



Stakeholder Engagement Framework

2020–21

Introduction

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is an independent statutory authority, whose vision is to inspire improvement in the learning of all young Australians through world-class curriculum, assessment and reporting.

ACARA and stakeholder engagement

Our stakeholders are varied and include people who may be affected by or have an interest in what we do including teachers, principals, parents and students as well as the broader community.

Stakeholder engagement is carried out by many people at ACARA every day through a variety of interactions and channels. We seek out a broad range of perspectives and strive to involve stakeholders who may be hard to reach.

ACARA is committed to genuine, two-way communication and engagement that are underpinned by a shared understanding of the purpose of the engagement and clear expectations of how stakeholder contributions are being used. In this way we seek to build relationships characterised by goodwill and collaboration that allow differences to be acknowledged and respected.

In setting the educational expectations and standards for all young Australians, ACARA maintains a rigorous national engagement framework to ensure our decision-making and practices are collaborative and continuously informed by views from across the Australian community and latest evidence internationally, as well as aligned with strategic directions set by COAG's Education Council.

Collaboration with stakeholders including state and territory authorities and the non-government education sector in pursuit of the national education agenda is a key strategic priority in ACARA's Charter and Corporate Plan.

Key deliverables include:

- A published advisory structure that produces strong satisfaction ratings from stakeholders.
- A set reporting process that produces a continual series of high-quality progress reports and advice delivered on time to the ACARA Board, Education Council and/or Australian Education Senior Officials Committee (AESOC) each reporting period.

Our engagement principles

Our principles for engagement reflect our core values and are the benchmarks we aspire to in building collaborative, open and respectful relationships with our stakeholders:

PURPOSEFUL

While our engagement is driven by our strategic priorities, we will work to ensure our stakeholder interactions begin with an understanding of what is the purpose of the engagement, its scope and what we want to achieve. We will focus on issues material to ACARA and our stakeholders

RESPECTFUL

We value stakeholders, the diversity of their views and the value they bring to ACARA's work; we recognise and accept our diverse backgrounds and different points of view. We recognise that engagement is a two-way process that involves talking, listening, acting and collaborating, as well as responding to issues in a timely manner.

INTEGRITY

We are honest, ethical and fair in our dealings with one another, our stakeholders and our partners in broader community.

COMMITMENT

We work closely with our partners and stakeholders to communicate clearly, share information, and work together towards achieving our vision.

INCLUSIVENESS

We are committed to seeking out stakeholders and involving those interested in our work including those who may be harder to reach for reasons such as language, culture, age or disability, and creating opportunities for dialogue.

TIMELINESS

We will involve stakeholders early and agree on how and when to engage. We will ensure our engagement process is clear and that key dates and response times for feedback are specified upfront.

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

We will work in a way that provides assurance to both the ministerial council and our stakeholders that our priorities are in the national interest and informed by a wide range of views.

Additional engagement principles relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations

As per our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), ACARA has four specific principles in place to guide engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. They help us operate in a culturally responsive way and promote the values of reconciliation in everything we do.

Principle 1: We acknowledge the history

ACARA recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners of Australia and respects their enduring connection to Country/Place. We acknowledge the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, languages and cultural practices, which inform our understandings of history, culture, science, technologies and the environment.

Principle 2: We encourage and support and promote enterprise

ACARA will enhance opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enterprises to provide, participate or contribute to ACARA's commercial acquisition of goods and services. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples businesses will be actively supported by procurement practices with the aim of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses competing on equal footing with other suppliers.

Principle 3: We are culturally responsive

ACARA aims to be a culturally responsive organisation that respects the individual and collective cultural protocols of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and recognises the value these protocols bring to the workforce and to our work. By developing and fostering an appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contemporary social dynamics, we aim to be culturally competent individuals who actively embrace the diversity and contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and communities.

Principle 4: We actively collaborate

ACARA recognises the need to understand, engage with and identify with members from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and aims to do this in an open, transparent and collaborative way. We aim to connect with individuals and community early in the engagement process, seek input and act on feedback, and commit time and resources to relationship-building and developing trust. We will ensure community concerns are responded to in a timely, open and effective manner.

ACARA's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group has reviewed these principles.

