

## MEDIA RELEASE

27 May 2026

### **NEW REPORT SHOWS WIDESPREAD USE OF AI AND OTHER DIGITAL TOOLS BY AUSTRALIAN STUDENTS DESPITE DROP IN RESULTS**

Australian students are enthusiastic users of generative artificial intelligence (AI) and other digital tools, according to the latest report from the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). Despite this, the report also shows a decline in Australian students' information communication technology (ICT) literacy since 2022.

The findings come from the National Assessment Program – ICT Literacy (NAP–ICTL) 2025 Public Report, which presents the results of the latest NAP–ICTL assessment that tested students' general ICT skills and knowledge in a sample of schools across the country.

ICT literacy aims to build students' capacity to become literate, creative and productive users of digital tools – both hardware and software. The online assessment, which also draws on a student's wider literacy and numeracy skills, gives schools, education ministers and the community information on Year 6 and Year 10 students' ICT literacy, to improve teaching and learning.

The 2025 report shows that, at the national level, results have fallen since the last assessment undertaken in 2022 and to the lowest levels since the assessment began in 2005.

- 50% of Year 6 students attained the proficient standard. This is a decline from 55% in 2022. It is also lower than the national percentages observed in 2011.
- 37% of Year 10 students attained the proficient standard, which is the lowest percentage observed since the assessment's inception.

This declining trend in student performance has also been observed in other recent international ICT literacy assessments.

Students from both Year 6 and Year 10 also completed a questionnaire to gather information about their ICT use. For the first time, this included questions about their use of generative AI tools. Key findings from the questionnaire show:

- Most students, especially at Year 10, have extensive experience using digital tools. Nearly all students have access to their own computer or tablet at home and reliable internet access.
- The use of AI tools is widespread among Australian school students.
  - Around 1 in 4 Year 10 students reported frequent use of AI to help with schoolwork at school and more than 1 in 5 use AI tools outside school. Use of AI tools is less common among Year 6 students.
  - More than 60% of Year 10 students and 30% of Year 6 students report using AI tools to generate written content at least once a month.
- Students' confidence in using digital tools (self-efficacy) and their belief in the importance of digital tools are associated with higher ICT literacy scores.
- Male students reported higher levels of self-efficacy in using digital tools than female students at the Year 6 level. At Year 10, there was no difference between the genders.
- Most students reported learning how to search for information, identify different types of digital content and assess the trustworthiness of online sources at school. More than 80% of students

in both year levels have learnt about key online safety topics, including cyberbullying and online privacy.

The latest report also includes further information on performance results for sub-groups of students based on their background and demographics. The report shows that disparities for some of these groups persist:

- Female students had higher levels of ICT literacy in comparison to male students in both Year 6 and Year 10. This is consistent with previous testing cycles.
- The gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students attaining the proficient standard remained significant in 2025. This has been observed consistently over the last 4 assessment cycles.
- Like with other national assessments, students from schools in major cities generally outperformed those in regional and remote schools.
- Achievement in ICT literacy gradually increased with increasing levels of parental occupation and parental education, resulting in large, significant differences between the highest and the lowest occupational and educational groups.

Commenting on the report, ACARA CEO, Stephen Gniel, said:

“Information communication technology (ICT) literacy is one of 3 priority areas that we assess on a 3-year cycle in our NAP sample assessment program. This is the seventh assessment in the series, which began in 2005, and so gives education policymakers and the broader community important information about the underlying trends in this area.

“The 2025 results show a decline in student proficiency in ICT literacy and continuing gaps between different groups of students. This contrasts with most students reporting extensive experience using digital tools, and the vast majority reporting reliable internet services and having access to their own computer or tablet at home.

“Unsurprisingly but importantly, the combined results of the assessment and the student survey show that greater student engagement with ICT, as reported by students, was associated with higher ICT literacy scores. Reflecting the rapid impact of AI across our society, students also reported frequent use of AI tools to assist with schoolwork at school and to generate written content.

“The results in this report provide timely, quality information to support schools, sectors, education departments and ministers, along with the broader community, to understand the current state of Australian students’ ICT literacy. It will also help them respond to the challenges of making sure all students are equipped with the knowledge and skills they need in ICT literacy to thrive at school and beyond.”

The full NAP–ICTL 2025 Public Report can be found online at [www.nap.edu.au/nap-sample-assessments/results-and-reports](http://www.nap.edu.au/nap-sample-assessments/results-and-reports).

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## Background

- ACARA conducts the NAP sample assessments on behalf of all education ministers, to provide useful information for all policymakers in education, including ministers and senior education officials, teachers and community members committed to improving educational outcomes for all young Australians.
- The National Assessment Program (NAP) sample Information and Communication Technology Literacy (ICTL) Public Report 2025 provides results from the assessment conducted in May 2025 (Term 2).
- The NAP–ICTL 2025 assessment is designed to assess students’ ability to use ICT and digital tools appropriately, safely and effectively across a range of real-world contexts.
- The NAP–ICTL 2025 assessment was administered online to representative samples of students in Year 6 and Year 10 in all states and territories across Australia.
- In total, 5,498 Year 6 students from 328 schools and 4,753 Year 10 students from 313 schools participated. Response rates were 87% for Year 6 and 78% for Year 10 students.
- The assessment was administered online via an assessment platform also used for NAPLAN. This ensured a consistent and familiar testing environment for students.
- The 2025 report presents the findings of the seventh NAP–ICTL assessment, with the previous NAP–ICTL assessment being undertaken in 2022.