MEDIA RELEASE

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ICT LITERACY RESULTS STABLE – FEMALE STUDENTS OUTPERFORMING MALE STUDENTS

Student performance nationally in ICT literacy has remained stable compared to the previous sample assessments in 2014, a report released by ACARA shows.

The National Assessment Program (NAP) sample assessment in information and communication technology literacy tests students' general ICT skills and knowledge in a sample of schools across the country. The sample tests are held every three years.

"Compared to the 2014 ICT sample assessments, national results have remained stable for Years 6 and 10," said ACARA CEO Robert Randall.

Other results from the report show:

- Gender: Female students nationally in both Year 6 and Year 10 performed significantly better than male students.
- Indigeneity: Indigenous students had a statistically significant lower mean achievement than non-Indigenous students. The gap continues to be significant and large.
- LBOTE: Year 6 students who speak a language other than English at home outperformed students who speak English at home (a significant difference of 13 score points). The difference was not significant for Year 10 students.
- Australia-born: No significant difference between Year 6 students born in Australia and those born overseas was found. However, Year 10 students born in Australia significantly, by 21 score points, outperformed those born overseas.
- Geographical location: School geographic location was classified as metropolitan, regional and remote. For both Year 6 and Year 10, students from metropolitan schools had the highest scale scores, and those from remote schools had the lowest scale scores. These differences were significant.

Key findings from the Year 6 and Year 10 student surveys show that:

- Higher levels of digital device experience were associated with higher levels of ICT literacy, particularly in Year 10.
- Students' ratings of the importance of using digital devices were higher in Year 10 than in Year 6, and higher for males than for females.
- Outside of school, male students were significantly more likely to report using entertainment applications (such as watching videos, playing games and streaming music) than female students. The difference was more marked at Year 10 but was still observable among Year 6 students.
- For both Year 6 and Year 10, students with lower ICT literacy achievement were more likely to report frequent use of entertainment applications when at school. This was particularly true for students in Year 6 and for male students in both year levels.
- Lower achieving Year 6 students reported slightly more frequent use of communication applications when at school than higher achieving students did. This was true for both female and male Year 6 students.
- Of the ICT-related tools for school-related purposes, students at both year levels were most likely to use word-processing software, presentation software and computer-based information resources. These types of software were more frequently used by Year 10 students than Year 6 students.

"The Australian Curriculum: Digital Technologies and the ICT capability in the Australian Curriculum provide opportunities for teachers to engage students in the skills, knowledge and understanding that underpin ICT literacy," said Mr Randall.

"The ICT capability in the Australian Curriculum supports students to learn how to use ICT effectively to communicate information and ideas. The Digital Technologies curriculum teaches students how to use digital technologies to create, for example, digital solutions with computer code such as developing an automated watering system for a school garden, analyse data and understand different forms of a network and security issues involved (for example, Bluetooth and wireless).

"While the report indicates there hasn't been any improvement since the last round of testing, it is early days in the implementation of the Australian Curriculum: Digital Technologies. It has been available for use since October 2015 and has been implemented progressively across the country. As implementation continues, we should start to see an impact by the next assessment in 2020.

"However, as only a small amount of time is allocated to Digital Technologies, it continues to be important for teachers to value ICT capability in all learning areas if we would like to see a significant improvement.

![ACARA - Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority]

Level 13, 280 Elizabeth Street Sydney NSW 2000
phone: 1300 895 563 | fax: 1800 982 118
info@acara.edu.au | www.acara.edu.au

"As a part of the Australian Government's National Innovation and Science Agenda, ACARA has been funded to support the implementation of the Australian Curriculum: Digital Technologies in some of Australia's most disadvantaged schools. 160 schools with a low index of community socio-educational advantage (ICSEA) rating are participating in the project, called Digital Technologies in focus (DTiF). DTiF resources to support all teachers can be found on the Australian Curriculum website.

"The report released today also contains a chapter providing support to teachers and curriculum specialists about how the Australian Curriculum: Digital Technologies and the ICT general capability can be used to support teaching and learning of the knowledge, understanding and skills that underpin ICT literacy."
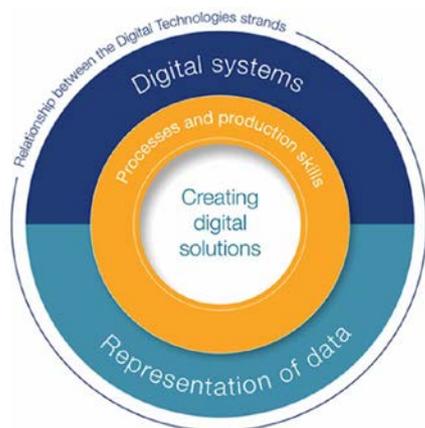
Read the full report on the NAP website.

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MEDIA CONTACT: 0414 063 872 or media.contact@acara.edu.au

Notes for editors

- NAP sample assessments test students' skills and understanding in: science, civics and citizenship and ICT literacy.
- NAP sample assessments began in 2003 and are held on a rolling three-yearly basis (i.e. one subject is tested every three years). The NAP – ICT Literacy assessments were held in October and November 2017. The 2017 report presents the findings of the fifth NAP–ICTL assessment.
- In October and November 2017, the NAP–ICTL assessment was delivered online to students in Year 6 and Year 10. Data were provided by 5,439 Year 6 students in 327 schools and 4,885 Year 10 students in 313 schools. Students were selected by drawing a random sample of schools in each state and territory across Australia, and then a sample of students within each of these schools was tested.

Australian Curriculum: Digital Technologies