ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE OR DIALECT

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1. What is this policy about?
1.1. This policy outlines the support for students in Canberra public schools for whom English is an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D).

2. Policy Statement
2.1. This policy responds to the diversity of student need in the context of English language proficiency in Canberra public schools. It commits schools to support EAL/D learners to achieve equitable education and social outcomes, and participate successfully in our culturally diverse society.

2.2. The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) EAL/D Learning Progression is the framework that Canberra public schools will use to describe phases of English language acquisition for EAL/D learners.

3. Who does this policy apply to?
3.1. This policy applies to all Canberra public schools and branches of the Directorate.

4. Context
4.1. English language proficiency is a key determinant of success within our education system and for social and economic participation in the broader community.
4.2. Students for whom English is an additional language or dialect (EAL/D learners) come from diverse, multilingual backgrounds. EAL/D learners:
   • require specific support to develop English language proficiency; and
   • include but are not limited to:
     o all students whose first language is a language other than English; or
     o Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students whose first language is an Indigenous language, including traditional languages, creoles or Aboriginal English.
4.3. EAL/D learners from refugee or asylum seeker backgrounds may have limited or interrupted educational experiences and may have additional factors impacting on language acquisition and the duration and type of support required.
4.4. EAL/D learner needs may vary depending on the stage of schooling. EAL/D learners entering a secondary school with ranging levels of English language proficiency may require additional English language acquisition support due to the complexity and specificity of language required to successfully access the secondary curriculum.
4.5. **The Education Act 2004** establishes the principle that every child has a right to receive a high quality education.

4.6. **The Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT), Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT), Human Rights Commission Act 2005 (ACT), Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Cth) Amended 2009, Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth), Racial Hatred Act 1995 (Cth).** Anti-discrimination legislation recognises that everyone has the right to equal and effective protection against discrimination including discrimination because of race, colour, sex, language, religion, national or social origin, disability or other status. This applies to the area of education and other defined areas.

5. **Support for students in Canberra Public Schools**

5.1. Canberra public schools will provide for EAL/D learners through:

- primary and secondary Introductory English Programs (IEPs) for students with beginning English language proficiency;
- early access to preschool for non-English speaking learners who meet the eligibility criteria outlined in the *Early Entry for Children with English as an Additional Language or Dialect Procedure* to provide opportunities to socialise and engage with English speaking children;
- use of additional allocated resources received through the EAL/D needs-based loading and/or international fee paying students annual tuition fees;
- school based activities and interventions, including through differentiated mainstream curriculum and instruction;
- delivery of Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS), accredited EAL/D courses at secondary colleges; and
- access to translating and interpreter services, and advice, for parents/carers of EAL/D learners.

5.2. Introductory English Programs should be delivered by teachers with specific EAL/D qualifications, specialised training and expertise.

5.3. Introductory English Programs will be staffed with a maximum teacher to student ratio of 1:15.

5.4. EAL/D resourcing for schools is one of four needs-based loadings under the Education Directorate’s Student Resource Allocation Program (SRA). EAL/D learners with disability or low socio-economic need, or of specific Aboriginal and Torres Islander student need, which is not directly related to English language proficiency, should also be considered for any support through the appropriate student needs-based loading to address each EAL/D learner’s educational and wellbeing needs.

6. **Responsibilities**

6.1. **Central Office** responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- the collection and management of system data regarding EAL/D learners gathered through enrolment, assessment and census procedures;
• distribution to Canberra public schools of additional resources through the EAL/D needs-based loading and international fee paying students annual tuition fees;
• provision of best-practice curriculum and pedagogy advice to schools, and system-wide promotion of best practice and innovation;
• monitoring of, and reporting on, the implementation of the policy and including its effectiveness and efficiency;
• oversee the assessment and moderation of EAL/D learner English language proficiency using the ACARA EAL/D Learning Progression and, where necessary, ensure the provision of relevant professional learning to build system capability;
• provision of information for schools to access professional accredited translation and interpreter services; and
• effective communication between Central Office and school EAL/D Liaison Officers on meeting the English language proficiency needs of EAL/D learners.

6.2. **Principals** are responsible for, but are not limited to:
• meeting the educational and wellbeing needs of EAL/D learners;
• implementation of evidence-based strategies which support EAL/D learners through the phases of the ACARA EAL/D Learning Progression;
• ensuring school practices are consistent with the policy and procedures;
• the collection and accuracy of data related to EAL/D learners gathered through enrolment, assessment and the census procedures;
• ensuring EAL/D data collection is completed accurately, and in a timely manner, to provide information on English language proficiency of students for resourcing purposes;
• ongoing assessment and monitoring of language acquisition of EAL/D learners relative to the ACARA EAL/D Learning Progression;
• effective management of the capability of school staff for the assessment and moderation of EAL/D learner English language proficiency using the ACARA EAL/D Learning Progression and, as needed, ensure staff access relevant professional learning in a timely manner;
• nomination of a first point of contact for all enquiries from parents, students and the wider community about meeting the needs of EAL/D learners. This may be the EAL/D Liaison Officer, or another designated school staff member;
• effective parent/carer communication strategies to encourage active participation in the school including the use of professional accredited translation and interpreter services; and
• documenting EAL/D strategies in school plans and reporting outcomes in Annual School Board Reports (ASBR).

6.3. **School Network Leaders** are responsible for supporting Principals in implementation of the policy as required.

6.4. **All staff members** are responsible for:
• ensuring that their practices comply with legislation and Directorate policies and procedures; and
• meeting the English Language acquisition needs of EAL/D learners.

6.5. **Policy Owner**: The Director, Learning and Teaching Branch is responsible for this policy.

7. **Monitoring and review**
7.1. The Policy Owner monitors the policy. This includes an annual scan of the policy’s operation. A full review of the policy will be conducted within a three year period.

8. **Contact**
8.1. For support contact the Learning and Teaching Branch on (02) 6205 9204 or email EALD@act.gov.au.

9. **Complaints**
9.1. Any concerns about the application of this policy or the policy itself, should be raised with:
  • the school principal in the first instance;
  • the Directorate’s Liaison Unit on (02) 6205 5429;
  • online at [http://www.det.act.gov.au/contact_us](http://www.det.act.gov.au/contact_us); and
  • see also the Complaints Policy on the Directorate’s website.

10. **References**
10.1. **Definitions**
  • **Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)**: is an independent statutory authority responsible for the development of the curriculum, national assessment and reporting process.
  • **ACARA EAL/D Learning Progression**: has been developed by ACARA to describe the progression of English language learning typical of students learning English as an Additional Language or Dialect.
  • **Annual School Board Report (ASBR)**: is a report prepared by all Canberra public schools to convey to the community information of the schools annual performance.
  • **Asylum seeker**: An asylum seeker is someone who is seeking international protection but whose claim for refugee status has not yet been determined.
  • **The ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS)**: is a statutory authority responsible for the certification of senior secondary school studies in government and non-government schools in the Australian Capital Territory.
  • **English**: in this policy refers to Standard Australian English (SAE). SAE is the variety of spoken and written English language in Australia used in more formal settings, such as for official or public purposes, and recorded in dictionaries, style guides and grammars. While it is always dynamic and evolving, it is recognised as the ‘common language’ within Australia.
  • **English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D)**: This replaces the earlier term, ‘English as a Second Language (ESL)’ in alignment with the Australian Curriculum. EAL/D is
the educational acronym that refers to those students whose home language is a language or dialect other than Standard Australian English (SAE) and who require additional support to develop proficiency in SAE. The use of the acronym EAL/D recognises the English language learning needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who speak an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Creole, or a variety of Aboriginal English, as their home language, as well as those who speak a traditional or heritage Indigenous language, and migrant and refugee students who speak an English-based Creole, pidgin or dialect as their home language, as well as those who are learning English as a second or additional language (ESL/EAL).

- **EAL/D Liaison Officer**: is the first point of contact for all enquiries from parents, students and the wider community about meetings the needs of EAL/D learners.
- **English language acquisition**: is the process of learning Standard Australian English for academic English language proficiency.
- **English language proficiency**: is the ability of students to use the English language to make and communicate meaning in spoken and written contexts to participate in the curriculum.
- **English as a Second Language (ESL)**: Whilst still in common usage, this term has been replaced by EAL/D, except for existing BSSS Courses.
- **First Language**: The language predominately spoken at home. Alternate terms may be used such as: mother tongue, heritage language or home language.
- **Introductory English Programs (IEPs)**: are a system resource co-located in mainstream schools. The program is designed to support newly arrived students with minimal English through intensive language teaching prior to entry into mainstream Canberra public schools.
- **Language Background Other Than English (LBOTE)**: identifies a student, or the student’s parents/carers, speaking a language other than English at home.
- **Refugee background**: is someone who has been recognised under the *1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees* to be a refugee.

### 10.2 Legislation

- **Education Act 2004 (ACT)**
- **The Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)**
- **Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT)**
- **Human Rights Commission Act 2005 (ACT)**
- **Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)**
- **Racial Hatred Act 1995 (Cth)**

### 10.3 Implementation Documents

- English as an Additional Language or Dialect – Advice and Procedures for Schools
- ACARA EAL/D Teacher Resource: EAL/D overview and advice
• ACARA EAL/D Learning Progression: Foundation to Year 10

10.4. Related Policies and Information
• ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies appendix 7 assessment provisions for EAL/D students – Guidelines
• ACT Multicultural Framework 2015-2020
• Early entry for children with English as an Additional Language or Dialect procedure
• Education Participation (Enrolment and Attendance) 2011
• International fee paying students 2011 policy
• People, Practice and Performance: School Improvement in Canberra Public Schools a framework for performance and accountability
• Reporting Student Achievement (Preschool-Year 12) Policy
• Students with Disability: Meeting their Educational Needs (under review) policy
• 2012-16 Australian Capital Territory Language Policy
• If professional and accredited translating and interpreting service are required - please telephone 131 450 http://www.act.gov.au/browse/topics/community-and-family/national_translating_and_interpreting_service