

# Australian Education Review

## Number: 55

Series Editor: Suzanne Mellor

AER 55 explores the goals of Australian education and of how schools should prepare young people for work and life.

Section 1 provides an overview, discussing the nature of broad social and economic changes over the last 20 years, and their implications for the goals of Australian education systems today and for the future, and for what young people need to learn and why. Section 2 critically explores the assumptions which dominate current educational policies about the alignment of schooling with economic goals and work. Section 3 provides an analysis of the policy for social inclusion: the framing of educational goals that are oriented towards civic education, life skills and well-being. Developing curricula that equip young Australians for life involves confronting difficult questions about what kind of society Australia is now and should be in the future. Section 4 considers the nature of school knowledge and questions the learning outcomes traditionally measured. It argues that chronic inequalities experienced by some groups are the result of educational debts, accrued over time, through practices of social exclusion. National and international research indicates that addressing these inequalities will require different resourcing models and new teaching and learning approaches. Section 5 concludes that to prepare young Australians for the future, their education should be holistic and flexible, and encompass a commitment to learning for both work and life. In their 'education for the future' young people should be provided with opportunities to engage in learning that has meaning to them and in which they can exercise active participation and decision making.

**Johanna Wyn**, Professor in Education in the Melbourne Graduate School of Education and Director of the University of Melbourne's Youth Research Centre. Her work focuses on the education, training and work experiences of young people, their well-being and youth health promotion. Drawing on a range of research, and in particular on longitudinal studies, her work contributes to policy development in the education and youth sectors. She has published extensively in the fields of educational sociology and youth studies.

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Australian Council for Educational Research



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Touching the Future

## Touching the Future: Building skills for life and work

Johanna Wyn

Australian Council for Educational Research



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