

● Language Education Action Plan

Activity Report (June 2026)

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Introduction

This Activity Report provides an update on implementation of the ACT Government's Language Education Action Plan.

Implementation of the Language Education Action Plan is progressing with a range of activities supporting workforce planning, curriculum, and partnerships. The Education Directorate committed to deliver all priority actions in the Action Plan by the end of 2025. While some actions have been delayed due to system-wide priorities, foundational work is improving data visibility, strengthening partnerships, and expanding delivery options.

Outcomes of this work to date have:

- provided greater accuracy and visibility of language education data for the Education Directorate and the community
- supported schools to make more informed decisions about their language program offerings and student pathways
- enabled the Education Directorate to provide more targeted support and guidance to schools about language education options, and
- enhanced collaboration with universities and embassies to increase the ACT's language teacher workforce and support the provision of high-quality language programs in ACT public schools.

The Language Education Action Plan was developed in April 2024. The Action Plan remains the ACT Government's current commitment for strengthening language education in ACT public schools.

The Language Education Action Plan seeks to:

- sustainably deliver language education across the ACT public school system;
- build teacher capability and capacity to deliver language education;
- ensure language education programs meet student and community needs and that all students have access to options for language proficiency.

The scope of the Language Education Action Plan is refined to ensure actions are well-targeted and achievable. The directorate must remain flexible and adaptable as the context and conditions for language education in schools changes. This requires ongoing review and refinement of actions to respond to shifting priorities and needs.

The directorate remains committed to strengthening language education opportunities for all students across ACT public schools. We will continue to pursue the priority actions in the Language Education Action Plan to achieve this. Future phases of work will also be informed by the resourcing needs of the ACT public school system identified through the *ACT Public School System Resourcing Review*, and the ACT Government's response – *Future of Education: One public education system*.

Workforce Planning

The workforce planning actions in the Language Education Action Plan seek to improve the shortage of qualified language specialist teachers in ACT public schools. This includes a focus on retaining existing staff and attracting new language teachers through university partnerships and upskilling. There is also potential to better utilise community language resources and international teachers, although regulatory requirements such as English language proficiency continue to present challenges. There is opportunity to further explore alternative delivery models to expand access and capacity.

Action 1: Develop a workforce plan for public school language teachers that is integrated with the Education Directorate's existing workforce strategy.

This work remains ongoing and is being informed by evolving priorities for language education and the ACT public school system more broadly. This includes the re-prioritisation of resources to deliver the 2024 election commitment of a Punjabi and Hindi Language Survey and the dissolution of CIT Solutions, both of which have impacted workforce planning assumptions and delivery models.

The directorate has continued to implement initiatives that support language teacher supply and capability and will inform future workforce planning. These include:

- facilitating language teacher networks for each of the eight priority languages taught in ACT public schools, including quarterly network meetings and annual funding allocations for professional development
- supporting language networks with professional learning activities, including the accreditation of professional learning through the Teacher Quality Institute
- actively promoting language teaching opportunities through universities (including university fairs and tutorials)
- offering annual teacher scholarships with languages identified as a priority area
- promoting language teaching career pathways to international students through the International Education Unit and annual CareersXpo.

The directorate is also exploring opportunities to continue and expand existing arrangements with international universities for trainee teachers to undertake pre-service teacher placements in ACT public schools.

Action 2: Work with the Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) to explore options for international teachers looking to teach in ACT public schools, including access to Permit to Teach status.

The Education Directorate has consulted with the Teacher Quality Institute (TQI), as the independent statutory authority established by the *ACT Teacher Quality Institute Act (2010)*, to raise awareness of system challenges for international teachers looking to teach in ACT public schools.

TQI encourages stakeholders to discuss their individual circumstances with the Institute to determine eligibility. The directorate is supporting this messaging to schools and prospective teachers through its existing engagement with Language Network Leaders and embassies. The directorate will continue to consult with TQI throughout the development of the directorate's workforce strategy.

Action 3: Collaborate with TQI on Permit to Teach requirements and investigate tuition supports for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

International English Language Testing System (IELTS) requirements are consistent across states and territories, as specified in the *Migration (Specification of Language Tests, Test Scores and Passports) Instrument 2025* (LIN 25/016) made under the *Migration Regulations 1994*. Work is being undertaken nationally to examine legislation around IELTS levels for language teachers.

The Education Directorate is also working with TQI and embassies to support the provision of information about Permit to Teach and IELTS requirements to prospective teachers. This includes facilitating connections between TQI, schools, embassies and prospective teachers.

Action 4: Explore options for alternative delivery models for public school language education programs, including online delivery, which will provide flexible and innovative solutions for students wishing to undertake a pathway for proficiency.

The ACT Government undertook a community engagement in 2025 to consider the need and interest of ACT public school students to access Punjabi and Hindi language education. Over 1,800 contributions were received from community members. The YourSay consultation confirmed strong community support for Punjabi and Hindi language education, with a clear preference for in-school delivery, particularly at primary level. Since the Listening Report: Punjabi and Hindi Language Education Survey was published on 10 November 2025, the Education Directorate has been working through options to respond to the survey findings. This work is being guided by existing policies, current teaching practices and the operational capacity of ACT public schools.

More broadly, the Education Directorate has explored and provided advice to schools, community stakeholders and families about enrolment options for senior secondary language programs. This includes options for out of area enrolment, or for students to attend their local school and enrol in their language course of choice at another college.

The directorate has also established enhanced data collection and reporting processes for the annual ACT Public Schools Language Education Census to provide greater visibility and understanding of language pathways, teacher workforce, and flexible models currently being implemented across schools. The directorate will continue to seek feedback from schools on delivery models, such as language teaching assistant programs and online learning platforms, to inform future implementation options.

Pedagogy and curriculum

The Education Directorate is working to strengthen language education offerings across ACT public schools by ensuring consistent delivery aligned with the Australian Curriculum, and better matching language offerings to student demand, community needs, and pathways for proficiency. A key priority is to improve access to clear, publicly available information about language pathways to support school planning and further empower students and families to make informed choices and engage with language learning opportunities.

Action 5: Maintain the minutes mandated for language learning in the 'Curriculum Policy and Procedures' so that languages is delivered as one of the eight learning areas under the Australian Curriculum.

Mandated minutes for language learning are maintained in the *Learning and Teaching Policy (Curriculum Practice Guide for ACT public schools K-10)* implemented in 2026.

ACT public schools must implement the Australian Curriculum Languages learning area. In Years 3 to 6, schools must provide students with a minimum of 60 minutes per week of languages education. In Years 7 and 8, students must receive a minimum of 150 minutes (or one line) per week.

Action 6: Update the 'Curriculum Policy and Procedures' to ensure consistency in the review and decision making of language pathways for individual school settings. This will require extensive consultation with all stakeholders.

This action is being informed by consultation undertaken in 2025 as language education priorities continue to evolve. The directorate's *Learning and Teaching Policy (Curriculum Practice Guide for ACT public schools K-10)*, published in January 2026, includes mandated minutes for language learning. The directorate provides guidance to schools to support the implementation of this policy requirement and decision making of language pathways for individual school settings. The directorate is preparing a new fact sheet to ensure this guidance is available to all schools. The new fact sheet will be published via the directorate's existing communication channels in Semester 2, 2026.

The ACT Government's *Future of Education: One public education system* reform seeks to build one coordinated public education system to deliver greater equity, consistency and long-term sustainability for students, the workforce, families and schools. Consistency in the review and decision making of language pathways for individual school settings will be considered as part of this reform.

In 2025, the directorate undertook the Punjabi and Hindi Language Education YourSay consultation to understand student and community demand and to inform potential options for the delivery of Punjabi and Hindi language education to ACT public school students. This work is also informing broader policy considerations about language education in the ACT.

Action 7: Provide access to pathways for proficiency options in high school and colleges to facilitate consistency in language provision across school years. This includes tracking of pathway options and providing advice on pathway options.

The Education Directorate has introduced new reporting mechanisms to improve the availability and accuracy of language education data. This data was shared with principals of ACT public colleges in early 2026 to inform their language offerings and pathways for 2027 ahead of the college enrolment process.

The directorate has developed a comprehensive publication of language education data to provide visibility of language pathways across schools and to support school decision making regarding language offerings. This is available at <https://www.act.gov.au/directorates-and-agencies/education-directorate>

Partnerships

The Education Directorate continues to facilitate partnerships that support language learning opportunities for ACT students, including strengthening collaboration with community language schools, universities and embassies. At the same time, we are working to build and sustain a skilled language teaching workforce by retaining existing specialists and supporting current teachers to develop language expertise, ensuring greater capacity and diversity in language provision across public schools.

Action 8: Forge stronger connections between ACT public schools and community language schools and explore potential ways to include and incorporate more community languages into ACT public schools.

The Education Directorate provides funding to the Modern Language Teachers' Association of the ACT (MLTA ACT) for delivery of professional learning workshops to community language schools (via the ACT Community Language Schools Association). This funding supports four tailored professional learning workshops per year for ACT Community Language Schools Association (CLSA) teachers. These workshops are delivered by MLTA ACT presenters who are experienced TQI registered language teachers, and workshop topics are selected based on the requirements of CLSA. MLTA ACT is exploring options to strengthen this professional learning by applying for TQI accreditation for specific workshops.

The directorate is continuing to explore potential ways to incorporate community languages into ACT public schools where there is community demand. This work is being guided by existing policies including the new *Learning and Teaching Policy for ACT public schools*, current teaching practices and the operational capacity of schools.

As part of the Punjabi and Hindi Language Education consultation, the directorate is developing information about community language schools for ACT public schools to promote community language options to families.

Action 9: Leverage existing relationships with universities to promote the training of public school teachers in language education. This would include forming a partnership with the University of Canberra and building upon the Affiliated Schools model.

The ACT Government is investing \$4 million in the Scholarship and Career Pathways to Teaching Program to help more people become teachers in ACT public schools. The ACT Government is partnering with the University of Canberra (UC) and Australian Catholic University (ACU) to offer supported pathways into teaching. This includes 5 undergraduate scholarships per year (ACU) and 5 postgraduate scholarships per university per year (ACU and UC) in ACT priority teaching areas: languages, inclusive education and STEM. In addition, the ACT Teacher Scholarship Program provides financial support to ACT teachers and school leaders within the Education Directorate to undertake further education and training, with Priority Area Scholarships available for languages.

The directorate is also actively promoting language teaching opportunities to new teachers via universities. . Examples of this includes development of an information sheet about language teaching in ACT public schools, and attendance at the 2026 Tertiary to Work Fair (a combined university careers fair for Australian Catholic University, Australian National University, and University of Canberra). In addition, the directorate's Teacher Attraction and Engagement team has been actively promoting language teaching opportunities as part of its regular engagement with local and interstate universities. The new information sheet about language teaching in ACT public schools will also be shared at the directorate's Teach in Canberra stall at the annual Canberra CareersXpo.

The directorate also engages in local and national language networks and organisations (e.g. Canberra Languages Network, Early Learning Languages Australia, Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority, and the Japan Foundation Advisory Committee) to identify contemporary methods of language education delivery. These relationships are established and ongoing.

What's next?

Over the next 6–12 months, the Education Directorate will:

- ensure language teachers are considered as part of a system-wide workforce strategy
- provide policy guidance to schools to improve consistency in language pathway decision making
- publish language education data to improve transparency and support school planning
- explore the accessibility and efficacy of alternative delivery models, including online and cross-school pathways
- strengthen partnerships with community language schools and universities
- continue consultation on language learning options in response to student and community demand, including emerging community interest in languages such as Punjabi and Hindi.

These actions will support the next phase of the Language Education Action Plan and inform longer-term system reform.