www.stemgames.org.au)



# COMMISSIONED RESEARCH PROJECTS 2018–19

## INTERNATIONAL

### **Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge**

International assessment research study/question a day (United Arab Emirates)

### **ACT Inc.**

Global assessment curriculum accreditation and curriculum refresh

### **Asian Development Bank**

Supporting Education and Skills Development – Examination Reforms Expert (India)

### **Boston College**

eTIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) Mathematics (Global)

Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2021 consultancy (Global)

### **Brookings Institution**

Optimizing Assessment for All (Global)

### **Campbell Collaboration Inc.**

Systematic review on interventions for anxiety in school-aged children with autism spectrum disorder (Global)

### **Cardno Emerging Markets**

Myanmar Education Quality Improvement Program (Myanmar)

### **Coffey International**

Basic education quality and access in Lao PDR program (Lao PDR)

### **Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada**

Analysis and mapping of in-service teacher training program to Jordan's national teaching standards (Jordan)

Formative evaluation of the scaling-up Teacher Professional Development for Quality Education (Jordan)

### **Directorate for Learning – Scottish Government**

Scottish National Standardised Assessments (Scotland)

### **International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement**

International Civic and Citizenship Education Study – 2022 (Global)

International Computer and Information Literacy Study (ICILS) (Global)

Gender differences in ICILS (Global)

OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) 2018 (Global)

### **International Baccalaureate**

IBO research project

Primary Years Programme wellbeing

### **Knowledge and Human Development Authority**

PISA-based tests for schools 2019 (United Arab Emirates)

### **LEGO Foundation**

Learning Through Play (Global)

Support and review of Learning Through Play in education systems (Global)

### **Ministry of Education Singapore**

Development of test items (Singapore)

### **National Centre of Education and the Economy**

Comparative study of learning systems in selected top-performing countries (Global)

### **Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)**

International Early Learning Child Well-being Study (Global)

PISA Core E 2021 (El Salvador, India [Chandigarh], Mongolia, Panama, Uzbekistan)

Study on Social and Emotional Skills (Global)

### **Palladium International**

Buk Bilong Pikinini literacy program evaluation 2018 (Papua New Guinea)

Education Pathways to Peace in Mindanao (Philippines)

**Public Education Evaluation Commission**

Development of the National Assessment System for public education (Saudi Arabia)

**Secrétariat of the Pacific Community**

Educational Quality and Assessment Programme (EQAP) (Pacific Islands)

**Standards and Testing Agency**

Item writing KS2 English reading (United Kingdom)

Item writing KS2 maths (United Kingdom)

**State Council for Educational Research and Training**

Strengthening learning assessment capacities at SCERT, Chhattisgarh (India)

**Stichting Benevolentia**

Measuring What Matters: Policy Level Analysis (Global)

**TEP LEARNigeria Initiative**

LEARNigeria technical support: Phases 2 and 3 (Nigeria)

**UAE Ministry of Education**

Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) main study 2019 and PISA-based test for schools (United Arab Emirates)

**UNESCO**

Survey of teachers in pre-primary education (Global)

**UNICEF**

Analysis of 21st century skills integration in Philippines K to 12 program (Philippines)

Early childhood care and development tracer study (Philippines)

Midline study for the modelling of universal pre-primary education in the district of Bogor (Indonesia)

Operational plan for a national assessment framework for Afghanistan (Afghanistan)

South Asian knowledge platform on learning assessment (South Asia)

Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) (Southeast Asia)

Strengthening systemic capacity on learning assessment (India)

**WESTAT**

PISA 2018 sampling (Global)

**World Bank**

ANLAS 2018 – Analysis of National Learning Assessment Systems (Global)

**AUSTRALIA****Australian Council of Deans of Science**

Mathematics in senior secondary school and performance in first year science at Australian universities

**Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)**

Aligning ACER and ACARA learning progressions

National Assessment Program (NAP) civics and citizenship

- ▶ 2019 field trial test administration
- ▶ 2019 sampling

National Assessment Program (NAP) ICT Literacy 2017

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

- ▶ 2017 central analysis of data
- ▶ 2017 national reporting
- ▶ 2018 central analysis of data
- ▶ 2018 equating study
- ▶ 2018 national reporting
- ▶ 2019 centre leader training
- ▶ 2019 item development
- ▶ 2020 item development – reading
- ▶ 2020 item development – language conventions

National Assessment Program Science Literacy

- ▶ 2018 main study test administration
- ▶ 2018 mode effect study
- ▶ 2018 school summary reports
- ▶ 2019 sampling
- ▶ marking operation

### **Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership**

AITSL standard setting projects

### **Australian Science Innovations**

Big Science 2018

### **Australian Securities and Investments Commission**

Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)  
2018 National Financial Literacy

### **Department of Education and Training**

Analysis and revision of Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) learning outcome descriptors for the review of the AQF

Assessment of university support services for regional and remote students

Early Learning STEM Australia (ELSA) program pilot evaluation

Growing the number of international students in regional areas

International graduate employment outcomes

OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2015, 2018 and 2021 national component (also funded by state and territory education departments)

Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) national study 2019

Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) national project manager

Tertiary education systems in five countries – How does Australia compare?

Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) national 2019

### **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility

Australia Awards strategy evaluation performance report

Education Analytics Service

Global educational monitoring partnership

### **Department of Health**

Registrar satisfaction survey

## AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

### **ACT Department of Education**

ACT Scaling Test

AST Computer-Based Writing Test

## NEW SOUTH WALES

### **Australasian College of Dermatologists**

Assessment review

### **Australasian Society for Ultrasound in Medicine**

Assessment review

### **Australian Business and Community Network**

What do schools want from engagement with business?

### **Australian College of Physical Scientists and Engineers in Medicine**

Review of professional assessment of competency and ability to practice

### **Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation**

Overcoming disadvantage in early childhood

### **Department of Education**

Selective high schools test

Test for Year 5 opportunity classes

Validation of Assessment for Learning and Individual Development (VALID) marking

### **Life Education Australia**

Social norms approach in secondary pilot project

### **NSW Education Standards Authority**

NSW curriculum review

### **Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons**

Oral and maxillofacial surgery assessment review

### **Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists**

Assessment review and development

### **Social Ventures Australia**

South Australian DECD Year 7/8 transition maths pedagogy program

### **The Dusseldorp Forum**

Evaluation of the school readiness initiative: TV series

## **QUEENSLAND**

### **Department of Education**

Policy radar project

### **Queensland Teachers Union**

Teacher workload study

## **SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

### **Department of Education**

Early career teacher development program evaluation  
Thinking Maths senior years and master class

### **Department for Innovation and Skills**

Development and facilitation of VET masterclass – unpacking and applying the ACSF

### **Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills**

SA STEM employability

### **School Library Association of South Australia**

School libraries in SA

### **Youth+ Central West Flexi Schools Network**

EREA Youth+ – Validation of wellbeing measurement tool

## **VICTORIA**

### **Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists**

Exam advancement review

### **Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute**

Evaluation of Choose Maths program

### **Department of Education and Training**

Certificate IV in Business for school business managers – evaluation

Classroom level student perception survey

Environment scan of independent assessment models for apprentices and trainees

Future opportunities for adult learners

Principal for a Day

Evaluation of functional needs assessment pilot

### **RMIT University**

Economies of scale in supporting low SES students

### **Royal Australasian College of Surgeons**

Data analysis of exam results and production of reports

### **Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists**

Assessment advisory project

### **Sidney Myer Fund**

Pilot and evaluation of maths anxiety professional learning program

### **State Library of Victoria**

Evaluation of ALL Passion Index

### **Sustainability Victoria**

Wellbeing impacts research – ResourceSmart Schools

### **VET Development Centre**

Evaluation of the professional development program for skills first providers

### **Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA)**

Critical and creative thinking marking – 2018

Victorian General Achievement Test

## **WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

### **Curtin University**

Australian higher education student equity ranking

# STAFF PUBLICATIONS

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# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Australian Council for Educational Research Ltd

ABN 19 004 398 145

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019	2019 \$	2018 \$
Revenue	<b>89 348 149</b>	82 755 933
Other income	<b>2 027 602</b>	1 965 675
Changes in inventories of finished goods	<b>( 199 335)</b>	561 389
Employee benefits expenses	<b>(56 444 421)</b>	(53 038 181)
Consultancy expense	<b>(12 757 060)</b>	(11 260 301)
Purchases and consumables used	<b>(2 504 595)</b>	(3 538 243)
Computer expenses	<b>(2 970 453)</b>	(2 376 146)
Travel expenses	<b>(2 462 133)</b>	(2 347 660)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	<b>(2 356 009)</b>	(1 725 939)
Rent and occupancy expenses	<b>(1 478 714)</b>	(1 621 140)
Printing and stationery expenses	<b>(1 478 754)</b>	(1 275 554)
Repairs and maintenance expenses	<b>( 784 676)</b>	( 706 119)
Royalty expenses	<b>( 515 159)</b>	( 522 004)
Advertising expenses	<b>( 423 712)</b>	( 378 401)
Freight and cartage expenses	<b>( 225 927)</b>	( 313 944)
Finance costs	<b>( 586)</b>	( 14 952)
Other expenses	<b>(6 134 926)</b>	(6 106 330)
<b>Surplus before income tax</b>	<b>639 291</b>	58 083
Income tax expense	<b>0</b>	0
<b>Surplus for the year</b>	<b>639 291</b>	58 083

<b>CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2019</b>		<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
		<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	<b>13 747 587</b>		13 837 897
Trade and other receivables	<b>12 229 716</b>		12 297 114
Inventories	<b>1 070 882</b>		871 547
Other financial assets	<b>2 500 000</b>		4 028 169
Other assets	<b>7 346 557</b>		5 532 232
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>36 894 742</b>		36 566 959
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Other assets	<b>57 601</b>		59 902
Property, plant and equipment	<b>51 970 077</b>		52 539 430
Intangible assets	<b>3 009 340</b>		2 813 937
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>55 037 018</b>		55 413 269
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>91 931 760</b>		91 980 228
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade and other payables	<b>7 515 393</b>		6 442 690
Employee benefits	<b>10 318 215</b>		10 350 963
Other liabilities	<b>9 158 556</b>		10 924 575
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>26 992 164</b>		27 718 228
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Employee benefits	<b>1 398 991</b>		1 215 486
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>1 398 991</b>		1 215 486
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>28 391 155</b>		28 933 714
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>63 540 605</b>		63 046 514
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Reserves	<b>21 436 083</b>		21 581 283
Accumulated surpluses	<b>42 104 522</b>		41 465 231
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>63 540 605</b>		63 046 514

<b>CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019</b>		<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
		<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>CASH FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:</b>			
Receipts from customers	<b>96 356 435</b>		96 412 236
Payments to suppliers and employees	<b>(95 096 479)</b>		(86 853 508)
Interest received	<b>94 709</b>		34 827
Finance costs	<b>(586)</b>		0
Income taxes (paid)/refunded	<b>0</b>		16 724
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities</b>	<b>1 354 079</b>		9 610 279
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:</b>			
Payment for intangible asset	<b>(2 087 753)</b>		(1 694 144)
Payments from/(payments for) term deposits	<b>1 528 169</b>		(4 028 169)
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	<b>( 818 105)</b>		( 739 275)
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities</b>	<b>(1 377 689)</b>		(6 461 588)
Effects of exchange rate changes on cash and cash equivalents	<b>( 66 700)</b>		( 32 060)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held	<b>( 90 310)</b>		3 116 631
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	<b>13 837 897</b>		10 721 266
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year</b>	<b>13 747 587</b>		13 837 897

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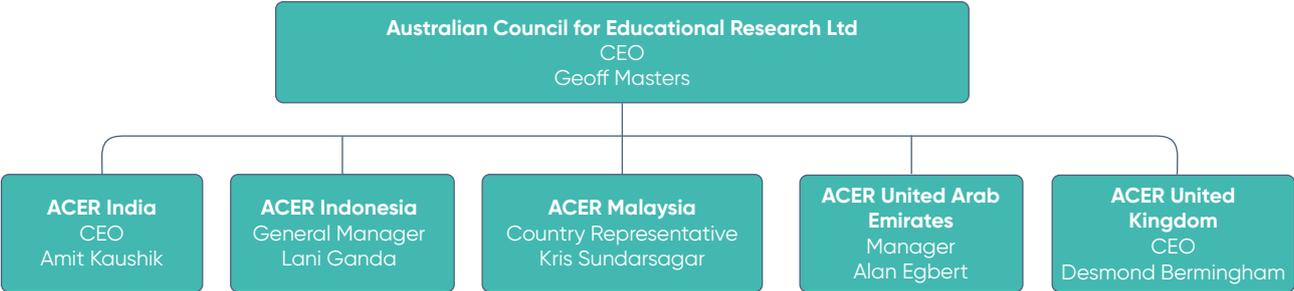
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Secretary

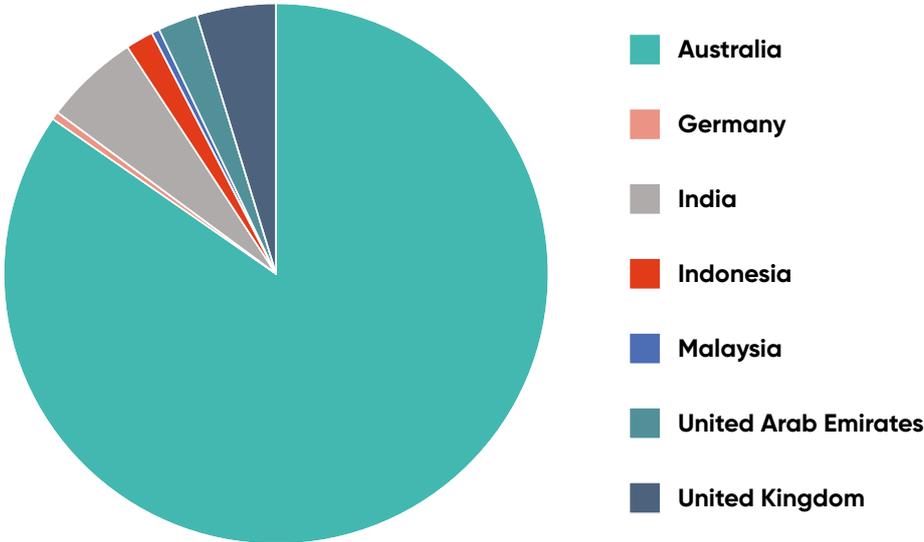
NSW Department of Education

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Employees by location



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