

MEDIA STATEMENT

NAPLAN 2026 UPDATE – 12 MARCH 2026 – AS AT 1200 AEDT

ACARA CEO Stephen Gniel

“I want to reiterate our apology for the disruption to testing yesterday and to sincerely thank our teachers and principals for supporting students and families.

“Testing resumed as of 1130 AEDT yesterday, and the system has since been operating as expected, with students successfully logging in and getting on with testing.

“Our NAPLAN technology provider Education Services Australia (ESA) is currently conducting a full and thorough investigation of the issue. Once this has been completed, we will have a fuller picture of the incident, including the number of students and schools impacted.

“We understand there are knock-on impacts following the disruption and we are working through these with test administration authorities to support schools and students.

“We understand from ESA that any writing that students had begun before the system malfunctioned has been retained. For those students, ACARA is working closely with the relevant test administration authority to ensure tests can be completed. Schools are also able to give students extra time to complete their tests due to the disruption.

“For those students who did not start yesterday, schools are being advised for students to complete those writing tests today or as soon as possible.

“The writing tests always include more than one writing prompt, so students who start today will receive a different prompt. This is the case every year, as there are schools who can’t schedule writing on day one for a variety of reasons.

“We’re also aware of concerns from schools, students, parents and carers about the potential impacts of this disruption on the results. Once the tests have been completed and the data from the assessments reviewed, ACARA will work with states and territories to consider any additional measures needed to ensure fair reporting of the results.”

Background

- On Day 1 (11 March), a significant technical issue with the NAPLAN testing platform caused widespread disruption and testing was paused.
- Importantly, the system did not shut down. Students experienced slow or frozen loading screen.
- The issue resolved within one hour and testing resumed within two hours, allowing many students to resume testing later in the afternoon.
- The disruption occurred during the online writing test, impacting Year 5, 7 and 9 students.
- As Year 3 students complete their NAPLAN writing tests on paper, these students were not impacted.

- There are tried and tested procedures in place to manage any technical incidents that arise to minimise impacts on schools and students.
- As the issue arose early in the day and in different time zones, most schools in Western Australia were largely unaffected.
- NAPLAN tests are scheduled in a particular order and as soon as possible within the test window. Further details about the test order can be found [here](#).

ENDS

ACARA's media line: 0414 063 872 (virtual line, please do not send texts) or media.contact@acara.edu.au