

# ACARA AGENCY PLAN – INFORMATION PUBLICATION SCHEME

Version 4 – June 2018

## 1 Introduction

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (**ACARA**) is a national agency set up to develop Australia's first national school curriculum from Foundation to Year 12, to administer the national assessment program and align this to the national curriculum, and to manage a national data collection and reporting program. ACARA was established under the *Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority Act 2008* (Cth) (**ACARA Act**).

ACARA is an agency subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth) (**FOI Act**) and is required to comply with the Information Publication Scheme (**IPS**) requirements. This agency plan describes how ACARA proposes to do this, as required by s8(1) of the FOI Act.

The rationale underpinning this federal government initiative is the recognition that public sector information is a national resource managed for public purposes. The IPS encourages a proactive disclosure of ACARA's information. The aim is to reduce the need for the public to request information under the FOI Act.

## 2 Purpose

The purpose of this agency plan is to:

- assist ACARA in planning and developing its IPS entry; and
- show what information ACARA proposes to publish, how the information will be published, and how ACARA will otherwise comply with the IPS requirements (s8(1)).

## 3 Objectives

This plan outlines ACARA's processes that will ensure that the information on ACARA's public website ([www.acara.edu.au](http://www.acara.edu.au)) remains up to date and relevant.

## 4 Establishing and administering ACARA's IPS entry

The [Chief Executive Officer](#) is designated by ACARA as the senior officer responsible for leading ACARA's compliance with the IPS.

### 4.1 Establishing ACARA's IPS entry

The Chief Executive Officer, supported by the Board secretary, the senior project officer, legal and compliance, the research and policy officer and the IT team (together the **project team**), have established ACARA's IPS entry.

Through the Chief Information Officer, the IPS facilitates conformance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (version 2) (**WCAG 2.0**).

## 4.2 Administering ACARA's IPS entry

ACARA's ongoing compliance with the IPS will be coordinated by the Board secretary, together with the project team.

The project team will engage with the Australian community about ACARA's IPS entry by:

- making IPS documents as easily discoverable, understandable and machine-readable as possible;
- inviting members of the public to contact ACARA's project team to provide feedback on ACARA's IPS entry; and
- providing members of the public with contact details to obtain documents in another format or, where they are not available, for downloading from ACARA's website ([www.acara.edu.au](http://www.acara.edu.au)).

The project team will arrange for ACARA IPS documents, which are not available on the ACARA website ([www.acara.edu.au](http://www.acara.edu.au)), to be made available upon request.

ACARA may charge a person for accessing any IPS document that is impracticable to publish online. ACARA will generally not impose a charge where the reimbursement or incidental cost is lower than \$100.

## 5 IPS information architecture

The IPS entry will be published on the ACARA website ([www.acara.edu.au](http://www.acara.edu.au)) under the following headings:

### 5.1 Required information

- Agency plan (ss8(2)(a));
- Who we are (ss8(2)(b) and 8(2)(d));
- What we do (ss8(2)(c) and 8(2)(j));
- Our reports and responses to parliament (ss8(2)(e) and 8(2)(h));
- Routinely requested information and disclosure log (ss8(2)(g) and 11C);
- Consultation arrangements (s8(2)(f));
- ACARA's operational information (s8(2)(j)); and
- Contact us (s8(2)(i)).

### 5.2 Other information

- Our priorities s8(4);
- Our finances s8(4);
- Our lists s8(4);
- Our submissions s8(4);
- Our policies s8(4);

- Our workforce s8(4); and
- Other publications s8(4).

### 5.3 Process for identifying operational information

An agency's operational information is defined in s. 8A of the FOI Act as follows:

“... is information held by the agency to assist the agency to perform or exercise the agency's functions or powers in making decisions or recommendations affecting members of the public (or any particular person or entity, or class of persons or entities).”

As ACARA is not a regulatory body, its decisions affecting members of the public generally are limited in scope. On the IPS page of the ACARA website ([www.acara.edu.au](http://www.acara.edu.au)), ACARA lists links to other parts of its website where information concerning decisions affecting members of the public is published. These links comprise ACARA FOI policy, ACARA complaints handling policy, ACARA privacy policy, ACARA's information on recognition of alternative curriculum and ACARA data access program.

### 5.4 Process for identifying additional information under s. 8(4) of the FOI Act

ACARA regularly reviews its FOI disclosure log to identify what documents are routinely requested, to publish these documents on the IPS page or on other pages of ACARA's four websites.

### 5.5 Web architecture

To ensure that the ACARA IPS entry and individual IPS documents are easily discoverable, understandable and machine-readable, ACARA has:

- published an IPS icon on the homepage of the ACARA website ([www.acara.edu.au](http://www.acara.edu.au)), which links to the IPS section of the website;
- designed and published an IPS entry point on the ACARA website ([www.acara.edu.au](http://www.acara.edu.au));
- where possible, provided online content in a format that can be searched and copied;
- where possible, provided a search function for its websites; and
- established a feedback channel for seeking, and responding to, community feedback about whether ACARA's IPS entry and individual IPS documents are easily discoverable, understandable and machine-readable.

ACARA will, so far as possible, make its IPS information holdings available for reuse in unmodified format only.

To conform to **WCAG 2.0**, ACARA has:

#### 5.5.1 Approach to accessibility by commencement of the IPS

- planned that, as soon as reasonably practical, all online information that is published under the IPS conforms with WCAG 2.0; and
- stated on the dedicated IPS section of the ACARA website ([www.acara.edu.au](http://www.acara.edu.au)) that where a person requires an alternative accessible format of a document, it will be made available on request.

### 5.5.2 Approach to accessibility after commencement of the IPS

- planned that, as soon as reasonably practical, all information newly published under the IPS on ACARA's website ([www.acara.edu.au](http://www.acara.edu.au)) conforms with WCAG 2.0.

## 6 IPS compliance review

ACARA will review and revise this agency plan at least annually, which will coincide with the ACARA's strategic planning process.

ACARA will review the operation of its IPS from time to time and at least every five years, in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Information Commissioner about IPS compliance review (better practice guidance material to assist agencies to comply with the IPS – to be published in the Information Commissioner's regulatory capacity).

ACARA will adopt the following criteria for measuring its performance:

- *Agency plan* – has ACARA published a comprehensive plan for its IPS compliance?
- *Governance and administration* – does ACARA have appropriate governance mechanisms in place to meet its IPS obligations, including a sound information management framework?
- *IPS document holdings* – has ACARA reviewed its document holdings to decide what information must be published under s. 8(2) and information that can be published under s. 8(4)? Is the ACARA's IPS entry accurate, up to date and complete?
- *IPS information architecture* – does ACARA have a publication framework in place and has ACARA taken the necessary steps to ensure that information in its IPS entry is easily discoverable and accessible?
- *Agency compliance review* – does ACARA have appropriate processes, systems and resources in place to monitor and review its IPS compliance and to make necessary improvements to its IPS implementation?