

A collaborative approach to  
national assessment in

# Saudi Arabia



Work on a national assessment program to support teaching and learning is also developing organisational capacity in Saudi Arabia.

A collaborative assessment project involving the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) and Saudi Arabia's Public Education Evaluation Commission (PEEC) has involved the rapid development of national sample assessments of students in Grades 3 and 6 in Mathematics and Science.

The assessments undertaken in May 2015 involved 25 500 Grade 3 and 6 students in 560 schools across the kingdom. The 2015 assessments, as established in PEEC's seven-year strategic plan, are being followed in 2016 by national sample assessments of Grades 3, 4, 5 and 6 students' Arabic literacy.

PEEC expects the national assessment to expand each year in terms of the number of grade levels and subjects to be assessed. PEEC's seven-year strategic plan also includes a timetable for the introduction of computer-based and technology assisted assessments to enable interactive, adaptive and multimedia-rich assessments.

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The close collaboration has involved the development of assessment frameworks addressing the curriculum taught in schools in Saudi Arabia, as well as the development, trialling and evaluation of the assessments themselves to ensure they are robust, appropriately challenging, culturally appropriate and engaging for students at each grade level.

The assessment program also includes a survey of students, teachers and parents to gather information about students' family resources, attitudes to school and learning, and experience of school.

According to PEEC's Vice Governor, Dr Saleh Anshumrani, 100 markers at the PEEC marking centre in Riyadh in June scored approximately 370 000 items in just over two days using ACER's custom online marking system.

The success of the marking process was testimony to PEEC's organisational skills, the robustness and quality of ACER's marking technology, the skill and the dedication of the Saudi teachers employed by PEEC to

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complete the marking, and the quality of the assessments themselves.

The collaboration to develop and deliver the national assessment program is also building the capacity of PEEC to progressively assume responsibility for all aspects of their national program. ■