

C8 Learning and Development

Learning and development ensures that the Directorate's workforce has the skills and abilities to provide services to the ACT community in an appropriate and competent manner. It also provides a means to increase and improve productivity by enhancing staff capability and quality.

During 2010-11, professional learning and development was offered to staff, particularly in the areas of leadership to school executive teams and aspiring school leaders, and support to new educators. The majority of this professional development was conducted at the Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning, in Stirling. This site was renamed in honour of Professor Hedley Beare, the inaugural Chief Executive Officer of the ACT Schools Authority (now the Education and Training Directorate).

The ACT Government's Shared Services division provided a number of workforce development opportunities across the whole of government. The number of participants from the Directorate is shown in Table C8.1.

Table C8.1: Directorate participation in whole of government learning and development initiatives

Initiative	No. of participants
ACT Public Service Graduate Program	1
Future Leaders Program	1
Executive Development Program	6
Public Sector Management Program	2
Training for first time and frontline managers	7
Young Professionals' Network	Several sessions

Source: Shared Services, Treasury Directorate and Chief Minister and Cabinet Directorate

In addition to these programs, training opportunities were also provided through the ACT Public Service (ACTPS) Training Calendar. In some areas, additional support was offered to Directorate employees either through time allowance or through Study Assistance Grants (Table C8.2).

Table C8.2: The number of participants and cost for ACTPS training and Study Assistance programs 2010-11

Program	No. of participants	Cost (\$)
ACTPS Training Calendar	38	21,107
Study Assistance	50	11,375

Source: Shared Services, Treasury Directorate

Respectful Workplaces: Reducing the risk of workplace bullying and harassment

The delivery of Respectful Workplaces training to approximately 1,000 employees during 2011 is a key action of the Directorate's implementation of the ACT Public Service's *Respect, Equity and Diversity Framework* and demonstrates the Directorate's commitment to reducing the risk of psychological injury to employees, as required under the *Workplace Safety Act 2008* and the *Workplace Health Strategic Plan 2008-12*.

Executive Staff, Respect, Equity and Diversity Contact Officers (REDCOs), Workplace Safety Representatives (WSRs), principals, deputy principals, business managers, building service officers, managers and assistant managers were required to attend the training, which provided information and strategies for building respectful workplaces.

Induction programs

More than 351 members of the Directorate attended induction programs in the first half of 2011. These programs were organised for all new Directorate employees: teachers, administrative staff and newly promoted principals, deputy principals and executive officers. They cover the operations of the Directorate, the Code of Conduct of ACT Government employees and other matters relating to employment conditions.

Career development for school support and administration staff

Workforce development is primarily offered to school-based non-teaching staff, to build staff capability in the school environment. Specific courses were conducted in areas such as information technology, first aid, building maintenance and repairs, and personal skills such as writing job applications for promotion positions. In 2010-11, a total of 72 courses were offered, with approximately 600 participants attending.

School-based staff can also apply for sponsorship for formal study through the Commonwealth Government traineeship programs. The programs undertaken include: the Certificate IV in Education Support; the Diploma of Government (Project Management); the Diploma of Government; the Diploma of Business Administration; and the Certificate III in Children's Services. A total of 175 staff engaged in these traineeships.

Learning and development of teaching staff

The Directorate's *Strategic Plan 2010-2013: Everyone matters, Operational Plan 2010 and 2011*, and the *School Improvement Strategy – Core Principles*, provide the main drivers for the professional learning and development of teaching staff. In the reporting period, the main priorities were in the areas of teaching and learning;

the school environment (including information and communication technologies); student pathways and transitions; and leadership development.

The Teachers Professional Learning Fund and the Principals Professional Learning Fund provide the primary source of funding for the professional learning of teaching staff. In 2010-11, the amount allocated to support teacher professional learning totalled \$1.25 million. This included a \$250,000 allocation specifically for educational scholarships for teachers. For principals, one percent of their salaries (around \$170,000) comprised the Principals Professional Learning Fund to support activities in this area.

Teacher scholarships

Education scholarships are offered to teaching staff in two areas – as targeted scholarships or as individual scholarships. Targeted scholarships apply to specific areas in education where there is a specific need to build teacher capability. In 2010-11, targeted scholarships were in the areas of early childhood education and teaching English to speakers of other languages.

A Recognition of Studies ceremony was conducted in December 2010 to recognise all teachers who completed their formal area of study under the individual and targeted scholarship programs.

New Educator Support Program

The New Educator Support Program supports the development of new teachers in their first three years of teaching and provides up to 15 days for each new educator over the three years to support their learning. In the reporting period, four modules were offered and were delivered in week five of each term (see Table C8.3).

Table C8.3: Attendance at New Educator Support Program sessions, 2010-11

Program	Session	Attendance
Enhancing teaching and learning with ICT	August 2010	115
Planning and reflection	November 2010	72
Professional relationships	March 2011	168
Essential skills for classroom teachers	May 2011	161

Source: Learning and Teaching Branch

Leadership development

Leadership development activities continued throughout the reporting period. The leadership initiatives targeted school principals, newly appointed school leaders and teachers aspiring to executive leadership positions in schools. The professional learning activities were designed around the dimensions and capabilities of the Directorate’s School Leadership Framework.

In the 2010-11 reporting period, the Leading to Leadership program was expanded and delivered to 130 aspiring principals, deputy principals and executive teachers.

Specific work on developing school leadership teams was undertaken with executive teachers of primary and high schools. Individual development of school leaders and aspiring school leaders, through a 360-degree instrument and personal interviews, was also offered as part of the school leadership development initiatives.

In 2010, 11 principals, 15 deputy principals and 57 executive teachers participated in the School Leadership Orientation programs. Workshop themes were based on the dimensions of the School Leadership Framework and included courses in finance, staffing, technology, team building, compliance, conflict resolution, literacy and numeracy, and behaviour management.

In 2011, the Directorate organised a two day leadership conference for 225 principals and school executives. Focus areas for the conference were instructional leadership, literacy and numeracy, leading teaching and learning, and leading ICT in schools. International, national and local presenters offered a range of keynote addresses and workshops to the delegates.

A Leadership Strategy is being developed in 2011 based on career progression areas for teachers and school leaders. New professional learning programs and units of study are currently under construction for emerging leaders and school executives, aspiring and experienced principals.

Curriculum

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) has been responsible for the development of a national curriculum, the Australian Curriculum. There are three phases in the development process. The Australian Curriculum, Phase 1 (English, mathematics, science, history) was released in December 2010 and ACT schools began implementing Phase 1 from the beginning of 2011. For the Australian Curriculum learning areas yet to be released, ACT schools are continuing to use the ACT curriculum framework P-10 *Every chance to learn*.

Every teacher in the ACT received a Bridging Document to assist them in the transition to the Australian Curriculum. This document covered the history of the development of the Australian Curriculum, the ACT's strategic plan for implementation, and answers to frequently asked questions. A curriculum map for the Phase 1 learning areas was produced by the Directorate's Curriculum Support section to assist teachers in aligning current teaching programs with the new national curriculum.

Teachers also attended workshops, led by curriculum experts, which supported teachers in understanding the intention, structure and content of the Australian Curriculum Phase 1 learning areas. They received guidance about developing units of work/teaching programs which meet students' learning needs. Ten Lead Schools are developing processes and exemplars of units of work, to be shared across the Directorate's schools as additional support regarding the implementation of the Australian Curriculum.

Literacy and numeracy

The Directorate-endorsed professional development programs introduced in 2009 and 2010 to support the implementation of the *Literacy and Numeracy Strategy 2010-2013* continued to be delivered throughout 2010 and 2011.

The Middle Years Mental Computation project was funded under an Australian Government Numeracy Pilot. It was conducted as two separate programs in 14 ACT public schools in the 2009 and 2010 calendar years. Other ACT public schools have benefited from delivery of the professional learning associated with the program. While the pilot finished at the end of 2010 and has been fully evaluated, it continues to be implemented in schools in 2011.

Literacy and Numeracy Field Officers form part of the ACT strategy in achieving reforms outlined in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy. In 2010-11, they were responsible for:

- building teacher capacity at all levels across the school through on-site professional learning, coaching, mentoring and modelling
- providing expert advice in literacy and numeracy strategies and their classroom application
- supporting the development and implementation across the school of the literacy and numeracy priorities within the school plan
- strengthening student monitoring processes.

In 2010 and again in 2011, every ACT public primary and public high school appointed a Literacy and Numeracy Coordinator. Both Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators and Field Officers have participated in extensive professional learning to assist teachers in improving teaching practices at their schools, to develop and deliver consistent evidence-based practices. The development of a facilitator course for Coordinators and Field Officers has provided greater options for delivery across more ACT public schools.

In response to needs arising from the development and implementation of the Australian Curriculum and changes in the text type for NAPLAN Writing, professional learning in the teaching of grammar and persuasive writing was also delivered to Coordinators, Field Officers and teachers.

Safe schools

ACT public school teachers accessed a variety of professional learning to support the implementation of the safe school policies and the *National Safe Schools* framework. These included:

- developing the behaviour management skills of new educators through the Essential Skills for Classroom Teachers program
- supporting school executive and classroom teachers to implement Restorative Practices and Circle Time programs to resolve conflict and bullying across the school
- increasing the number of schools implementing mental health programs through the KidsMatter and MindMatters courses

- continuing to implement whole school approaches to behaviour support through the *Everyone Matters: Behaviour Support Protocols*
- increasing the number of schools trained in managing aggressive student behaviours through the TeamTeach program.

Quality teaching

The Quality Teaching model is the pedagogical framework underpinning the delivery of curriculum in ACT public schools P-12. The embedding of this model in teacher classroom and assessment practice has been a priority over the past three years. Current work includes schools using the Quality Teaching Rounds approach, lesson study and introductory sessions for new teachers to the Directorate. Feedback from schools which are focusing on using the Quality Teaching model confirms that it is a highly effective approach to pedagogy. It positively impacts on teachers teaching and students learning.

For more information contact:

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Learning and Teaching

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