5 GOVERNMENT SCHOOL EDUCATION

Summary

This Chapter is concerned only with primary and secondary government schooling and focuses on the outcomes of each system, not individual schools. A preliminary framework of effectiveness and efficiency indicators has been developed for these government school systems. The effectiveness indicators address the range of objectives pursued at the system level. They are generally based on the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia (see Box 5.2) and can be described by three main categories which are not mutually exclusive: student learning outcomes, social and other, and equity objectives. The efficiency indicators focus on costs per student.

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) asked the Steering Committee to examine *government* services. Consequently, independent, private or religious school systems are not included in this report.

Learning outcomes

No nationally comparable data on student learning outcomes are available.

Performance measurement in government school education is a complex task and considerable effort has been spent on measuring performance, particularly of student learning outcomes. Until now, however, little consideration has been given to comparability between systems, and there is currently no nationally comparable information on student learning outcomes.

Standard assessment instruments undertaken by all, or a representative sample, of students within school systems are the primary source of aggregate student learning outcome information. This type of testing is relatively new in some States and Territories, and does not yet cover all learning areas. Differences between the jurisdictions in the timing of statewide testing, the year levels at which this is done, testing methodologies, curriculum content, and reporting frameworks mean that the results of tests in one system can not currently be compared to the results of other systems.

State and Territory specific trends.

Based on each State and Territory's existing standard test instruments, some limited conclusions can be drawn. Generally, the available information suggests there has not been any marked improvement or deterioration in student performance over the last few years. The absence of extensive time series information, however, means that within the jurisdictions, only partial analysis of trends is possible.

Some key examples of results include:

- relatively stable scores in NSW over the past five years for Years 3 and 5 students' literacy and numeracy performance, while non-English speaking background students have improved in both areas over this period;
- improvements in Years 5 and 9 students' mathematics performance between 1991 and 1993 in Queensland, with a slight fall in the performance of Year 7 students over the same period;
- slight improvements in mathematics performance for Year 3 and Year 10 students in WA between 1990 and 1992, with an improvement for Year 7 students;
- in Tasmania, which has a relatively long record of reporting outcomes, numeracy levels have fallen over the last decade, while some literacy results have improved over the same period;
- in the NT, improvements in mathematics and reading for Year 5 and Year 7 students between 1990 and 1994; and
- where they are recorded, the learning outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are lower than those recorded for the population as a whole.

Details of these and other results are provided in Section 5.4.

Action is required to address the lack of comparable information.

It is anticipated that the National Schools English Literacy Survey, to be completed by the end of 1996, will go some way to addressing the lack of comparable outcomes data, and will provide important information in terms of literacy.

The Steering Committee has recognised, however, the need to develop a mechanism for the ongoing reporting of comparable learning outcomes data across the curriculum. Given the strong government commitment to the existing State and Territory tests, the Steering Committee believes that these tests should be utilised in preference to the potentially costly duplication of outcomes measurement by an extended system of national surveys. Accordingly, it commissioned the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) to identify how comparisons between existing statewide testing programs could be established.

ACER has indicated that it is possible to report comparable outcomes, initially in mathematics and English, either by embedding common items in existing State and Territory tests or by administering tests to a common sample of students. The common item approach would utilise the existing testing infrastructure, obviating the need for the duplication of testing required by the common person approach.

Given the differences in years of testing, testing formats and methodologies, and some variations in the curriculum content, clearly whichever approach is adopted will require a significant commitment from the States, Territories and Commonwealth. In particular, the support of COAG is necessary to encourage the various governments to commit resources to ensure that comparable outcomes can be reported.

Social and other objectives

School systems also aim to achieve a range of other objectives which relate to the attitudes and wellbeing of students, as well as to prepare students for participation in further education, the workforce, society, and active citizenship.

Distinguishing these objectives from academic learning outcomes does not mean that they are not closely linked to the curriculum, only that they are a set of objectives for which performance information supplementary to learning outcomes is required to measure effectiveness in meeting them.

This is a complex area, and to date there are only limited examples of efforts by school systems to define these objectives beyond broad generalities. In addition, there is only limited performance data available and much of these are only loosely linked with these general objectives. The data that are available are of two main types: student attitude surveys, and post school destination and experience surveys.

Equity objectives

An important set of objectives for school systems relates to meeting the needs of groups identified as facing educational disadvantage. These include, amongst others, students with learning disabilities, students from low socio-economic and non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB), and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) students.

Five jurisdictions provided disaggregated information showing results by target group for statewide tests. These show, for example, that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Queensland, WA and the NT achieved below other students in those jurisdictions in all subjects and at all year levels tested. In Tasmania, students at low socio-economic status (SES) neighbourhood schools performed at lower levels than those from higher SES neighbourhood schools. Performance of other target groups shows similar, although not so pronounced, differences.

Expenditure per student

In 1993–94, the average Australia-wide expenditure per student was over $5100. This varied widely across jurisdictions, from over $4800 (Queensland) to nearly $7700 (NT). Average in-school primary expenditure per student[1] ranged from nearly $3900 in NSW to around $5900 in the NT with a national average of just over $4000. The range of average in-school secondary expenditure was from $5600 (for Queensland) to $8800 (NT), with a national average of $6000.

Expenditure per student will be influenced by factors such as different population densities and the provision of schooling to disadvantaged groups, and as such is an imperfect measure of efficiency.

For those States and Territories able to provide disaggregated data, expenditure tended to be lower in larger schools and higher in schools that faced socio-economic disadvantage.

Future directions

The tasks for the Steering Committee are to:

- establish comparable student learning outcome data by establishing equivalences between the existing State and Territory testing programs;
- develop a coherent framework of indicators to address the full range of school system objectives and to collect data on achieving those outcomes; and
- provide information on outcomes by target groups.

The activities of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), including the Taskforce on School Statistics, the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET), and the States, Territories and Commonwealth, are continuing to progress these activities in parallel exercises as well as contributing to the Review.

[1] Expenditure figures for 1992-93 and 1993-94 in the text and Tables in Section 5.6 include estimated superannuation liability.

5.1 Profile of the sector

This chapter focuses on government schools, which in 1994 accounted for 72 per cent of all school student enrolments. Government school education is one of the largest areas of State and Territory governments' activities. Total outlays by all governments amounted to $12 billion in 1993–94[2]. Expenditure on school education by the States and Territories accounted for, on average, 16 per cent[3] of total State and Territory government current outlays.

Government school systems in context

All State and Territory governments have a constitutional responsibility to provide education to all children of school age, regardless of their circumstances. School education is provided by both the government and private sectors in Australia.

Government schools are the responsibility of State and Territory Governments and non-government schools operate under conditions determined by government registration authorities. About 28 per cent of school students attend non-government schools and significant government funding is allocated to support non-government school education.

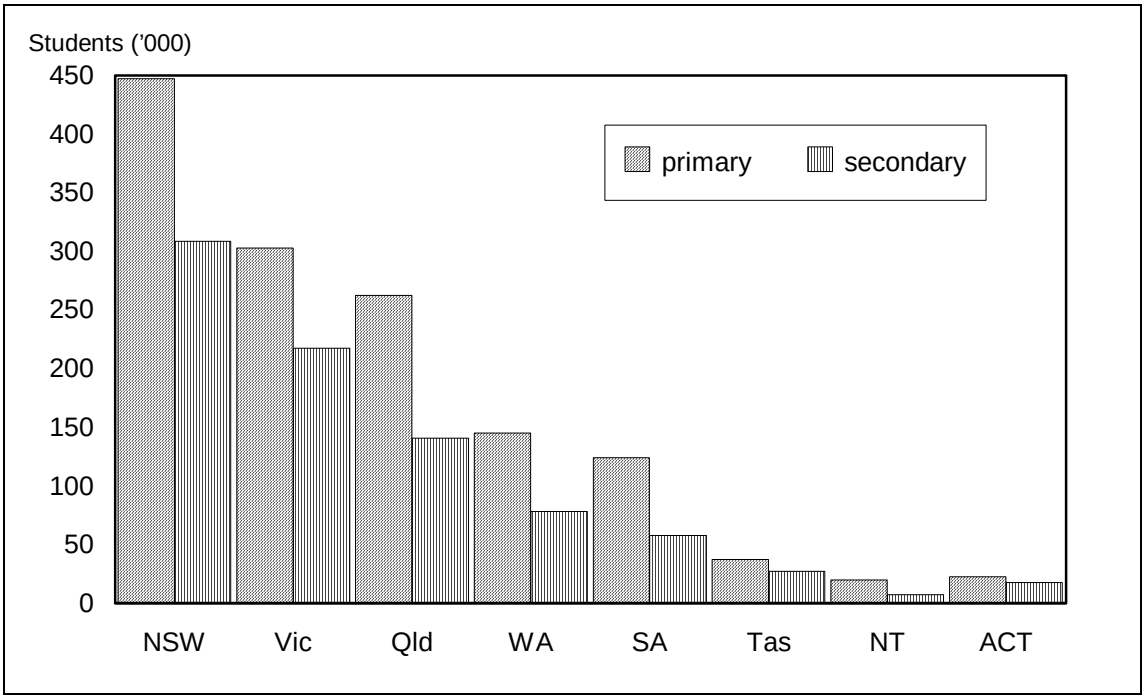
As discussed above, this year's Review is concerned only with government schools which currently account for three-quarters of primary students and over two-thirds of secondary students.

There are large differences in the size of the government school student body in each State and Territory. In 1994, NSW had over a third of Australia's government school students, followed by Victoria at nearly a quarter, Queensland at 20 per cent, WA and SA each at around 10 per cent, and Tasmania, the ACT and the NT each accounting for under 3 per cent (Figure 5.1).

[2] Source: ABS Catalogue No. 5512.0, Table 2, p. 16, 1993-94.

[3] Source: ABS Catalogue No. 5512.0, Table 12, p. 39, 1993-94.

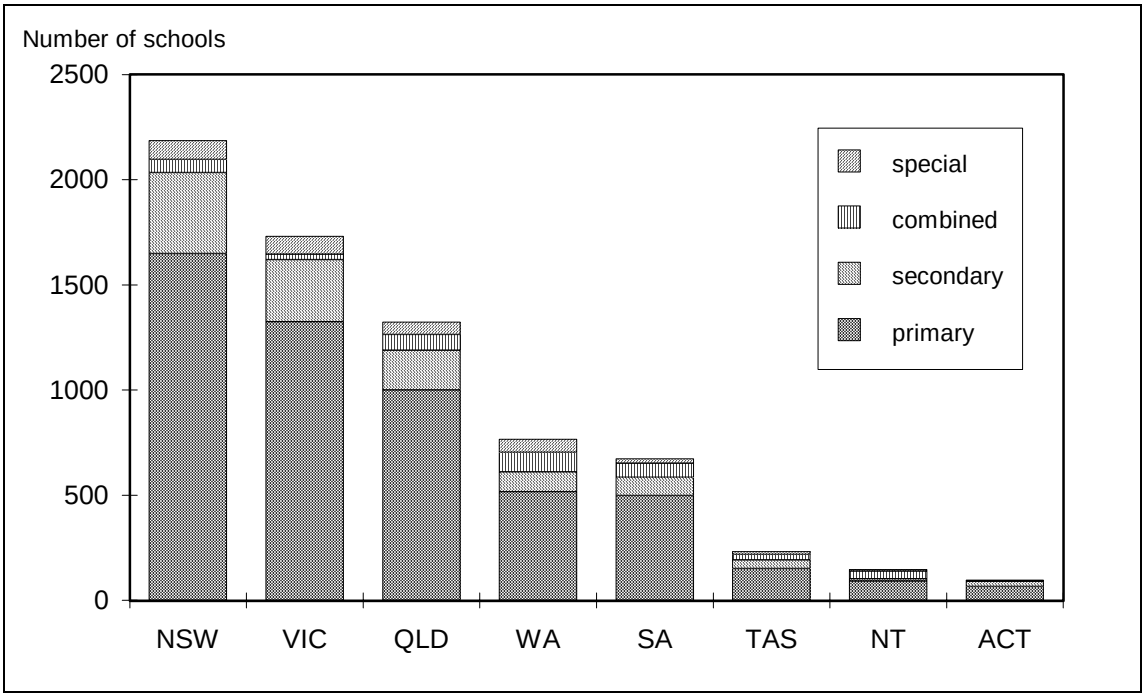
Figure 5.1: Government school students, by jurisdiction, 1994



Source: Information provided by DEET based on the National Schools Statistics Collection, 1994.

There are also differences in the number of schools in each State and Territory, with the majority in NSW and Victoria. Three quarters of schools are primary schools which are generally smaller than secondary schools and account for 60 per cent of all school students.

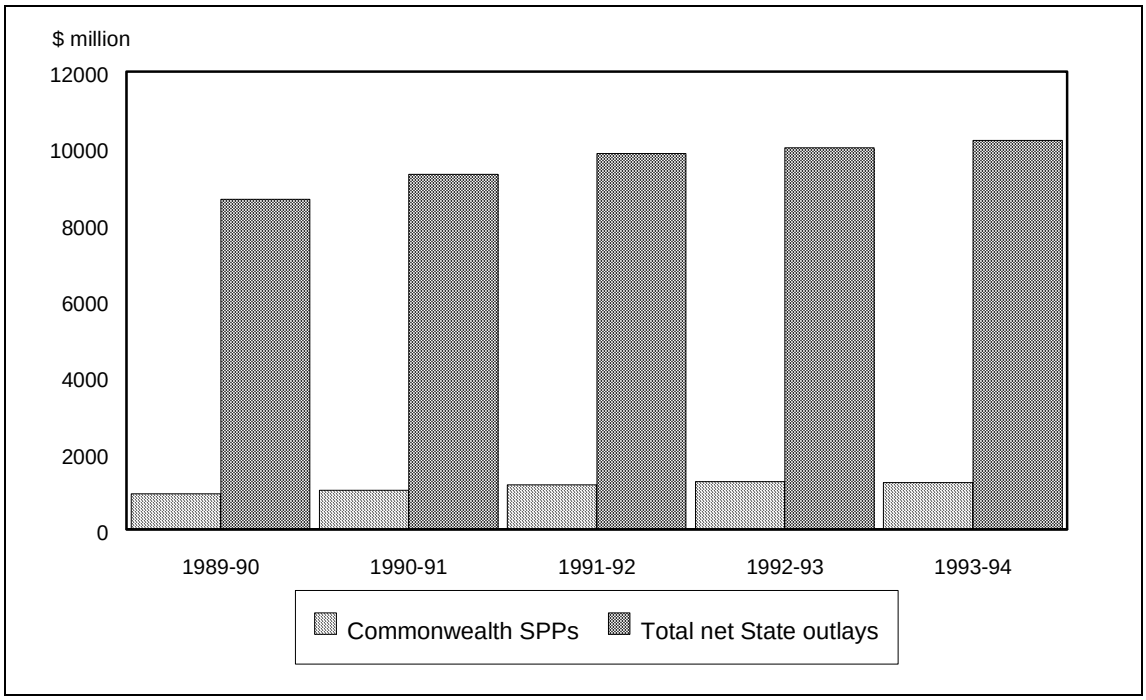
Figure 5.2: Government schools by type, by jurisdiction, 1994



Source: Information provided by DEET based on the National Schools Statistics Collection, 1994.

Responsibility for funding for government schools is shared between the States and Territories and the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth provides some supplementary general funding to support nationally agreed priorities and strategies for targeted assistance, including to young people identified as being educationally disadvantaged. States and Territories are responsible for implementing these programs.

Figure 5.3: Expenditure by source[1,2], government schools, Australia 1989 to 1994 ($ million)



Source: Commonwealth SPPs (current and capital) for government schools from Budget Paper No. 3, Tables 29 to 33, 1993–94. Total State outlays from ABS, *Expenditure on Education Australia*, Cat No. 5510.0, various years.

Notes: 1 Total net State outlays equals total State outlays on primary and secondary education minus Commonwealth SPPs for government schools.

2 Excludes funds from private sources, such as fundraising. This will vary widely from school to school and region to region, but has been estimated to be up to 6–7% of total expenditure.

The complementary roles of the three major partners in schooling are described in the preamble to the Common and Agreed National Goals for schooling as follows:

> **Schools**
>
> The schools are responsible for the provision of excellent schooling, by means of a curriculum which reflects local needs and aspirations within the framework of common and agreed national goals. This is achieved through the development of effective partnerships between parents, students and teachers.

States and Territories

The States and Territories have the constitutional and major responsibility for schooling.

Commonwealth

The Commonwealth, along with States and Territories, has a significant role in identifying national priorities for schooling. The Commonwealth contributes to the funding of schooling, has financial responsibility in the area of higher education and contributes to industry training. (AEC 1989)

Priorities and strategies requiring national agreement must be endorsed by MCEETYA, which is made up of the Commonwealth and State and Territory ministers responsible for school education.

5.2 Recent developments

Several recent developments have occurred in government school systems which are relevant to the assessment of performance. Each of these developments has different implications for the development of performance indicators and the interpretation of results.

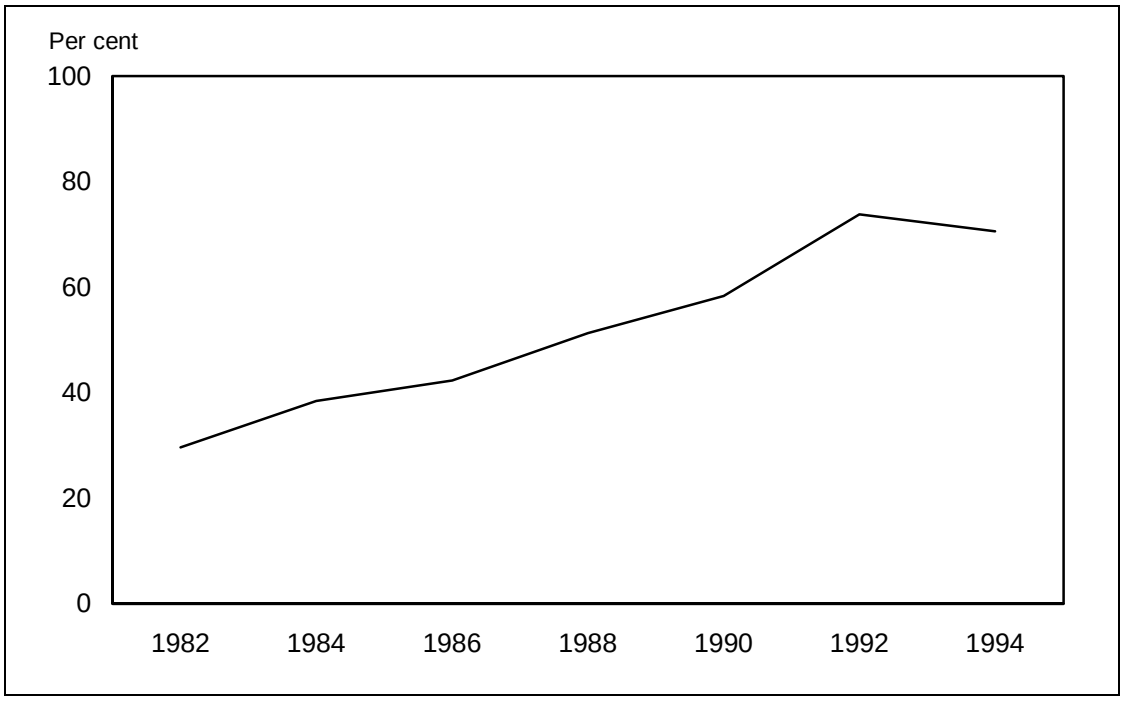
Growth in retention

There has been a marked growth in retention rates in Australian schools over the last decade. This growth reflects a changing emphasis on school education and an attendant change in the balance of objectives and priorities of post-compulsory schooling.

Of the students who commence government secondary schooling the proportion who continue on to Year 12 within the government system has increased from 30 per cent in 1982 to 71 per cent in 1994 (Figure 5.4). However, there has been a slight fall in retention rates since 1992 across Australia. Australia-wide, the percentage of 15 to 19 year olds in the population that participate in government school education has remained relatively stable over the past few years, although this varied between jurisdictions (from 28 per cent in WA to 35 per cent in the ACT in 1994)[4].

[4] Participation and retention rates measure different things. Participation is the proportion on the population in government schools, while retention refers to the proportion of students that start school that continue on to further years. Therefore, participation of 15-19 year olds in government schools does not necessarily reflect retention rates as 18 and 19 year olds make up a very small proportion of students in Year 12. Participation in government schools of 15-19 year olds will also be altered by the number of 15-19 year olds attending non-government schools and by different school starting ages across the States and Territories.

Figure 5.4: Apparent retention rates[1], government schools, Australia 1982–1994, (per cent)



Source: Information provided by DEET based on the National Schools Statistics Collection, 1994.

Note: 1 Percentage of students who continued to Year 12 from their cohort group at the commencement of secondary schooling. Care should be taken in interpreting apparent retention rates as they are impacted on by migration to, and emigration from, government schools, by students that repeat years and by the economic situation at the time.

Expanding role of government schools in the provision of vocational education and training

One clear example of the changing roles of government schools is their increased involvement in the delivery of vocational education and training (VET). This expansion has been directed in part at making the post-compulsory years more tailored to the needs of students. Under the Australian Vocational Training System, school students are increasingly taking part in, and being accredited for, vocational education provided by schools.

This trend reflects increasing flexibility in the delivery of VET (see Chapter 6). A study of the linkages of schools and the VET system is currently underway under the auspices of MCEETYA. As VET becomes a more significant part of school activity, there may be a need for the performance indicator framework to address this area, particularly with regard to the Finn Targets for youth participation in education and training.[5]

[5] Targets for youth participation in post-compulsory education and training from the 1991 "Finn Report" are discussed in Chapter 6, 'Vocational Education and Training'.

Convergence of States' and Territories' curricula

Each State and Territory has sole constitutional responsibility for the development of its government school curriculum. Components of the curriculum in each State and Territory have been tailored to reflect their particular needs and priorities.

There has been, however, some convergence of government school curricula across Australia in recent years through the development of national profiles in key learning areas (KLAs — see Table 5.2) which aimed to provide a common framework for reporting student progress. Most jurisdictions have adopted the broad profile framework, or variants of it, although in many cases the content has been augmented to reflect varying priorities and needs.[6]

The convergence of curricula across the nation, together with the implementation of statewide standard testing programs (discussed below) present a new opportunity for developing comparable information on learning outcomes.

Development of system-wide, standard assessment of learning outcomes

Nearly all States and Territories have implemented, or are implementing, system-wide assessments using uniform instruments to provide an indication of overall success in key learning areas (see Box 5.1).

Box 5.1: Outcomes reporting in Australia

NSW	Basic Skills Test (BST)	Yrs 3,6 (1989 – 1994) , Yrs 3,5 (1994 – 1995)
Vic	Learning Assessment Project (LAP)	Yrs 3, 5 (1995)
Qld	Assessment of Performance Program (APP)	Yrs 5,7,9 (1987 – 1994)
WA	Monitoring Standards in Education (MSE)	Yrs 3,7,10 (1990 – 1995)
SA	Basic Skills Test (BST)	Yrs 3,5 (1995)
Tas	10R & 10N, 14R & 14N tests	10 and 14 yr olds (1976– 1993)
NT	Multi-level Assessment Program (MAP)	Yrs 5,7 (1990 – 1993)
ACT	No standard testing of outcomes	

Apart from the tests in Tasmania, which have been in place since the mid-1970's, these testing programs have generally been in operation for around five years or less. All systems except for the ACT test students in at least two different year levels (for example, Years 3 and 5), in reading and aspects of mathematics. Other parts of the English curriculum and aspects of science and

[6] NSW no longer incorporates National Profiles into its curriculum.

'studies of society and environment' achievements have also been collected in some systems.

Results of these tests are generally recorded against standard reporting frameworks. These frameworks are broken down into separate levels of knowledge, skills and understanding — learning outcomes. Students are placed within a particular level based on their performance in the test.

Where there are links between tests over time, improvements at the individual student level may be measured by comparing the levels achieved in different tests over time. Performance at the system level may be measured in terms of changes in the proportion of students reaching higher levels in subsequent tests. Learning outcomes are discussed in more detail in Section 5.4.

Changing balance of responsibilities for delivery of school services

There has been a devolution of some responsibilities from central authorities to the school level in most systems. Often this has taken the form of giving schools (and school councils) greater responsibility for non-salary budgets and a corresponding increase of accountability through formal school review processes. These organisational changes in the delivery of school services affect the balance of responsibility, and focus of accountability, for the effectiveness and efficiency of school services.

5.3 Framework of performance indicators

Assessing the performance of school systems is a complex and difficult task. The difficulties are threefold. First, reaching a consensus on the specific objectives of school education; second, selecting and precisely defining indicators that address these objectives; and third, allowing for differences in the environment within which school services are delivered when making comparisons between systems. These difficulties mean that the performance indicator data presented in this chapter need to be interpreted with care.

Objectives of schooling

At the broad level, a statement of the objectives of schooling in Australia was prepared and agreed to by the Australian Education Council (now MCEETYA) in 1989. The statement is reproduced in the main in Box 5.2. In the absence of a more recent articulation of the agreed objectives for schools in Australia, the goals encompassed in them form the basis for the preliminary framework of indicators developed by the Steering Committee for assessing school system performance.

Box 5.2: Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia

The following ten goals for schooling form the basis for co-operation and collaboration between schools, States and Territories and the Commonwealth. They are intended as a set of general objectives, which will assist each school and each system in the development of specific objectives and strategies, including objectives and strategies in the areas of curriculum and assessment. The goals have been agreed by Education Ministers to guide their co-operative effort in enhancing schooling in Australia. Ministers look forward to future development and refinement of these goals in response to the changing needs of the community. The goals will be reviewed from time to time by the Australian Education Council (now MCEETYA), using consultative processes involving both government and non-government schools, parents, teachers and the community.

GOALS FOR SCHOOLING IN AUSTRALIA

1 To provide an excellent education for all young people, being one which develops their talents and capacities to full potential, and is relevant to the social, cultural and economic needs of the nation.

2 To enable all students to achieve high standards of learning and to develop self-confidence, optimism, high self-esteem, respect for others, and achievement of personal excellence.

3 To promote equality of educational opportunities, and to provide for groups with special learning requirements.

4 To respond to the current and emerging economic and social needs of the nation, and to provide those skills which allow students to maximise flexibility and adaptability in their future employment and other aspects of life.

5 To provide a foundation for further education and training, in terms of knowledge and skills, respect for learning and positive attitudes to life-long education.

6 To develop in students:

a) the skills of English literacy, including skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing;

b) skills of numeracy, and other mathematical skills;

c) skills of analysis and problem solving;

d) skills of information processing and computing;

e) an understanding of the role of science and technology in society, together with scientific and technological skills;

f) a knowledge and appreciation of Australia's historical and geographic context;

g) a knowledge of languages other than English;

h) an appreciation and understanding of, and confidence to participate in, the creative arts;

i) an understanding of, and concern for, balanced development and the global environment; and

j) a capacity to exercise judgement in matters of morality, ethics and social justice.

7 To develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which will enable students to participate as active and informed citizens in our democratic Australian society within an international context.

8 To provide an understanding and respect for our cultural heritage, including the particular cultural background of Aboriginal and ethnic groups.

9 To provide for the physical development and personal health and fitness of students, and for the creative use of leisure time.

10 To provide appropriate career education and knowledge of the world of work, including an understanding of the nature and place of work in our society. (AEC 1989, p. iii)

These objectives are by necessity stated in very broad terms, and in some cases it is difficult to separate them from those pursued by society as a whole. For example, the degree to which Australian youth "... respect ... the cultural background of Aboriginal and ethnic groups" (objective number 8) reflects a range of societal influences beyond the classroom.

Nevertheless, these objectives indicate the wider roles which governments are demanding of school systems in addition to the cognitive activities of core curricula. Generally, the ten objectives fall into the following main categories which are not mutually exclusive:

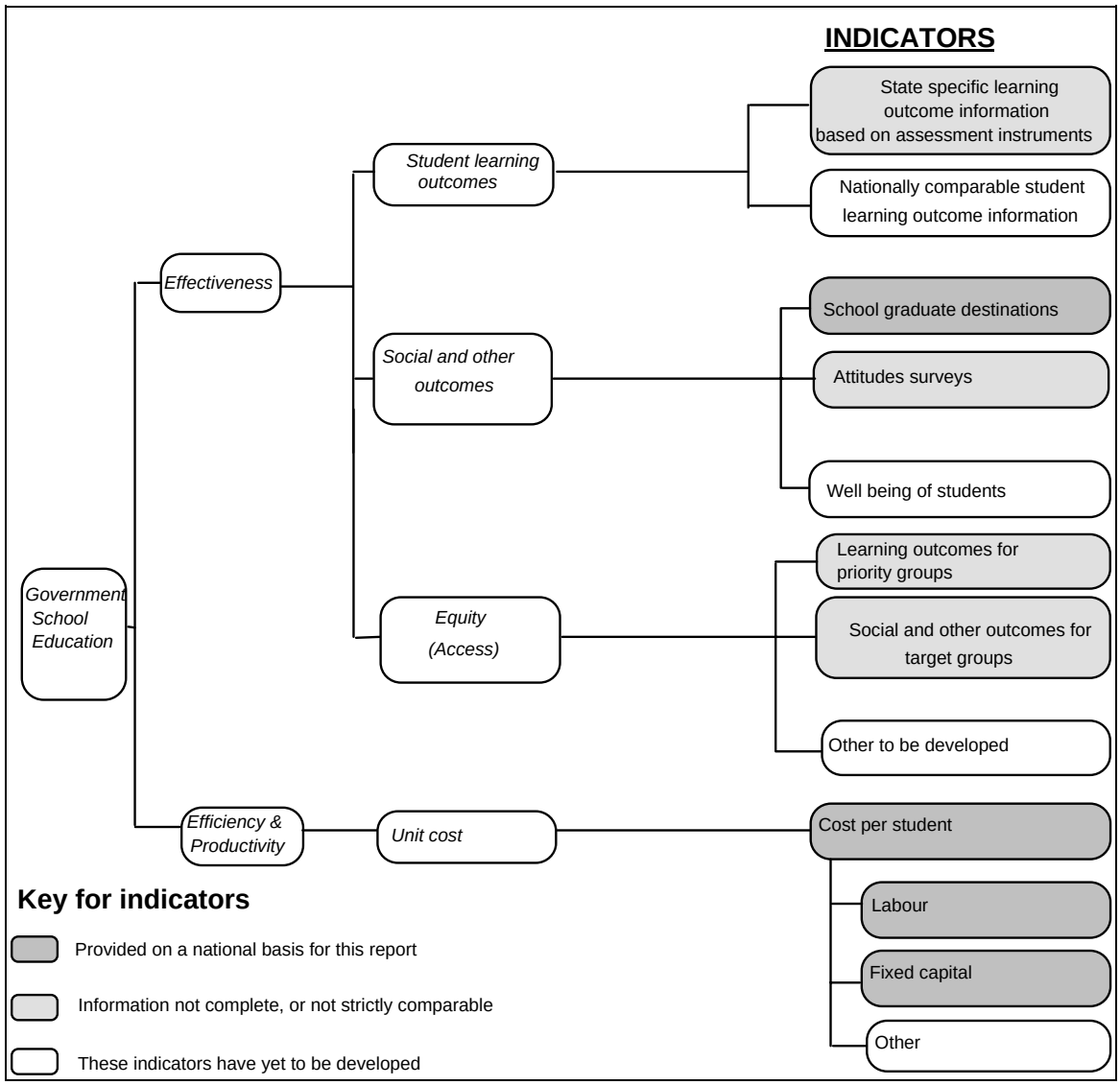
- **"Student learning" objectives**: developing students' knowledge, skills and understanding in key learning areas;
- **"Social and other" objectives**: emphasising the role of schooling in relation to student experiences at school, pathways through life, and social responsibility; and
- **"Equity" objectives**: promoting equality of educational opportunities and providing for groups with special learning requirements.

These themes of learning, social and other, and equity objectives provide a basis from which to develop a framework of performance indicators to address the effectiveness of school systems.

A preliminary framework of effectiveness and efficiency indicators for government school systems is presented in Figure 5.5. There are clearly linkages and overlap between the three themes in effectiveness, particularly between learning and social objectives.

This preliminary framework requires more work to develop an appropriate set of indicators for school systems. For example, social outcomes need to be more clearly linked with learning outcomes, and the indicators for social and other objectives need to be further defined.

Figure 5.5: Preliminary framework of indicators for government schools



Notwithstanding the preliminary nature of the framework, it provides a broad guide to where information is currently available and to where further work is required. The information that is available is presented below, and the action required to flesh out the framework is discussed in 'Future directions' (Section 5.5). The indicators, and the variables that comprise them, are defined in Section 5.7.

5.4 Summary of results

Student learning outcomes

Student learning outcomes are assessed by teachers in classrooms on an ongoing basis. In addition, standard testing instruments are used to supplement this information. Standard tests are particularly suited to system-wide assessments of student learning outcomes. Unlike teacher assessments their statistical validity is not affected by the unknown differences in the way teachers across the system approach the task of assessment.

Standard tests, however, are clearly not without limitations. As a basis for making comparisons, either over time or between systems at one point in time, they are limited by varying results due to varying efforts by teachers to "teach to the test" rather than the wider curriculum; the inability of standard tests to cater for the different cultural or ethnic backgrounds of students; and, in some cases, the limited range of learning outcomes addressed. In addition, tests may not be able to measure performance in all of the broader constructs of a particular learning area.

Some of these problems are being addressed to some extent through the development by the school systems of more sophisticated standard assessment instruments, including the incorporation of assessments based on portfolios of student work.

Factors outside of the control of schools such as social norms, general economic influences, and the fact that not all students start from the same base level will also impact on learning outcomes.

The results of standard outcomes testing in each State and Territory are reported in this chapter. In some cases, additional data are presented in the State and Territory-specific sections in the second part of this chapter (see Section 5.6).

This student learning outcome information is not comparable between jurisdictions and there is currently no means by which the level of outcomes in one system can be compared with the level of outcomes in another. Action required to enhance comparability is discussed in Section 5.5.

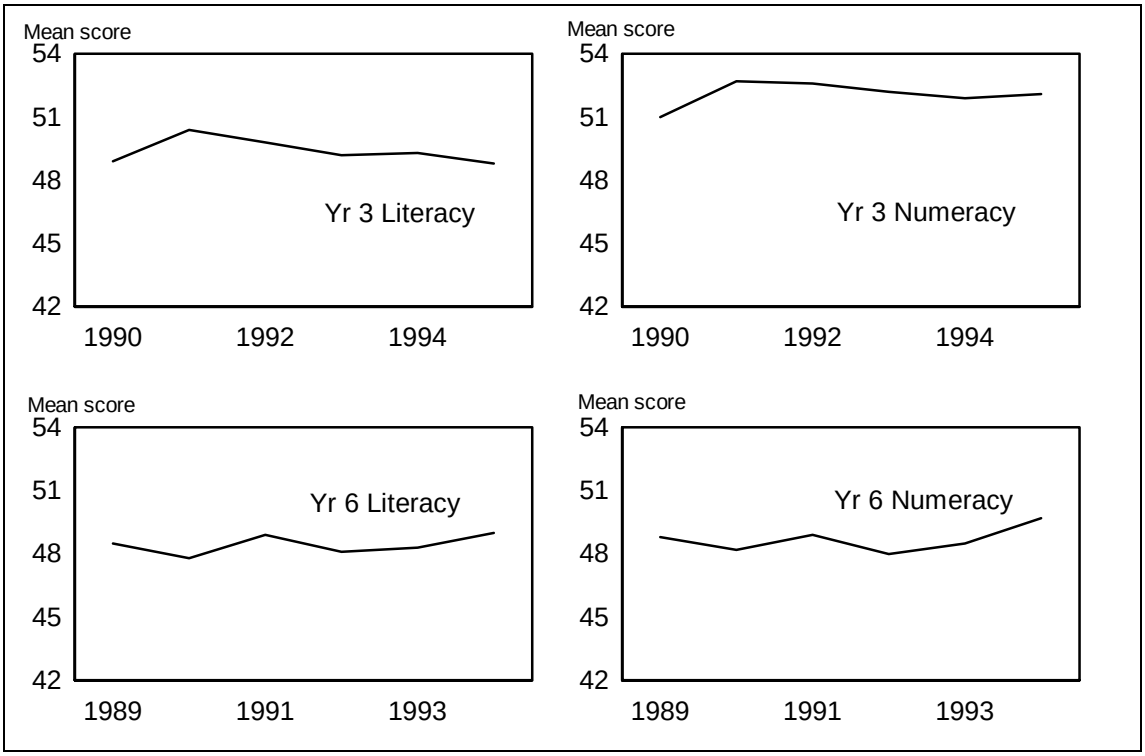
Based on the testing that has been completed around Australia, learning outcomes within each State and Territory system appear to have remained stable, with some slight improvements for some specific groups or subject areas.

NSW (Basic Skills Test (BST))

The NSW Basic Skills Test (BST) is an annual census testing program designed to measure Year 3, 5 and 6 student achievement in literacy and numeracy. Students' achievements are grouped into skill band levels, with Band 1 being the lowest level of skill and knowledge, and Band 4 the highest.

Figure 5.6 shows trend data for the BST for all NSW Year 3 and Year 6 in literacy and numeracy. Comparisons between subjects and Year levels should not be made.

Figure 5.6: NSW BST, Years 3 and 6, Literacy and Numeracy, 1989 to 1995, (mean test score[1])



Note: 1 BST results are presented as a mean score on a 25 to 65 scale. The scales used for Year 3 and Year 6 for literacy and numeracy are separate and comparisons should not be made between the scales.

Over the past five years the mean NSW government school BST scores in literacy and numeracy have remained relatively stable with improvements in some sub-groups. Outcomes broken down by student groups are presented in Section 5.6. More than half of the students in Years 3 and 6 are achieving results at the higher end of the scale.

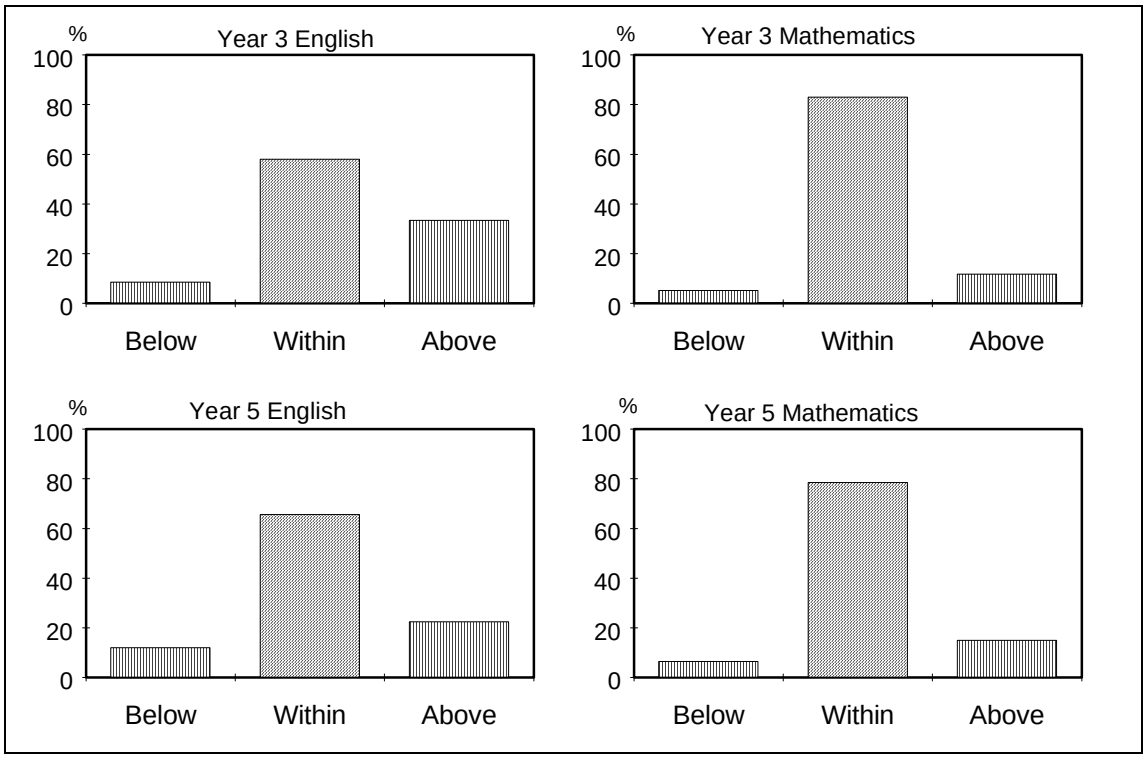
Victoria (Learning Assessment Project (LAP))

Victoria recently implemented the Learning Assessment Project, testing all students in Years 3 and 5 in English and mathematics. The assessments were based on the expected range for students identified in the Curriculum and Standards Framework (CSF).

Results at the system level shown for 1994 in Figure 5.7 indicate that:

- overall 90 per cent of students in Years 3 and 5 were achieving within or above the range identified as appropriate for their level;
- in English at Year 3 approximately 3 out of 10 students were performing at levels beyond their grade. In Year 5 the rate is 2 out of ten;
- in mathematics 14 per cent of Year 5 students were performing at a level expected of Year 7 students; and
- girls were performing better than boys in English at both year levels, and had similar levels of achievement in mathematics.

Figure 5.7: Victorian LAP, Years 3 and 5, English and Mathematics, 1995 (per cent below/ within/ above appropriate CSF range[1])



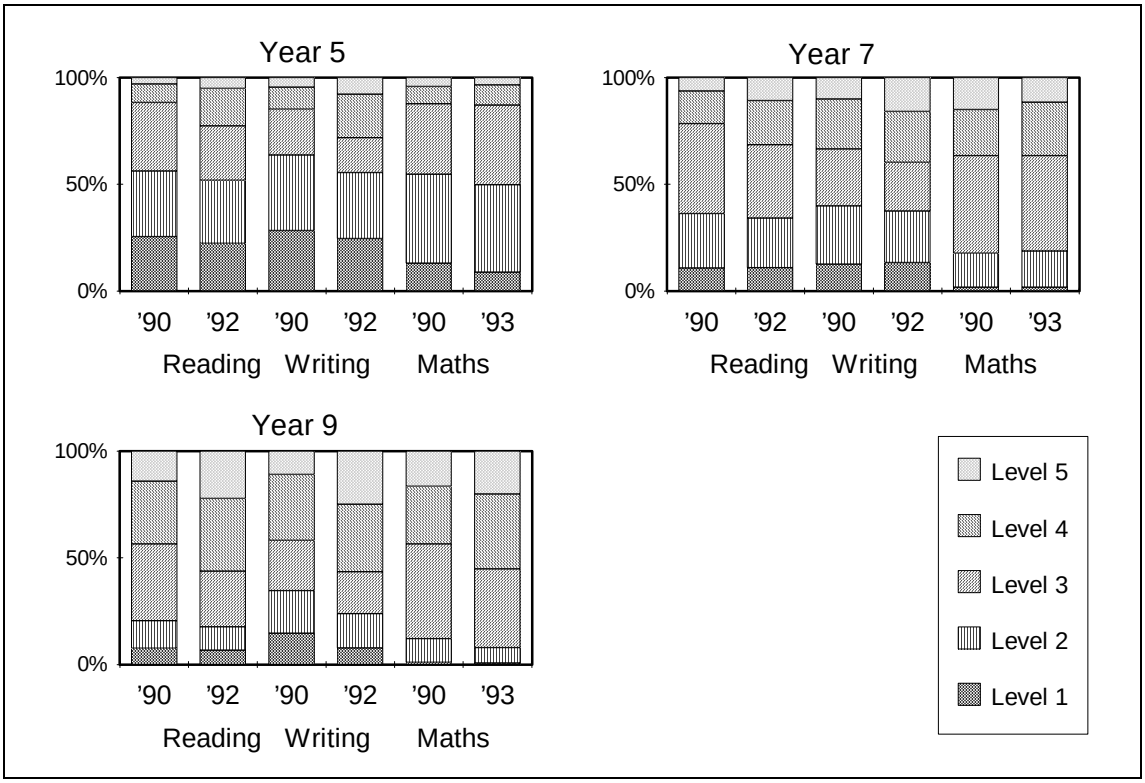
Note: 1 Shows the percentage of students that are achieving below, within, or above the range identified as appropriate for their level in the Curriculum and Standards Framework .

Queensland (Assessment of Performance Program (APP))

The APP is based on a sample of Years 5, 7 and 9 and has measured student outcomes in aspects of key learning areas since 1990. Data are reported on a scale of increasing skill and knowledge from Level 1 to Level 5. The percentages of students that achieved particular levels are presented in Figure 5.8.

The results of the APP show that a larger proportion of students achieved higher levels in Years 5, 7 and 9 in reading and writing between 1990 and 1992, and in Years 5 and 9 in mathematics between 1990 and 1993. At the same time there was a very slight fall in performance in mathematics for Year 7.

Figure 5.8: Queensland APP, Years 5, 7 and 9, Reading, Writing and Mathematics, 1990 and 1992–1993 (per cent of students achieving level[1])



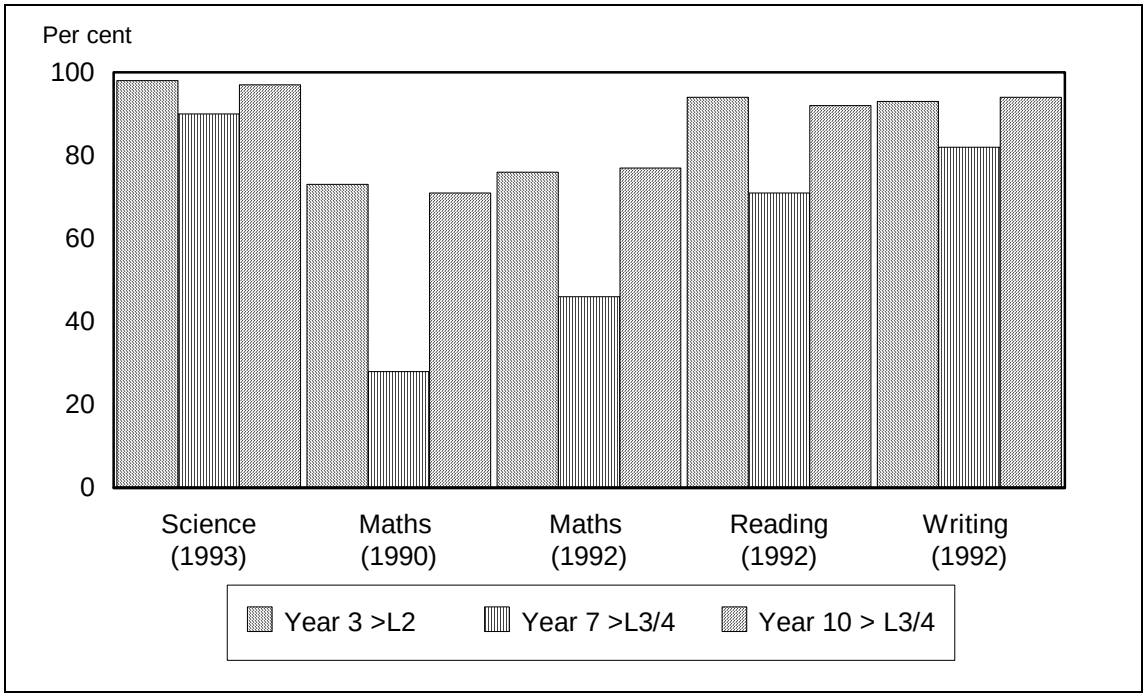
Note: 1 Student performance is shown on a scale representing a learning continuum divided into levels of increasing skills and knowledge, increasing from Level 1 to Level 5. The scale is described in terms of the kind of skills/processes/knowledge/ that characteristically typify the different levels. Student performance is discussed in relation to the scale levels.

In the 1994 APP for science process skills and science concepts, 64 per cent of Year 5 students, over 81 per cent of Year 7 students, and over 94 per cent of Year 10 students performed in the top three levels of a five level skill scale. The program also monitored changes in performance for Years 5 and 7 students since 1987. Median performance was generally unchanged except for a slight decrease for Year 5 science process skills. However, there was more variability in performance in 1994, with greater proportions of students performing at the higher and lower levels of the scale.

Western Australia (Monitoring Standards in Education (MSE))

Since 1990, the WA Monitoring Standards in Education (MSE) Project has tested performance in a range of curriculum areas for a sample of students in Years 3, 7 and 10. The standards are set by reference to descriptions of expected student performance expressed in Levels, with particular Levels specified for Year groups in each subject. Figure 5.9 shows the percentage of students that achieved at a level equal to or greater than the specified level in each subject. Comparisons between subjects should not be made.

Figure 5.9: WA MSE, Years 3,7 and 10, various subjects, 1990, 1992, 1993 (per cent of students achieving at or above the specified level[1])



Note: 1 For science the specified levels are Level 2 for Year 3 and Level 3 for Year 7 and Year 10. For reading, mathematics and writing the specified levels are Level 2 for Year 3 and Level 4 for Year 7 and Year 10.

The majority of students meet or exceed the established standards. Where a time series is available for mathematics there are slight improvements in performance for 1990 to 1992 for Year 3 and Year 10 students. There is a significant improvement for Year 7 students.

Table 5.1 shows the proportion of Year 10 students who reached a benchmark Unit Curriculum stage in English and mathematics. Both English and mathematics levels appear to be relatively stable, although English and mathematics fell slightly between 1990 to 1993.

Table 5.1: WA Year 10, 1988 to 1994 (% of students to pass Stage 4 or higher in English, and Stage 3 or higher in mathematics)

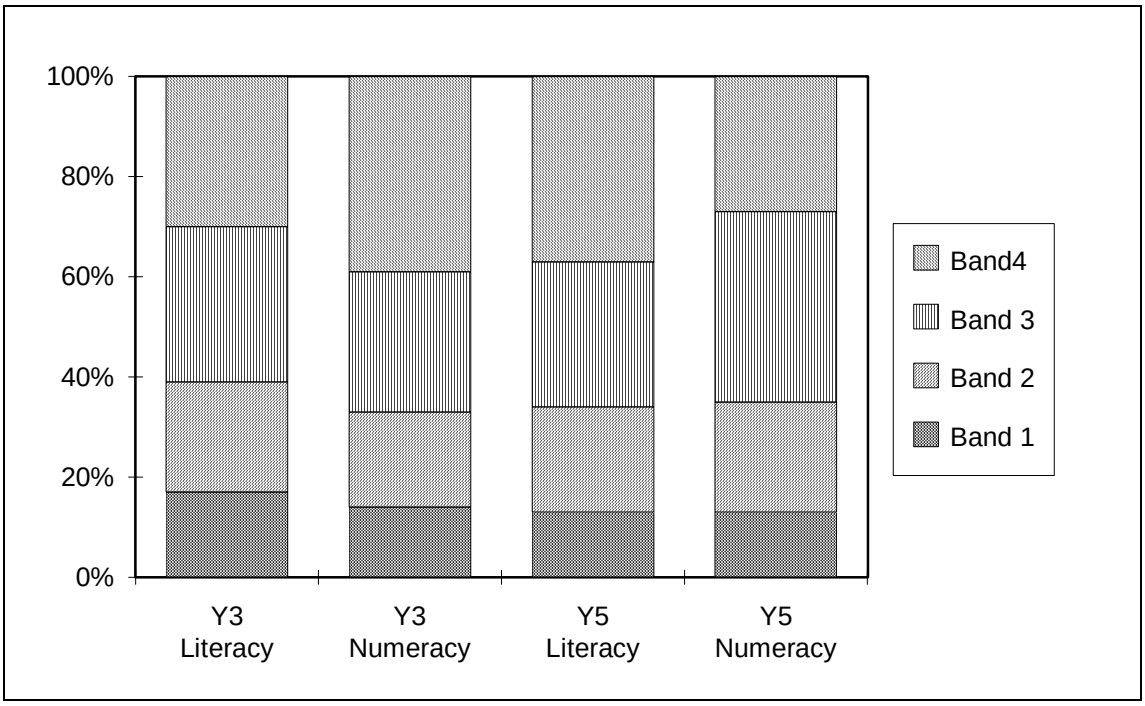
Year	*English*	*Mathematics*
1988	94.3	92.5
1989	95.8	94.2
1990	95.8	94.1
1991	95.0	92.7
1992	94.7	92.6
1993	93.7	92.5
1994	92.5	90.6

South Australia (Basic Skills Test (BST))

In 1995 the initial testing of aspects of literacy and numeracy in Years 3 and 5 was conducted using the Basic Skills Test jointly developed by NSW and SA. Trial collections of learning outcomes in the form of profiles level within key learning areas were also commenced in 1995.

The aggregated data indicate that at Years 3 and 5 the literacy score for girls is higher than boys but that the numeracy scores for boys and girls are very similar. Skill band 4 is the highest band.

Figure 5.10: SA BST, Years 3 and 5, literacy and numeracy, 1995 (per cent of students in skills band)

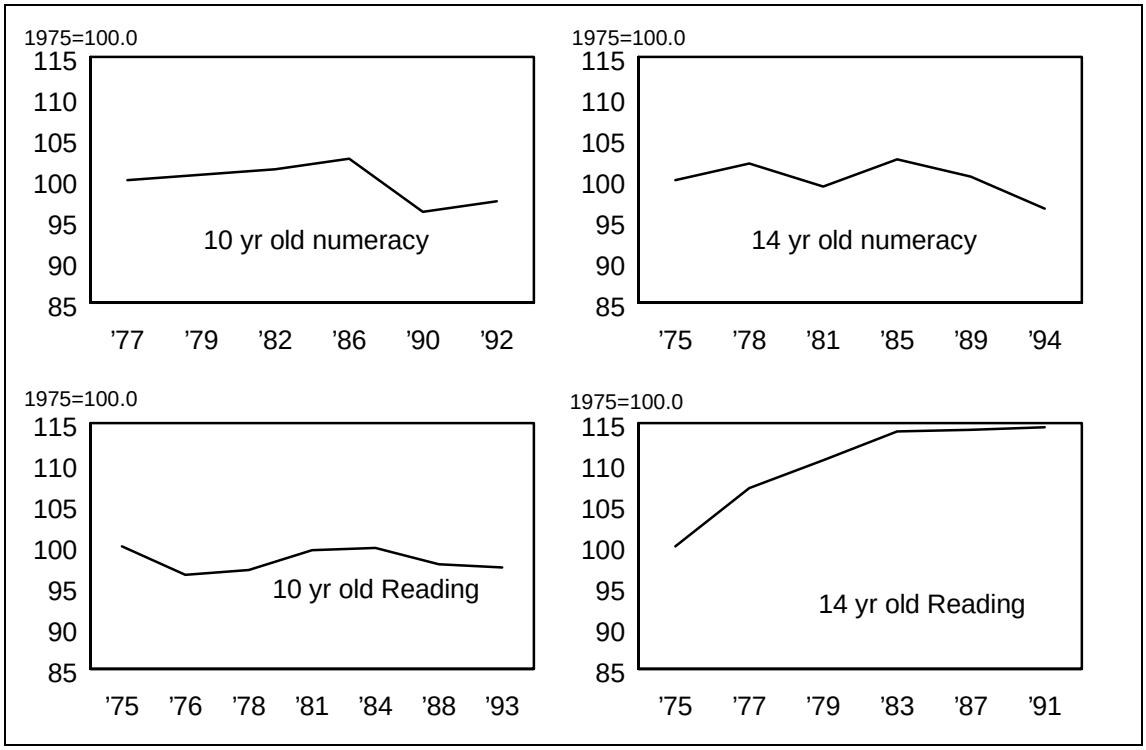


Tasmania (Reading and Numeracy tests)

Tasmania has the longest data series of any State or Territory that is able to show changes in learning outcomes over time. A rolling program of standardised tests of reading and numeracy skills has been administered to 10 year olds and 14 year olds for the last 20 years. There was a decline on the test of 14 year old numeracy skills from 1989 to 1994, and an improvement in the performance of 14 year olds on basic reading skills since 1975.

For 10 year olds' numeracy tests there was relative stability between 1977 to 1986, followed by a decline in 1990. The rise in 1992 was not statistically significant. For 10 year olds' reading tests there has been a decline in performance since the 1984 test. The results of these tests are shown in Figure 5.11.

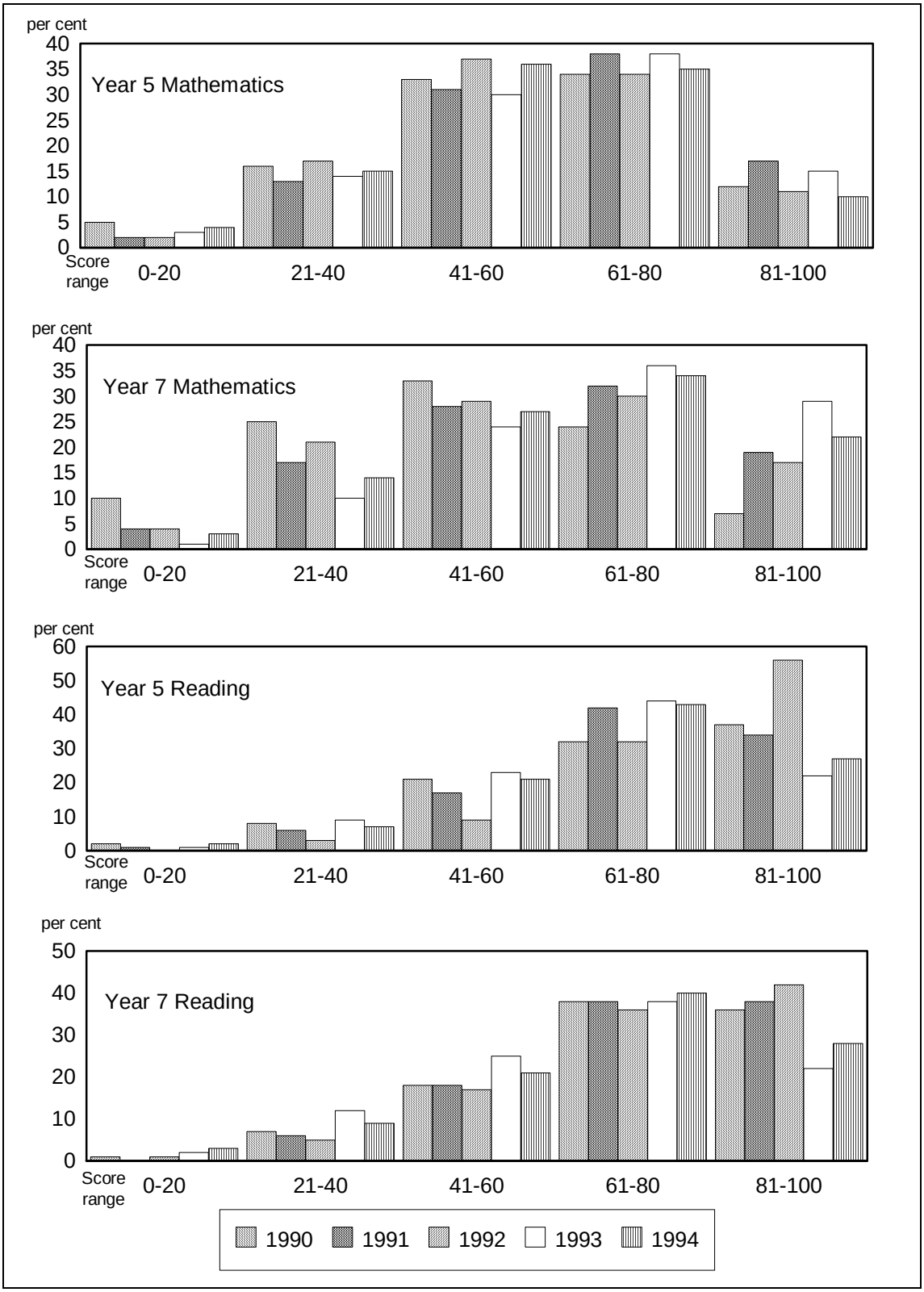
Figure 5.11: Tasmania, 10 year and 14 year old Reading and Numeracy tests, 1975 to 1994 (mean scores – index)



Northern Territory (Multi-level Assessment Program (MAP))

The NT Department of Education collects system-wide data on student achievement in reading and mathematics for Years 5 and 7 under the Multi-level Assessment Program (MAP) (see Figure 5.12).

Figure 5.12: NT MAP, Years 5 and 7, mathematics and reading, urban non-ATSI students, 1990 to 1994 (proportion achieving in per cent range)



The results of the tests for the urban population show that mathematics performance improved each year for Year 5 and Year 7 students between 1990 and 1994, except between 1991 and 1992 where Year 7 performance did not change. Reading performance in Year 5 improved between 1991 and 1992, while there was a decline in the reading performance in both Years 5 and 7 between 1992 and 1993. The 1994 tests indicate an improvement in reading for Years 5 and 7.

Results for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students show that whilst significant numbers of urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students scored in the higher ranges, there were relatively high proportions of Aboriginal students who were in the lower range of scores.

Australian Capital Territory

No standard outcomes testing is undertaken in the ACT. The unadjusted grade distributions for Year 12 for 1992 to 1994 in key learning areas are reported in Section 5.6.

Equity Objectives

The third goal of the Common and Agreed National Goals is to "promote equality of educational opportunities, and to provide for groups with special learning requirements" (see Box 5.3). This is clearly a multi-dimensional objective and further work is required to determine how performance against it can best be measured (see Section 5.5).

One partial approach is to measure the student learning and other outcomes achieved by target groups compared with the rest of the student body. While this may highlight whether there is a systematic difference in outcomes, it does not provide insight into the "value added" by school systems: that is, it does not indicate how large the overall differences in outcomes between target groups and other students might have been in the absence of special efforts by school systems. One way to incorporate this approach is to monitor the outcomes achieved by cohorts of students through the school system. Clearly, however, these data will only be available once adequate system-wide performance monitoring has been in place for some time.

The information below provides an indication of how outcomes for some priority groups compare with student outcomes for the whole population. It is limited to outcomes for a subset of the priority groups identified above since outcome information is currently not available for all target groups.

Ideally, the whole range of student outcomes identified in this report and for future development would be reported for all groups of students that face educational disadvantage.

Box 5.3: Priority student groups under the National Strategy for Equity in Schooling

Under the National Strategy for Equity in Schooling, six categories of students are identified as being:

> Groups whose participation and range of educational outcomes are currently significantly lower than those for the population as a whole, and who require additional support and resources to improve their educational outcomes. They are:
>
> - Students with disability, difficulties in learning and/or emotional behavioural disorders;
> - Students at risk of dropping out of school;
> - Students from low socio-economic backgrounds or living in poverty;
> - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
> - Students from non-English speaking backgrounds who need English as a second language (ESL) assistance;
> - Students who are geographically isolated (MCEETYA 1994).

These groups are not mutually exclusive. Work is currently underway under the auspices of MCEETYA and DEET to develop common definitions for the above groups. For example, MCEETYA is working on a common definition for non-English speaking background students, and DEET has commissioned a study to recommend an appropriate approach to defining and measuring the socio-economic status of school students. These issues remain to be resolved.

Learning outcomes

Only limited student learning outcomes information is currently available for target groups. Where information on learning outcomes is disaggregated, this is most often for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, although some information is also available for NESB students and students from a relatively low socio-economic background.

Information on learning outcomes for NESB and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in WA and NSW, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland and the NT, and low socio-economic status (SES) students in Tasmania suggests that learning outcomes for these groups are generally lower than for the general population of students. In particular, the information provided indicated that:

- in NSW, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' scores were consistently below the State mean averages with some slight improvements in numeracy. The sub-group of NESB students performed at close to or above the state mean averages for numeracy in recent years, and there were some improvements in literacy scores;

- in Queensland, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students scoring in higher achievement bands was consistently lower than for the total population across a number of subjects. In Year 12 English in 1994, 41 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieved a "sound" or higher level of achievement, compared with 84 per cent overall. For mathematics I, the corresponding levels were 22 and 63 per cent, respectively;
- in WA the results show that, relative to the whole student population, a lower percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieved at or above a given level in all Year levels (Years 3, 5 and 10) for the subjects tested. The percentages of NESB students achieving a given level was also lower than for the general population, but higher than for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
- in the NT, lower proportions of urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieved in the higher score range bands than of non-urban non-Aboriginal students in Years 5 and 7 for reading and mathematics; and
- in Tasmania, reading and numeracy tests of 10 year olds and 14 year olds showed that the mean scores of schools with intakes from lower SES neighbourhoods were lower than those of schools located in higher SES neighbourhoods.

Apparent retention rates

In the absence of more relevant information on target group outcomes, a means of comparing the outcomes of those groups is to compare their retention rates relative to the population as a whole. Clearly this is not a proxy for learning outcomes; average learning outcomes may actually fall as the result of an increase in the retention of students who are not academically inclined or motivated. It does, however, provide an indication of the relative progress of priority groups through schools systems. At present, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are the only priority group for whom retention rates are reported.

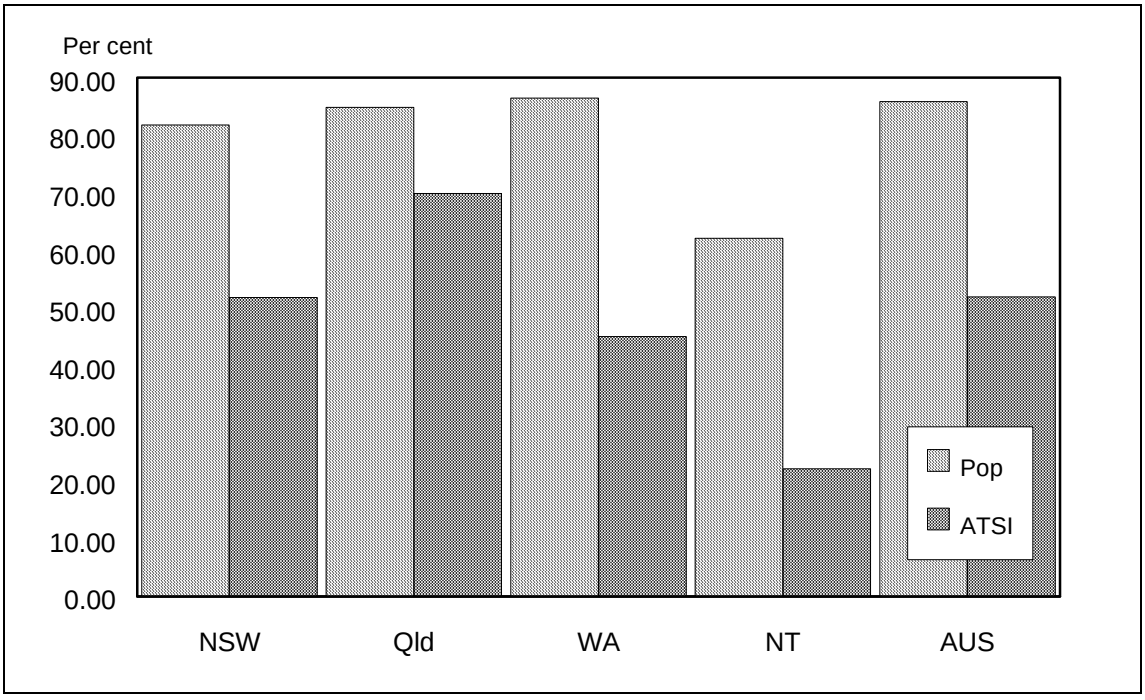
Notwithstanding concerns about the cultural relevance of retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, an examination of the gap between retention for those students and for the population as a whole provides an indication of the different patterns of retention across Australia.

Although there are some limitations of these data, retention rates of Aboriginal and Strait Islander students to Years 10, 11, and 12 show a clear trend of increasing retention rates across Australia. This is in line with the increase in retention rates for the population as a whole.

Australia-wide, apparent retention for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to Year 12 has increased from 21 per cent in 1991, to between 25 per cent and 33 per cent in 1993[7]. There has been a greater increase in retention to Year 11, from 42 per cent to 52 per cent, with retention to Year 10 remaining relatively stable at around 80 per cent. Retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are consistently lower than for student populations as a whole.

There are concerns about the reliability of data in the States and Territories with a relatively low share of the population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Figure 5.13 shows retention rates to Year 11 in 1993 for NSW, Qld, WA, and the NT (these jurisdictions account for over 85 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students) and Australia.

Figure 5.13: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student apparent retention to Year 11[1], selected jurisdictions[2], 1993 (per cent)



Source: MCEETYA 1993, Table 10 (C) and information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years.

Notes: 1 Along with qualifications presented under Figure 5.4, ATSI retention rates are impacted on by an increased willingness of people to identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and by the low base populations of ATSI people in Victoria, SA, Tasmania and the ACT.

2 This section focuses on NSW, Queensland, WA and the NT, which together account for over 85 per cent of ATSI students in Australia. Higher base populations in these States and Territories reduces the potential for immigration, emigration, and the repeating of ATSI students to significantly influence apparent retention figures.

[7] Apparent retention in 1993 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people was 25 per cent Australia-wide (excluding Queensland) and 33 per cent including Queensland (Queensland's retention was estimated at 51.3 per cent in 1993).

The difference between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and total population apparent retention rates was greatest in WA and the NT at around 40 percentage points, and least in Queensland at 15 percentage points in 1993. Between 1991 and 1993 this gap narrowed slightly in WA and remained constant in NSW, but widened in the NT due to a fall there in the apparent retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students between 1991 and 1993.

Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live in remote communities where Australian mainstream education is often marginally relevant to Aboriginal cultural values and learning styles and where access to education is difficult. In particular, in recent years both WA and the NT have extended services to students in remote and homeland centres. This has had the effect of increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students counted in enrolments without a commensurate increase in educational outcomes. Over time, this effect will diminish to the extent that these students achieve higher levels of participation.

Social and other objectives

Social and other objectives emphasise the role of schooling in relation to student experiences in school, pathways through life, and social responsibility. These are encompassed in the Common and Agreed National Goals and can be broadly categorised as those that relate to:

- attitudes of students;
- well being of students;
- preparation of students for participation in the workforce;
- preparation of students for further education and life long learning; and
- preparation of students for social responsibility through active citizenship.

In acknowledging the importance of social and other objectives recognition needs to be given to how they are inextricably linked to student learning outcomes.

The nationally developed profiles articulate and encompass many learning outcomes which contribute to the social and other objectives. Social objectives are generally achieved through the inter-relationship of specific learning outcomes and interactions between individuals and learning outcomes.

This is a difficult area in which to measure school system performance for three main reasons:

- the broad nature of the objectives, such as to “develop in students the capacity to exercise judgement in matters of morality ...”, makes it difficult to identify specific outcomes. There is no one single set of social values and objectives that would meet the needs of every community in Australia;

- the extent to which factors outside the control of schools influence students, such as economic factors and social norms, must be taken into account when measuring outcomes just as they are when considering other learning outcomes; and,
- many of the social objectives sought by schools will not become apparent in the behaviour of students until they are adults.

Although there are variations in expectations across different education communities, surveys of student attitudes, and the workplace and education destinations of school graduates, can provide some insight into the performance of systems in meeting these objectives. Some care must be taken in attributing changes in these areas to school system performance and further effort is required in this area. This is discussed in 'Future directions' Section 5.5.

Attitudes

Some surveys of students have been completed by ACER and are reported in further detail for Queensland, Victoria and NSW in Section 5.6. The information is not comparable between jurisdictions, and is somewhat dated for Victorian secondary schools. These ACER studies showed that:

- in Victorian secondary schools (1986) and primary schools (1990), a large majority of students responded positively to questions about the quality of school life, indicating a high general level of satisfaction. There was, however, a progressive decline in students' views on the relevance of school work, their achievement, and an increase in the negative aspects of schools from Years 7 to 12;
- NSW secondary students (1992) found that satisfaction with teacher-student relations, sense of status, and social integration improved between Years 9 and 12. The trend of a falling sense of relevance and achievement to Year 12 found in Victoria was reflected in NSW secondary schools; and
- Eighty four per cent of Queensland primary schools students agreed with positive statements about the quality of school life in 1994. Primary school was strongly perceived as being relevant to secondary school, but fewer students felt that their school was an adventurous place.

A general theme that emerges from these studies is that students on average have a high level of general satisfaction with school at the primary level, but that this tends to fall slightly as students continue through secondary school.

Transition from education to work

The destinations of government school leavers are influenced by a number of factors, and care should be taken in interpreting these figures. The recent growth in places for vocational education and training and in higher education, and the recent economic upturn will have impacted on school graduate destinations. Variations in economic conditions and unemployment rates between, and within, the States and Territories will also affect comparisons.

Nevertheless, student destinations are a starting point for examining how well school systems are addressing their higher education and workforce participation objectives. In May 1994, nearly 30 per cent of the students who left school in 1993 were employed, 47 per cent were in some form of tertiary education and training, and the remaining one-quarter were not employed.

The NT had the highest proportion of school leavers moving on to tertiary education and training at 66 per cent[8]. However, low retention rates in the NT would suggest that students in the NT are more likely to leave school prior to the end of Year 12 if they are not considering tertiary education or training.

The NT also had the lowest rate of school graduates who were not employed or in the labour force (11 per cent). This has declined from 19 per cent in 1991. In 1994 SA had the highest proportion of school graduates who were unemployed or not in the labour force (34 per cent), and the lowest proportion of graduates continuing on to tertiary education and training (35 per cent).

Efficiency

Information on expenditure and staffing levels per student is presented below. For a discussion of the measurement of efficiency, see Chapter 2.

A number of factors may impact on the resources needed by some systems to provide an equivalent service relative to other systems. It is therefore necessary to disaggregate efficiency measures to account for different operating environments. Differences in the composition of the student body can impact on cost and staffing levels and are discussed in the Contextual Information section below.

Expenditure per student

In line with the growth of expenditure (excluding superannuation) on school education in Australia, expenditure per student has grown on average by around 8 per cent between 1990–91 and 1993–94[9], with relatively more growth in per student secondary than primary expenditure. The make up of these costs can be divided into 'in-school' primary and secondary expenditure, and 'out of school' expenditure. Out of school expenditure includes expenditure on non-school administrative centres and staff who spend less than 50 per cent of their time in schools.

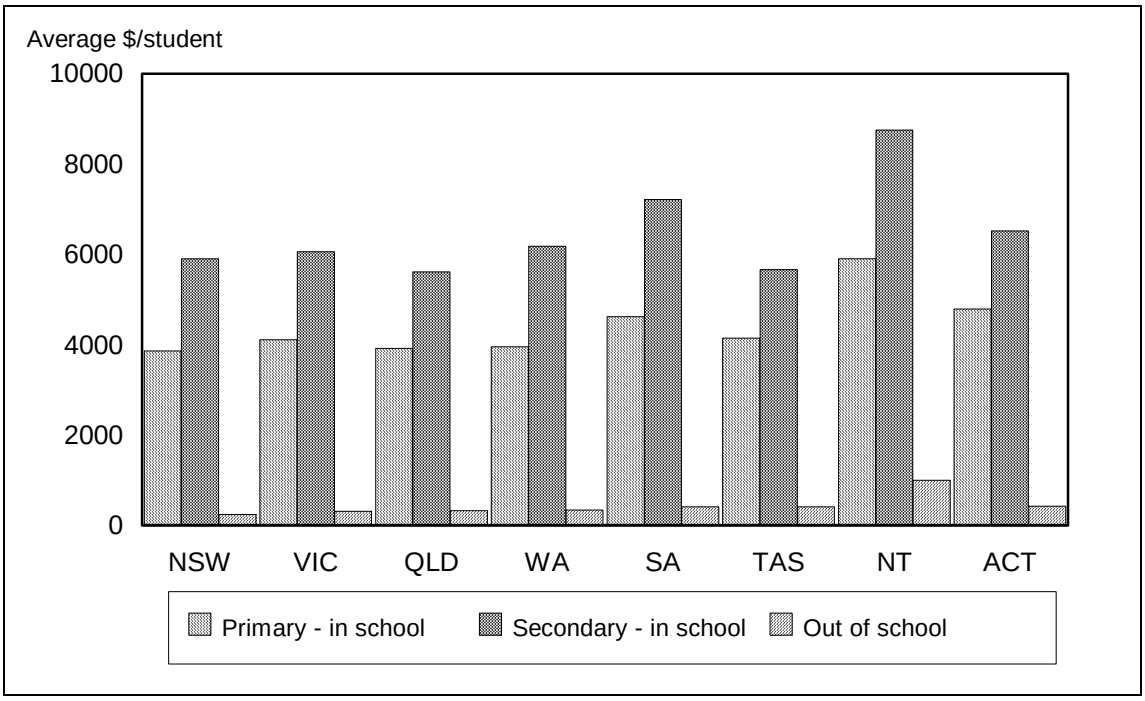
[8] Transition from education to work figures for the NT should be interpreted with care since they have a standard error greater than 25 per cent.

[9] Superannuation liabilities have been excluded in this instance because they are not available prior to 1992–93.

In 1993–94, the average Australia-wide expenditure[10] per primary and secondary student was over $5100. The average expenditure per student varied widely across jurisdictions, from over $4800 in (Queensland) to nearly $7700 (NT).

Average in-school primary expenditure per student ranged from nearly $3900 in NSW to around $5900 in the NT with a national average of just over $4000. The range of average in-school secondary expenditure was from $5600 (for Queensland) to $8800 (NT), with the national average of $6000 nearly 50 per cent higher than for primary students (Figure 5.14).

Figure 5.14: Average government school expenditure per student, by jurisdiction, 1993–1994 (dollars)



Source: Information provided by DEET based on the National Schools Statistics Collection, 1994.

In 1993–94, out of school expenditure per student averaged just over $300 across Australia, with the NT spending more than three times this amount,[11] and NSW the least at around $240.

[10] Expenditure figures for 1992–93 and 1993–94 in the text and Tables in Section 5.6 include estimated superannuation liability.

[11] The relatively high average costs in the NT reflect in part the lack of opportunity to achieve economies of scale due to small size, geographical dispersion, and demographic composition of the NT population.

Some States and Territories were able to disaggregate expenditure data and, although they are incomplete and not fully comparable, some results can be observed:

- average expenditure per student in the non-metropolitan schools was generally less than for metropolitan schools in Tasmania (except for primary schools) and SA, but higher in Victoria;
- average expenditure per student generally fell as school size increased, indicating the economies of scale in the provision of school education; and
- there was a pattern of higher average expenditure per student in primary and secondary schools classified as being relatively disadvantaged.

Students per full time equivalent (FTE) staff

Average student levels per FTE teacher do not accurately represent class sizes, but rather provide a general indication of the number of teachers within each segment of the school education system.

In 1994, the average number of primary students per teacher did not vary across jurisdictions significantly from the national average of 18[12]. The NT, with 15 primary students per teacher had the lowest number, although this figure includes the Aboriginal Assistant Teachers required as translators for the 21 different languages used in NT Aboriginal Remote Schools. If the Aboriginal Teachers are excluded the ratio is slightly below the national average at 17.7. NSW and WA had the highest number with 19 students per teacher.

The average number of secondary students per teacher lies between 11 (SA, the NT) and 13 (NSW, WA, TAS) with Victoria, Queensland and the ACT, 12.

The average number of primary students per non-teaching staff varied in 1994 from 47 in Queensland to 109 in Victoria. WA reflected the national average at 66 students per FTE of non-teaching staff.

The number of secondary students per non-teaching staff varied from 28 in the NT to 77 in Victoria. NSW followed at 61 with the remainder of States and Territories having between 53 (Queensland) and 42 (SA).

SA and Tasmania were the only two jurisdictions able to provide disaggregated staffing details for metropolitan and non-metropolitan schools (apart from the ACT – all metro, and the NT – all non-metro) and there were no significant differences in the staffing levels. The data are insufficient to draw definite conclusions, but would suggest that factors other than different staffing levels influence expenditure per student levels in the non-metropolitan regions of those States.

[12] Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Across SA, Tasmania, the ACT and the NT, the average number of students per teacher and non-teacher staff members rose consistently with school size, except for non-metropolitan secondary schools in the NT, where staff concentrations increased. The average number of students per teaching and non-teaching staff was generally lower for schools classified as being relatively disadvantaged.

Contextual information

The summary of results presented in this report need to be interpreted in the context of the differing environments within which school services are delivered across the nation and the different student populations they serve. Environmental factors include, for example, the population distribution and dispersion in each State and Territory. Student body populations vary significantly in terms of, for example, variations in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, students of a non-English speaking background, students with disabilities, and students from low socio-economic status families across jurisdictions.

Mix of students

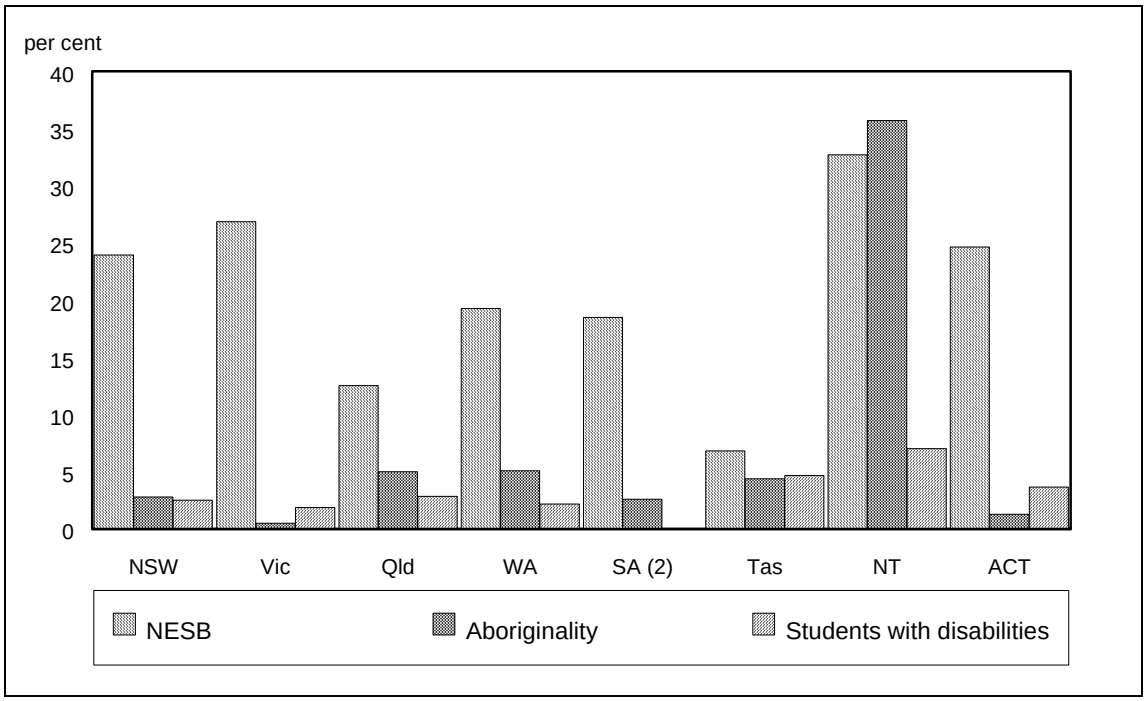
It is difficult to obtain a precise measure of the varying mix of students across school systems, particularly those identified as facing educational disadvantage (see Box 5.3). This is due mainly to a lack of common definitions for different types of students, although a number of definitions are currently being developed.

Common definitions for some priority groups have, however, been applied across the States and Territories as the basis for allocating some Commonwealth targeted funding. These definitions suffer from some inconsistencies since, for example, self reporting is relied on for the identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and there are different definitions of students with a disability across States and Territories. In addition, definitions for funding purposes may not necessarily be the most appropriate for reporting differences in student body mixes across Australia.

In the absence of more accurate information, however, the proportion of enrolments in government schools in each State and Territory that are targeted for assistance are presented in Figure 5.15. These figures are somewhat dated, and a number of the mechanisms for allocating funds are currently under review[13].

[13] For example, the means for allocating funds to Country Area students is under Review by DEET.

Figure 5.15: Proportion of government school enrolments in a target group[1], by jurisdiction, 1994 (per cent)



Source: Information provided by DEET based on National Equity Program for Schools, 1994.

Notes: 1 Definitions used by DEET to allocate National Equity Program for Schools funding. These apply to priority group students at government schools. NESB includes New Arrivals and General Support. Some definitions are under review.

2 Students with disabilities not reported for SA in 1994.

The NT has by far the highest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, as well as NESB students. There is likely to be significant overlap between these groups. NSW and Victoria also have relatively high proportions of NESB students making up the student body.

Some targeted assistance is based on the proportion of students from target groups in Australia that are in each State and Territory. This provides an indication of the relative assistance that each State and Territory receives from the Commonwealth for these target groups. There is likely to be some overlap between these groups.

NSW and Queensland each account for about a quarter of the national population identified as living in isolated or small communities[14], with Tasmania and the NT having less than 4 per cent each, and none in the ACT. This does not, however, account for the dispersion of populations which will also impact on the costs of service delivery. NSW receives the most funding on the basis of having students at risk of not completing Year 12, followed by Victoria and Queensland.

[14] Based on weighted population data from the 1976 census.

The NT has the highest proportion of government to total students (79 per cent) and the ACT (66 per cent) and Victoria (67 per cent) the lowest. The ACT had the highest proportion of senior secondary students (16 per cent) and the NT the lowest (8 percent), with a national average of 11 per cent.

Pattern of enrolments

Each State and Territory also has a different pattern of enrolments, which indicates different priorities and resource requirements within each system. Table 5.2 below shows the percentage of enrolments in each of the eight key learning areas in each system.

Table 5.2: Student Enrolment Index[1] by Key Learning Area, Year 12, by jurisdiction, 1994 (per cent)

	English	*Maths*	*Soc&Env*	*Science*	*Arts*	*LOTE*	*Technology*	*Health&PE*
NSW	18.2	19.8	25.2	14.8	5.9	3.2	9.4	3.6
VIC[2]	21.2	15.3	18.9	15.7	9.0	3.0	9.8	7.2
QLD	17.3	18.4	10.9	16.3	9.1	1.3	18.1	8.7
WA	18.6	17.6	13.1	16.9	5.9	1	16	10.7
SA	13.8	17.4	24.5	18.3	6.1	2.3	14.6	4.1
TAS[3]	15.3	10.5	29.4	17.2	6.7	2.2	12.3	4.6
NT	18.7	17.6	25.7	15.9	6.9	1.5	9.1	4.6
ACT[4]	23.2	19.7	19	14.9	4.9	3	10.2	5.1
AUS[5] 1994	**18.3**	**17.0**	**20.8**	**16.2**	**6.8**	**2.2**	**12.4**	**6.1**
Avge[6]1990	**18.6**	**18.8**	**25.9**	**18.4**	**6.6**	**2.6**	**6.7**	**2.5**

Sources: States and Territories, and DEET 1994, *Subject Choice in the 1990s*.

Notes: 1 Full year equivalent enrolments in each subject/total full year equivalent enrolments. May not add to 100 due to rounding.

2 Includes government and non-government schools.

3 1.8 % of enrolments were not classified into KLAs.

4 For Years 11 and 12 combined and including non-government schools.

5 Average of enrolment indices in each State and Territory.

6 Average of NSW, Victoria, Queensland, WA, SA in 1990 from DEET 1994.

The classification of subjects within KLAs may differ to some degree between States and Territories, but average figures for Australia show an increase in Health and Physical Education, and Technology enrolments between 1990 and 1994. Enrolments in English, Arts and Languages other than English (LOTE) have remained relatively stable, while they have fallen in Mathematics, Science, and Society and the Environment.

5.5 Future directions

There is a great deal of work left to do in the development of indicators and mechanisms to report on the performance of Australian government school systems on a comparable basis. Given the integral role of learning outcomes in school systems, effort needs to be initially focused on achieving national comparability between learning outcomes in each State and Territory. Improvements could be made by broadening the indicators to cover all objectives of schools and to ensure that outcomes are reported on a consistent basis across Australia.

Nationally comparable information on student learning outcomes

As stated above, student learning outcomes represent a major indicator of the effectiveness of school systems. The available indicators used to assess these outcomes are currently not comparable between the State and Territory school education systems. Hence, it is not possible to present outcomes data in a way that allows comparisons of the performance of the States and Territories.

It is anticipated that the National Schools English Literacy Survey, to be completed by the end of 1996, will go some way to addressing the lack of comparable outcome data, and will provide important information in terms of literacy.

The Steering Committee has recognised the need to develop a mechanism for the ongoing reporting of comparable learning outcome data across the curriculum. Given the strong government commitment to the existing State and Territory tests, the Steering Committee believes that these tests should be utilised in preference to the potentially costly duplication of outcomes measurement by an extended system of national surveys. Accordingly, it commissioned ACER to identify how comparisons between existing statewide testing programs could be established.

ACER has indicated that there is sufficient common ground between what students are taught and how they are assessed in Australia for meaningful comparisons to be made using the existing State and Territory testing programs.

ACER identified two practical approaches for establishing equivalences:

- to embed links of 10 to 20 common items in pairs of otherwise different tests (common item); or
- to administer tests to a common sample of students (common person).

The common item approach would utilise the existing testing infrastructure, obviating the need for the duplication of testing required by the common person approach. By replacing some items within existing tests with common items, any impact on student, teacher, and administrative load can be minimised.

From a conceptual viewpoint, ACER has argued that the common item approach would be a simpler, more direct and robust process by which to establish equivalences. ACER has suggested that progress could most readily be made in the testing of Number, Measurement, Space, and Reading in Year 3 and the Upper Primary years. Importantly, over the long run, the cost of the common item approach is also likely to be lower. Apart from the initial cost of developing common items, which could also be used in future testing, there would be minimal additional testing costs.

Given the differences in years of testing, testing formats and methodologies, and some variations in the curriculum content, clearly whichever approach is adopted will require a significant commitment from all States and Territories. In particular, the support of COAG is necessary to encourage the various governments to commit resources to ensure that comparable outcomes can be reported.

Development of indicators for social and other objectives

The social and other objectives of schools are inextricably linked with learning outcomes and represent an important part of the schooling process. Indicators of performance in meeting these objectives are required for a full assessment of school system performance to be made.

Nationally consistent data are available on students' further education and workforce destinations, but care must be taken in attributing changes in those destinations to school system performance. More sophisticated indicators on school graduate outcomes in further education and workforce participation may more directly reflect the performance of schools. Examples include monitoring the performance of school graduates in further education, or the employment paths of target groups.

A number of States and Territories are currently examining the measurement of student attitudes at the jurisdiction and school level, in particular by surveying students and sometimes teachers and students. School-based statistics, such as unauthorised absences, are sometimes used as a substitute for student attitudes.

The attitudinal outcomes that have been, or are being, measured are not, however, nationally consistent or comparable, and are only loosely linked to the agreed national objectives. Although it is not currently possible to develop performance indicators that would allow for the aggregation of data at the national level, this remains an important area for further work. Future tasks could include:

- identification of outcomes related to social and other objectives; and
- development of instruments to measure success in achieving outcomes at the school system level.

A MCEETYA endorsed study on student attitudes in 1996 should inform this debate.

Measuring outcomes for target groups

There is no consistent, system-wide information available Australia-wide on the relative access to educational services and achievement of outcomes for different groups, or on the provision for groups with special learning requirements. These are important objectives for school systems but particular difficulties, including a lack of consistent definitions across Australia, are encountered in measuring them.

5.6 Performance indicators by jurisdiction

Commonwealth – jurisdiction's own comments

"While State governments have the constitutional and major financial responsibility for school education, the Commonwealth has a number of roles in relation to schooling, with its responsibility being exercised by the Commonwealth Minister for Employment, Education and Training. The Commonwealth, in co-operation with State and non-government school authorities, has an important role in identifying national priorities for schooling, and in promoting national strategies for achieving these aims. It provides significant supplementary financial support to State and non-government school authorities to support agreed priorities and strategies. In relation to disadvantaged students, continuing co-operation on agreed goals and strategies between State and non-government school authorities and the Commonwealth In-schools' equity policies and programs is a shared national policy.

In this context, the Commonwealth and State/Territory Departments of Education are participating in a range of co-operative and collaborative activities in the area of developing performance indicators for school education, some in conjunction with the MCEETYA Schools Taskforce. The terms of reference for this Taskforce include: advising on frameworks for national reporting, including coordination of the Annual National Report (ANR) on Schooling in Australia; liaising with appropriate bodies and facilitating coordination of their advice for the Council of Australian Governments on educational inputs and outcomes for schools; and liaising closely with the Taskforce on School Statistics and setting the educational indicators for technical development by that taskforce.

Action initiated or substantially assisted by the Commonwealth in 1994–95 and 1995-96 has included development of a new framework for the 1995 and subsequent ANRs, based on agreement by Ministers that future ANRs will increasingly report nationally comparable outcomes data; negotiation of agreements with States and non-government school authorities for the Commonwealth's new National Equity Program for Schools, which include tighter accountability requirements; Commonwealth development and funding of sample studies (such as the 1993 and 1994 studies on socioeconomic status (SES), subject choice and NESB which include definition of outcomes for target groups as specific objectives); other related studies, such as the Third International Mathematics and Science Study and an Australian Curriculum Assessment and Certification Authority (ACACA) study on Year 12 data; and development of the National School English Literacy Survey to produce nationally comparable data on literacy performance."

New South Wales - jurisdiction's own comments

"The NSW Department of School Education measures its service provision using a number of techniques including performance indicators, student outcome measures, monitoring of budgets, quality assurance reviews, performance management and client feedback. The performance indicators selected for the COAG review and published here are a limited part of the overall performance monitoring process.

For instance, over 560 quality assurance reviews were completed in NSW government schools during 1994. The reviews involved interviews with more than 8,300 staff, 16,800 students and 10,900 parents and community members as well as 3,000 classroom observations. The reviews found that students, teachers and parents were in general satisfied with the attainment of students and most acknowledged successful teaching practice. The reviews showed that parental and community perceptions of schools, teachers and school programs were positive; the learning environment In-schools is safe, caring, supportive and conducive to student learning; most teachers are seen to be sympathetic to and aware of, cultural diversity and actively support the development of positive relationships with students and parents; schools have broadened their base for planning and decision making to take account of the views of staff, parents and students; many schools feature a spirit of co-operation and partnership; and parent involvement in the day-to-day operations of schools is widespread, especially in primary schools. By the end of 1994, 69 per cent of government schools had established school councils.

The Quality Assurance Review findings for individual schools provided directions for improving student learning outcomes. The recommendations for school development were implemented by schools and progress reports were included In-school annual reports. The aggregated school Quality Assurance Review findings provided clear guidance for planning in the government school system.

Retention to Year 12 was 56 per cent in 1991 and following rapid increases is predicted to stabilise at around the 66 per cent achieved in 1994. To accommodate this growth structural changes have been made to the post-compulsory years. These include expanded vocational education, increased timetable flexibility, mature-age entry, course semesterisation and part-time attendance. Participation rates provided a better indication of the involvement of the post-compulsory cohort in education and training. The proportion of 15-19 year olds involved in education and training in NSW was 78.19 per cent for males and 74.55 per cent for females in 1994.

The DSE has increased its focus on identifying and addressing the needs of all students. For example, there have been substantial increases in early intervention programs for students experiencing difficulties in learning, activities in the performing arts have grown rapidly and the proportion of students with disabilities being integrated into regular schools has increased."

New South Wales, 1991–92 — 1994–95, descriptors

Table 5.3: Size of system

	Notes	Units	1991	1992	1993	1994
Students, staff and schools						
Students		FTE	**746,417**	**756,852**	**757,975**	**755,771**
primary			439,928	445,772	446,911	447,238
secondary			306,489	311,080	311,064	308,533
Staff		FTE	**55,643**	**56,117**	**57,780**	**58,073**
primary			27,248	27,448	28,203	29,317
secondary			28,395	28,670	29,577	28,756
Schools		number	**2,176**	**2,180**	**2,184**	**2,187**
primary			1,637	1,642	1,646	1,649
secondary			383	384	385	385
combined			61	61	62	63
special			95	93	91	90
Mean school sizes		mean	**343**	**347**	**347**	**346**
mean primary			262	265	265	265
mean secondary			776	786	782	775
Total expenditure and assets						
Total expenditure		$'000		**3,109,044**	**3,491,588**	**3,737,273**
In-school primary total				*1,462,321*	*1,652,350*	*1,727,851*
Capital total				84,385	100,482	93,071
Recurrent				1,377,936	1,551,868	1,634,780
Staff				938,855	1,106,734	1,197,815
Other				439,081	445,134	436,965
In-school secondary total		$'000		*1,477,728*	*1,645,140*	*1,828,603*
Capital				125,059	83,482	101,869
Recurrent				1,352,669	1,561,658	1,726,734
Staff				1,012,357	1,195,107	1,290,673
Other				340,312	366,551	436,061
Out of school total		$'000		*168,995*	*194,098*	*180,819*
Capital				na	5,120	13,667
Recurrent				168,995	188,978	167,152
Staff				98,901	88,350	93,025
Other				70,094	100,628	74,127

Source: Information provided by DEET based on National Schools Statistics Collection, various years.

New South Wales, 1991–92 — 1994–95, descriptors

Table 5.3: Size of system (continued)

	Notes	*Units*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Value of capital stock	1	$'000		**10,143,593**	**10,136,046**	**10,119,417**
land				2,611,177	2,621,461	2,584,489
buildings				7,513,470	7,495,006	7,500,359
equipment				18,946	19,579	34,569
Accumulated depreciation				**3,558,327**	**3,563,197**	**3,694,377**

Source: Value of capital stock provided in the NSW Department of School Education.

Note: 1 Mass valuation techniques were used to estimate of the value of the capital stock and land in 1992–93; and acquisitions since then have been valued at cost.

Table 5.4: School environment

	Notes	*Units*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Participation (15-19)		%	**na**	**34.5**	**35.2**	**34.4**
Participation age 15		%	65.1	65.0	64.9	64.1
Participation age 16		%	53.4	54.7	55.0	53.2
Participation age 17		%	40.6	43.9	45.5	44.3
Participation age 18		%	10.1	12.0	12.4	11.3
Participation age 19		%	na	2.1	2.2	1.9
Apparent retention rates						
to Year 10		%	95.1	96.5	96.9	95.7
to Year 11		%	74.7	80.0	81.8	78.7
to Year 12		%	56.3	64.4	66.5	66.2
Year 12 male		%	51.1	59.5	61.9	60.9
Year 12 female		%	61.8	69.6	71.5	71.7
Enrolment index (1994)		%	**Year 11**		**Year 12**	
English		%	18.6		18.2	
Mathematics		%	19.9		19.8	
Society & Environment		%	21.6		25.2	
Science		%	15.8		14.8	
Arts		%	5.7		5.9	
LOTE		%	3.1		3.2	
Technology		%	10.9		9.4	
Health & PE		%	4.3		3.6	
Student body mix			per cent of government school student population			
NESB		%	na	25.0	25.0	25.0
Aboriginality		%	2.3	2.5	2.6	2.8
Students with disabilities		%	na	2.0	2.0	2.5
Seniority profile		%	10.6	11.1	11.1	10.6
Government students	1	%	72.0	72.1	72.0	71.9
Source of income				per cent of total State expenditure		
Private income		%		na	na	na
Commonwealth		%		13	13	12

Sources: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC), various years. Retention rates provided by DEET based on NSSC, calculated from ABS, *Schools Australia*, Cat No. 4221.0, various years. Enrolment index from NSW Department of School Education. NESB and students with disabilities from DEET National Equity Program for Schools.

Note: 1 Government students as a percentage of all school students.

New South Wales, 1991–92 — 1994–95, effectiveness

Table 5.5: Destination of school leavers

	Notes	*Units*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Destination of school leavers						
Further education and Training		%	59	58	51	51
Employed		%	24	24	29	20
Not employed		%	13	14	14	24
Not in labour force		%	4	4	6	4

Sources: Destination of school leavers from ABS, *Transition from Education to Work*, Cat No. 6227.0, unpublished tables.

Learning outcomes

Table 5.6: Basic Skill Test , Years 3 and 6, Literacy and Numeracy, 1989 to 1995, (mean test score[1])

Literacy Year	All students	Boys	Girls	ATSI	NESB(T)	NESB(1)	ESB
1990	48.9	47.7	50.1	43.2	47.5	45.5	49.2
1991	50.4	49.3	51.6	44.1	48.8	47.0	50.8
1992	49.8	48.9	50.7	44.7	48.1	46.4	50.2
1993	49.2	48.1	50.4	44.5	48.4	47.4	49.5
1994	49.3	48.2	50.5	44.1	48.6	48.3	49.5
1995	48.8	47.7	49.9	43.6	48.3	48.1	48.9
Numeracy	All students	Boys	Girls	ATSI	NESB(T)	NESB(1)	ESB
1990	51.0	50.7	51.3	44.1	49.0	47.6	51.5
1991	52.7	52.6	52.8	46.5	51.2	50.4	53.1
1992	52.6	52.9	52.3	46.2	51.2	50.5	53.0
1993	52.2	52.3	52.0	45.6	50.4	49.8	52.7
1994	51.9	51.9	51.9	46.1	51.0	51.3	52.1
1995	52.1	52	52.3	45.8	51.0	51.6	52.4
Literacy Year	All students	Boys	Girls	ATSI	NESB(T)	NESB(1)	ESB
1989	48.5	47.2	49.9	42.2	na	42.3	na
1990	47.8	46.9	48.8	42.7	46.0	43.3	48.3
1991	48.9	47.9	49.9	43.3	47.1	44.6	49.4
1992	48.1	47.1	49.1	42.4	46.1	43.4	48.7
1993	48.3	47.2	49.4	43.1	46.8	44.2	48.7
1994	49.0	47.5	50.5	43.0	47.7	45.3	49.3
Numeracy	All students	Boys	Girls	ATSI	NESB(T)	NESB(1)	ESB
1989	48.8	48.9	48.6	41.1	na	44.7	na
1990	48.2	48.4	48.0	41.3	46.4	45.2	48.7
1991	48.9	49.2	48.6	42.3	47.6	47.1	49.2
1992	48.0	48.6	47.4	41.8	46.6	46.3	48.3
1993	48.5	48.9	48.0	42.3	47.3	48.0	48.8
1994	49.7	49.6	49.8	42.6	49.1	50.3	49.8

Notes: 1 Results for the BST are presented as a mean score on a scale of 25 to 65.

NESB (T) are those students who answered "yes" to the question "Does anyone speak a language other than English in your home?" and the ESB students are those who answered "no".

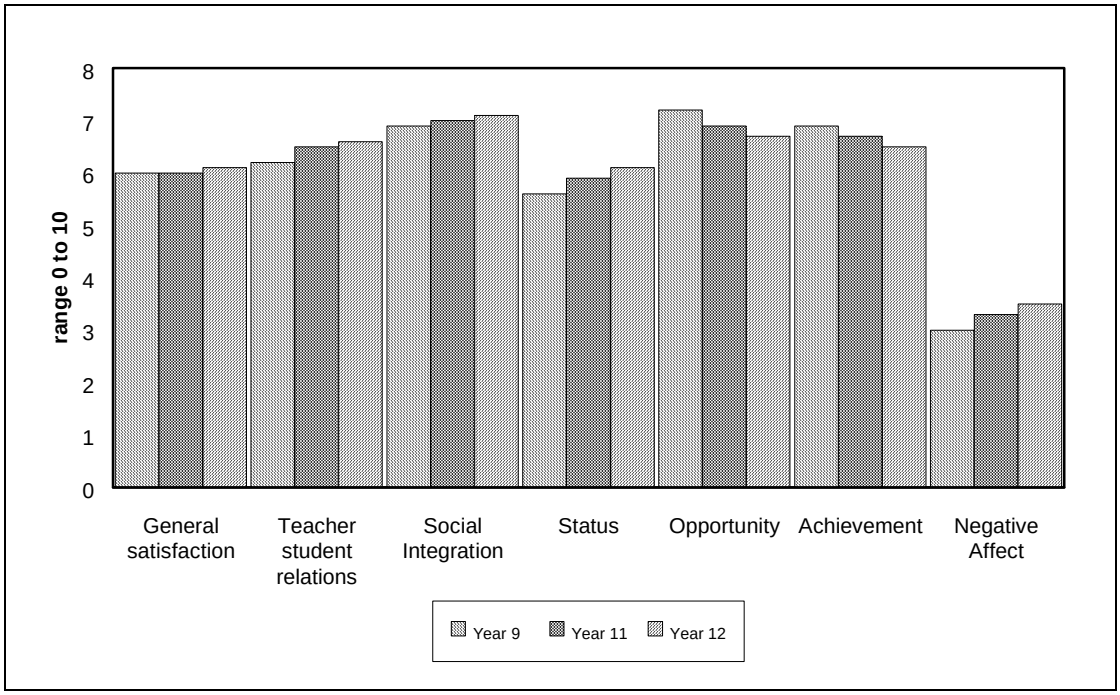
NESB (1) are those students who have lived in Australia for four years or less and never or only sometimes speak English at home.

New South Wales, 1992, effectiveness

Social outcomes

Results for NSW government secondary school student responses to the ACER School Life Questionnaire are shown in Figure 5.16 below. See Section 5.7 for a brief discussion of the school life questionnaire.

Figure 5.16: Government secondary students school life responses[1], 1992



Source: ACER, *Progress through High School*, Research Monograph No. 43, 1992, p. 137.

Note: 1 Standardised score range 0 to 10, 10 being the highest.

New South Wales, 1991–92 — 1994–95, unit costs and productivity

Table 5.7: Average expenditure and student staff ratios

	Notes	*Units*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Expenditure per student						
In-school primary		$/student		**3,302**	**3,702**	**3,865**
Capital				191	225	208
Recurrent				3,112	3,477	3,657
Staff				2,120	2,480	2,679
Other				991	997	977
In-school secondary		$/student		**4,786**	**5,289**	**5,903**
Capital				405	268	329
Recurrent				4,381	5,020	5,574
Staff				3,279	3,842	4,166
Other				1,102	1,178	1,408
Out of school total		$/student		**225**	**256**	**239**
Capital				na	7	18
Recurrent				225	250	221
Staff				132	117	123
Other				93	133	98
Student/staff ratios						
In-school primary		ratio				
teacher			20	20	19	19
non-teacher			90	88	87	80
In-school secondary		ratio				
teacher			13	13	13	13
non-teacher			60	61	57	61
The following data were requested from each State for 1993–94						
Expenditure per student	1,2	$/student	*metro*	*non-metro*	*SES*	*size*
In-school primary			3,630	3,458	3,546	na
In-school secondary			5,479	5,633	5,248	na
Student/staff ratios	3	ratio	*metro*	*non-metro*	*SES*	*size*
In-school primary						
teacher			19	19	na	na
non-teacher			90	102	na	na
In-school secondary						
teacher			12.6	12.5	na	na
non-teacher			69	56.3	na	na

Sources: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years.

Notes: 1 The data represent 'in-school' expenditure for 1993–94. The data are based on departmental cash outlays and therefore cannot be directly compared with unit costs from the NSSC which includes accrued expenses and education related expenditure incurred by the Board of Studies and the Department of Transport.

2 Expenditure/student by SES from NSW Department of School Education. Disaggregated data have been used to obtain this information; however, it must be emphasised that the Disadvantaged Index used to define Socio-economic Status does not extend to all schools in the NSW education system.

3 From NSW Department of School Education. The data represent 'in-school' student/staff ratios for 1993–94. The staff numbers used in this calculation includes specialist support personnel in the teaching area. This results in a higher student/non-teacher ratio than those based on the NSSC.

Victoria – jurisdiction's own comments

"In 1992, in Victoria, there were significant resourcing problems in education. A series of initiatives including the rationalisation in the teacher workforce, reduction in the number of schools and making schools more efficient, led to more sustainable and realistic levels of funding to government schools.

Since about eighty per cent of the costs of school education are derived from expenditure on teacher salaries, the government decided to bring the student teacher ratios for both primary and secondary government schools back to the Australian average by 1994. This has been achieved. In 1994 the student to teacher ratio for primary schools was 18.3 for both Victoria and Australia in the government sector. For secondary schools, the average was 12.0 for Victoria and 12.4 nationwide. The average size of government primary schools was 193.2 in 1991 and this had risen to 222.8 in 1994. Similarly, the rise in average school size for secondary schools was from 611.9 in 1991 to 741.7 in 1994. Government policies have resulted in increased access to a broader range of curriculum for students in secondary schools and to more specialist staff for students in primary schools.

Another reform in the Victorian government sector has been devolution of decision making for education to schools accompanied by a reduction in the number of out of school staff. In 1994 the percentage of out of school staff to total staff in the Victorian DSE was just over 2 per cent, the lowest of all states. The share of the DSE's recurrent budget for 1994 under the direct control of schools is over 90 per cent, this is the highest of any state and is an international benchmark. Comparisons of per student expenditure for the Victorian government sector from 1990-91 to 1993–94 has shown an increase from $4560 to $5240, which is greater than the Australian average of $5140. The figures for 1994 included expenditure on departure packages and superannuation employer liability. Victoria was the only state to have a substantial departure incentive program.

The DSE in Victoria is working hard to develop useful outcome indicators for the system. With the Victorian Board of Studies, the Directorate has developed a comprehensive program of reform including: revision of the Victorian Certificate of Education; development and implementation of the Curriculum and Standards Framework; development and implementation of the Learning Assessment Project; and, development and implementation of an Accountability Framework which includes a cycle of school review.

A statewide survey of parents' satisfaction with the quality of education in Victoria has indicated that over 80% of parents report that government schools are meeting or exceeding their expectations. This is an indication that the reforms commenced by the government have widespread support."

Victoria, 1991–92 — 1994–95, descriptors

Table 5.8 Size of system

	Notes	Units	1991	1992	1993	1994
Students, staff and schools						
Students		FTE	**533,386**	**533,909**	**526,636**	**520,328**
primary			301,140	303,752	303,985	302,897
secondary			232,246	230,157	222,651	217,431
Staff		FTE	**45,696**	**46,447**	**43,116**	**40,255**
primary			21,505	21,999	20,371	19,370
secondary			24,191	24,449	22,745	20,885
Schools		number	**2,029**	**2,013**	**1,934**	**1,731**
primary			1,538	1,538	1,501	1,325
secondary			373	357	322	295
combined			19	21	20	26
special			99	97	91	85
Mean school sizes		mean	**262.9**	**265.2**	**272.3**	**300.6**
mean primary			193.1	194.7	199.7	224.7
mean secondary			605.8	630.0	676.5	715.9
Total expenditure and asets						
Total expenditure		$'000		**2,556,548**	**2,967,004**	**2,742,960**
In-school primary total				*1,145,325*	*1,319,796*	*1,246,504*
Capital				63,829	48,711	52,641
Recurrent				1,081,496	1,271,085	1,193,863
Staff				866,045	1,076,716	979,489
Other				215,451	194,369	214,374
In-school secondary total		$'000		*1,239,829*	*1,471,020*	*1,333,900*
Capital				74,277	75,868	64,585
Recurrent				1,165,552	1,395,152	1,269,315
Staff				951,387	1,194,756	1,063,417
Other				214,165	200,396	205,898
Out of school total		$'000		*171,394*	*176,188*	*162,556*
Capital				1,934	927	1,295
Recurrent				169,460	175,261	161,261
Staff				61,783	62,822	50,585
Other				107,677	112,439	110,676
Value of capital stock	1	$'000				**6,483,073**
Land						2,293,000
Buildings						3,631,586
Other						558,487
Accumulated depreciation						**2,033,923**

Source: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years.

Note: 1 Value of Capital assets: provided by the Victorian Directorate of Schools Education. The valuation of buildings was made at replacement cost. Furniture, equipment and vehicles valuation is based on the purchase price. Land valuations were obtained using site areas and average vacant residential land values for each LGA.

Victoria, 1991–92 — 1994–95, descriptors

Table 5.9 School environment

	Notes	Units	1991	1992	1993	1994
Participation (15-19)		%	**na**	**35.1**	**34.1**	**33.7**
Participation age 15		%	62.1	62.0	61.0	60.4
Participation age 16		%	57.1	56.8	55.4	54.2
Participation age 17		%	45.3	47.0	45.8	44.5
Participation age 18		%	11.8	13.3	11.4	10.8
Participation age 19		%	na	3.1	2.7	2.5
Apparent retention rates						
to Year 10		%	102.3	102.3	99.0	94.8
to Year 11		%	92.7	94.6	91.2	88.7
to Year 12		%	71.1	77.9	75.6	73.2
Year 12 male		%	63.6	70.5	67.6	64.9
Year 12 female		%	79.5	86.1	84.4	82.2
Enrolment index (1994)			**Year 11**		**Year 12**	
English		%	17.4		21.2	
Mathematics		%	19.0		15.3	
Society & Environment		%	18.6		18.9	
Science		%	15.5		15.7	
Arts		%	9.1		9.0	
LOTE		%	2.5		3.0	
Technology		%	11.6		9.8	
Health &PE		%	6.2		7.2	
Student body mix			per cent of government school student population			
NESB		%	na	29.5	27.0	27.4
Aboriginality		%	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Students with disabilities		%	na	1.8	1.8	1.9
Seniority profile		%	13.0	13.0	12.0	12.0
Government students	1	%	68.0	68.0	68.0	67.0
Source of income				per cent of total State expenditure		
Private income		%		na	na	na
Commonwealth		%		11	10	11

Sources: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years. Retention rates calculated by DEET from ABS *Schools Australia*, Cat No. 4221.0, various years.
Enrolment Index from Victorian Directorate of School Education.
NESB and students with disabilities from DEET National Equity Program for Schools.

Note: 1 Government students as a percentage of all school students.

Victoria, 1991–92 — 1994–95, effectiveness

Table 5.10: Destination of school leavers

	Notes	*Units*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Destination of school leavers						
Further Education & Training		%	48	45	44	48
Employed		%	28	21	23	28
Not employed		%	19	29	28	18
Not in labour force		%	5	6	5	6

Source: Destination of school leavers from ABS Transition from Education to Work, Cat No. 6227.0, unpublished tables.

Learning outcomes

Table 5.11: Learning Assessment Project, Years 3 and 5 English and Mathematics, 1995 (per cent below/ within/ above appropriate CSF[1] range)

	Units	*Below CSF expectations*	*Within CSF expectations*	*Above CSF expectations*
Year 3 English	%	8.6	58.0	33.4
Year 3 Mathematics	%	5.25	83.0	11.75
Year 5 English	%	12.0	65.6	22.4
Year 5 Mathematics	%	6.5	78.5	15.0

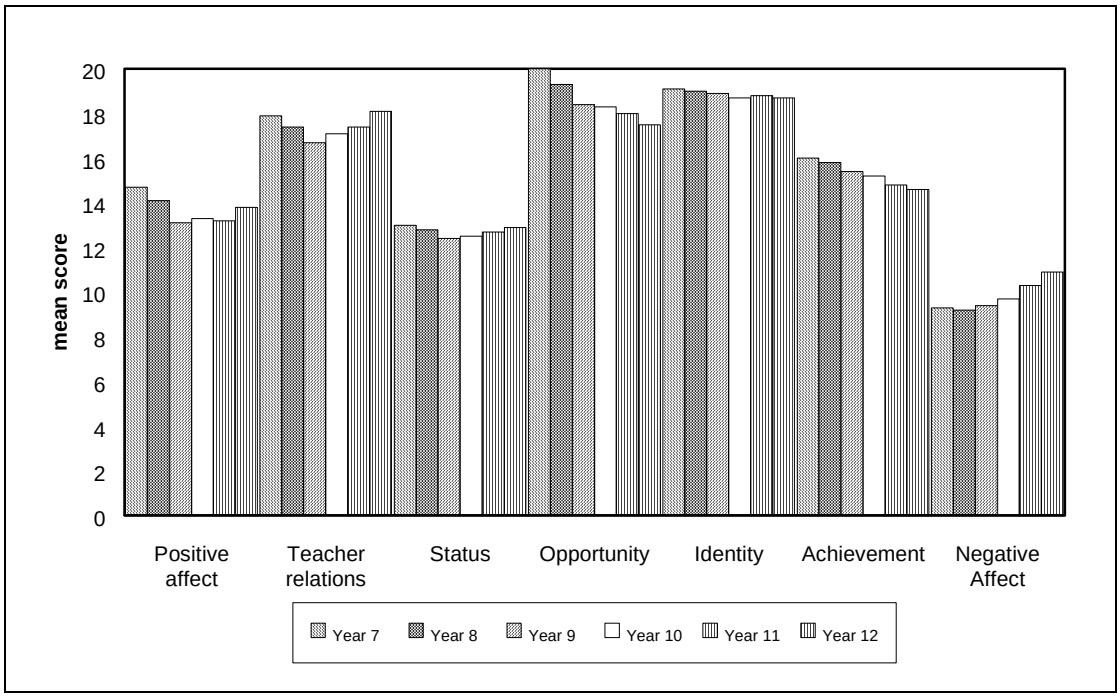
Note: 1 Shows the percentage of students that are achieving below, within, or above the range identified as appropriate for their level in the Curriculum and Standards Framework .

Social Outcomes

Results for responses to the ACER School Life Questionnaire by government primary and secondary students are shown in Figures 5.17 and 5.18 below. See Section 5.7 for a brief discussion of the school life questionnaire.

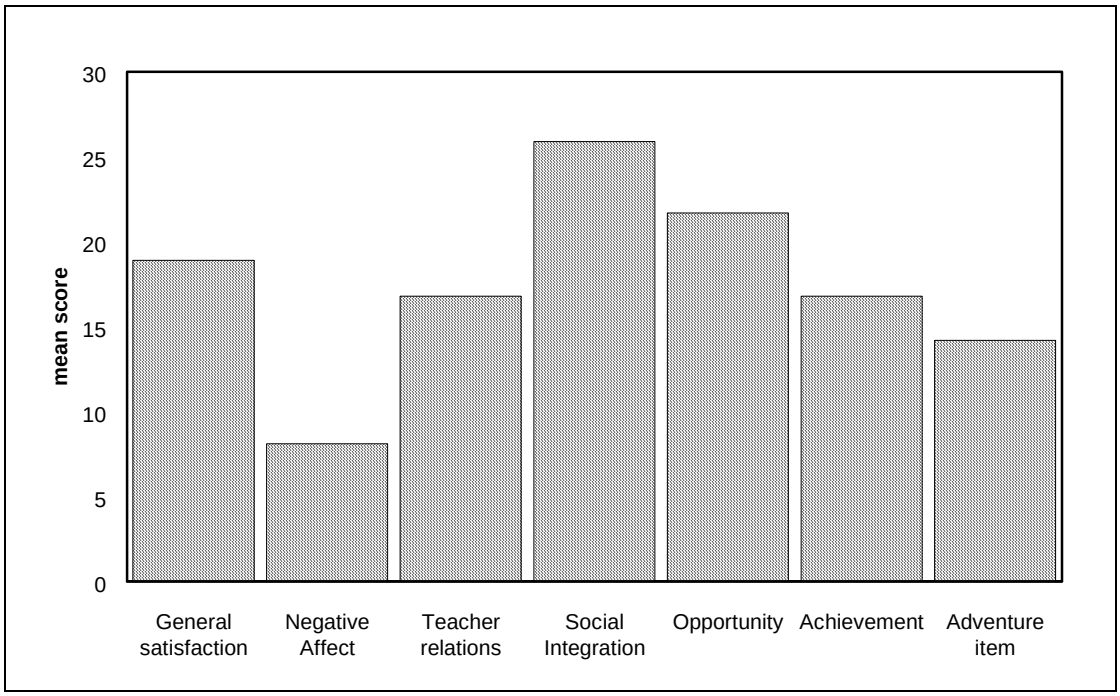
Victoria, 1986 and 1990, effectiveness

Figure 5.17: Government secondary students school life responses[1],1986



Source: ACER, *School Organisation and the Quality of Schooling*, Research Monograph No. 29, 1986.
Note: 1 Mean score.

Figure 5.18 Government primary students school life responses[1], 1990



Source: ACER, *Primary Schooling in Victoria,* Research Monograph No. 37, 1990.
Note: 1 Mean score.

Victoria, 1991–92 — 1994–95, unit costs and productivity

Table 5.12: Average expenditure and student staff ratios

	Notes	*Units*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Expenditure per student						
In-school primary		$/student		**3,787**	**4,343**	**4,108**
Capital				211	160	173
Recurrent				3,576	4,183	3,934
Staff				2,863	3,543	3,228
Other				713	640	706
In-school secondary		$/student		**5,363**	**6,497**	**6,062**
Capital				321	335	294
Recurrent				5,041	6,162	5,769
Staff				4,115	5,277	4,833
Other				926	885	936
Out of school total		$/student		**321**	**332**	**311**
Capital				4	2	2
Recurrent				318	331	308
Staff				116	118	97
Other				202	212	211
Student/staff ratios						
In-school primary		ratio				
teacher			16.3	15.8	17.1	18.3
non-teacher			99.2	107.7	115.6	108.7
In-school secondary						
teacher			11.1	10.8	11.2	12
non-teacher			72.3	74.8	75.8	76.7

Source: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years.

Victoria, 1991–92 — 1994–95, unit cost and productivity

Table 5.12: Average expenditure and student staff ratios (continued)

The following data were requested from each State for 1993–94

Expenditure per student	1				
			Primary		*Secondary*	
School size		$/student	*metro*	*non-metro*	*metro*	*non-metro*
1-100			4,025	4,239	7,913	10,998
101-300			3,412	3,391	6,694	6,748
301-500			3,169	3,176	5,171	5,227
501-1000			3,037	3,051	4,674	4,625
1000+			na	na	4,471	4,516
SES - primary schools		$/student	*least*	*medium*	*most disadvantaged*	
			3,136	3,278	3,592	
SES - secondary schools	1	$/student	*least*	*medium*	*most disadvantaged*	
			4,492	4,680	4,965	
Student/staff ratios		ratio	*metro*	*non-metro*	*SES*	size
In-school primary						
teacher			na	na	na	na
non-teacher			na	na	na	na
In-school secondary						
teacher			na	na	na	na
non-teacher			na	na	na	na

Note: 1 The expenditure per student broken down by school size, location (metropolitan/non metropolitan), socio-economic status and student type is not comparable to NSSC figures on which the interstate comparisons are based. The source of these data is the Victorian Directorate of School Education's total 1995 School Global Budget expenditure to schools. Ancillary and special settings are excluded. These global budgets include all recurrent resources to schools, including salaries.

Queensland - jurisdiction's own comments

"Queensland's resident population at 31 December 1994 was 3,233,900. At 30 June 1994, almost 63 per cent of Queensland's population resided in south east Queensland with approximately 1.45 million people (45.5 per cent of total state population) estimated to live in the Brisbane Statistical Division. Of the Australian mainland states, Queensland has the lowest proportion of its population living in the capital city. The remaining 1.78 million people (54.5 per cent) reside in cities, towns and rural settlements spread throughout the rest of Queensland. The low population density and vastness of rural areas together with the very high net migration rates pose unique challenges for resourcing to ensure the delivery of equitable education services.

The data presented in *Government School Education* provide only a brief overview of education service provision in Queensland. While it is not possible for Queensland to extract nationally comparable data disaggregated below system level, the following information provide some indication of the difficulties encountered in resourcing Queensland education.

In State primary schools there are significant differences in size, location and resourcing of schools. Just over half the primary students receive their education in 722 rural schools. Of these schools, 412 (39 per cent of all primary) have enrolments of less than 100 students. The per student expenditure in the small schools is over 40 per cent higher than the State average for primary. Some 40 per cent of all primary students are in metropolitan schools with enrolments over 500, the per student expenditure in metropolitan primary schools is some 14 per cent lower than in the rural primary schools.

In State secondary schools, there are limited differences in expenditure from metropolitan areas to the rural areas. Around 45 per cent of secondary students are enrolled in rural schools which are typically smaller than the metropolitan schools. The expenditure per student is marginally higher in rural schools, being just 2 per cent higher than the state average. The expenditure per student is highest in the smaller schools, schools with under 300 students receiving almost 40 per cent more per student than the state average.

Teacher student ratios reflect the increased resourcing requirements of rural schools and small schools. In primary the average rural student teacher ratio is 17.5 compared with 18.2 in metropolitan schools. Similarly, the average student ratio is 12.5 in rural secondary schools compared with 13.8 in metropolitan schools. In primary and secondary schools, as the school size decreases the student ratio generally increases."

Queensland, 1991–92 — 1994–95, descriptors

Table 5.13: Size of system

	Notes	Units	1991	1992	1993	1994
Students, staff and schools						
Students		FTE	**398,025**	**401,122**	**404,263**	**403,234**
primary			254,397	255,645	260,493	262,499
secondary			143,628	145,477	143,770	140,735
Staff		FTE	**32,602.4**	**32,964.9**	**34,101.5**	**33,932.3**
primary teacher			13,926.5	13,919.2	14,435.8	14,326.8
primary other			4,710.3	4,663.7	5,564.8	5,540.3
secondary teacher			11,258.6	11,462.9	11,346.1	11,390.8
secondary other			2707	2,919.1	2,754.8	2,674.4
Schools		number	**1,319**	**1,328**	**1,326**	**1,323**
primary			1,004	1,009	1,008	1,001
secondary			179	185	185	189
combined			72	70	71	74
special			64	64	62	59
Mean school sizes		mean	**301.8**	**302.0**	**304.9**	**304.8**
mean primary			233.0	235.4	240.3	245.9
mean secondary			780.6	755.1	740.7	712.2
Total expenditure and assets						
Total Expenditure		$'000		**1,660,501**	**1,917,524**	**1,953,323**
In-school primary total				*839,066*	*997,806*	*1,023,939*
Capital				58,999	74,222	62,300
Recurrent				780,067	923,584	961,639
Staff				595,857	708,565	750,785
Other				184,210	215,019	210,854
In-school secondary total		$'000		*710,088*	*798,734*	*798,850*
Capital				56,758	53,157	65,989
Recurrent				653,330	745,577	732,861
Staff				493,236	573,257	572,106
Other				160,094	172,320	160,755
Out of school total		$'000		*111,347*	*120,984*	*130,534*
Capital				602	2,968	919
Recurrent				110,745	118,016	129,615
Staff				67,022	77,784	81,133
Other				43,723	40,232	48,482
Value of capital stock	1	$'000				**4,146,200**

Source: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years.

Value of capital stock from Queensland Department of Education.

Note: 1 Capital replacement values of school buildings were by desk top audit for 1994–95, including locality indices but excluding land. The replacement value of school buildings for 1994–95 was $3971 million. As at 30 June 1995 the depreciated value of these assets was $175.2 million. The value of depreciation was $95.1 million. Total replacement values of school buildings and plant and equipment for 1994–95 was $4146.2 million.

Queensland, 1991–92 — 1994–95, descriptors

Table 5.14: School environment

	Notes	*Units*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Participation (15-19)		%	**na**	**30.3**	**29.9**	**28.6**
Participation age 15		%	62.8	62.6	61.7	59.3
Participation age 16		%	52.5	53.0	52.7	50.6
Participation age 17		%	30.8	31.6	30.9	29.7
Participation age 18		%	6.3	7.0	6.7	5.2
Participation age 19		%	na	1.8	1.4	1.2
Apparent retention rates						
to Year 10		%	102.1	100.8	100.5	97.6
to Year 11		%	86.7	86.0	84.9	81.4
to Year 12		%	75.4	82.1	79.2	73.7
Year 12 male		%	70.6	77.5	74.7	68.8
Year 12 female		%	80.4	86.9	83.8	78.8
Enrolment Index (1994)			**Year 11**		**Year 12**	
Arts		%	9.4		9.1	
English		%	17.4		17.3	
Society and Environment		%	10.0		10.9	
LOTE		%	1.2		1.3	
Mathematics		%	18.1		18.4	
Health and PE		%	8.4		8.7	
Science		%	15.9		16.3	
Technology		%	19.8		18.1	
Total		%	100.0		100.0	
Student body mix			per cent of government school student population			
English as a second language		%	na	10.0	13.0	13.0
Aboriginality		%	4.6	4.7	4.8	5
Students with disabilities		%	2.7	2.7	3.1	2.9
Seniority profile		%	12.8	12.8	12.4	11.7
Government students	1	%	75.0	74.7	74.3	73.5
Source of income					per cent of total State expenditure	
Private income		%	na	na	na	na
Commonwealth		%	11	12	11	na

Source: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years. Retention rates calculated by DEET from ABS *Schools Australia*, Cat No. 4221.0, various years.
Enrolment index from Queensland Department of Education .
NESB and students with disabilities from DEET National Equity Program for Schools.

Note: 1 Government students as a percentage of all school students.

Queensland, 1991–92 — 1994–95, effectiveness

Table 5.15: Destination of school leavers

	Notes	*Units*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Destination of school leavers						
Further education & Training		%	34	46	40	41
Employed		%	46	31	32	38
Not employed		%	17	20	20	14
Not in labour force		%	3	3	8	7

Source: Destination of school leavers from ABS, *Transition from Education to Work*, Cat No. 6227.0, unpublished tables.

Learning Outcomes

Table 5.16: Assessment of Performance Program, Years 5, 7 and 9, Reading, Writing and Mathematics, 1990 and 1992–1993, (per cent of students achieving level)

Year/subject		*Level*				
Year 5	*Year*	*Level 1*	*Level 2*	*Level 3*	*Level 4*	*Level 5*
Reading	1990	25.5	30.8	32.1	8.6	3.0
	1992	22.3	29.6	25.5	17.5	5.1
Writing	1990	28.4	35.3	21.5	10.3	4.5
	1992	24.7	30.8	16.5	20.4	7.7
Mathematics	1990	13.0	41.7	33.0	8.1	4.2
	1993	8.8	41.0	37.2	9.5	3.4
Year 7		*Level 1*	*Level 2*	*Level 3*	*Level 4*	*Level 5*
Reading	1990	10.7	25.5	42.2	15.2	6.3
	1992	10.9	23.3	34.3	20.7	10.8
Writing	1990	12.6	27.3	26.7	23.4	10.0
	1992	13.3	24.2	22.7	23.9	15.9
Mathematics	1990	1.7	16.0	45.7	21.7	14.9
	1993	1.8	16.9	44.7	25.0	11.5
Year 9		*Level 1*	*Level 2*	*Level 3*	*Level 4*	*Level 5*
Reading	1990	7.6	13.0	35.9	29.4	14.1
	1992	6.8	10.9	26.0	34.0	22.2
Writing	1990	14.7	19.9	23.6	30.9	11.0
	1992	7.8	16.0	19.6	31.6	24.9
Mathematics	1990	1.0	11.1	44.5	26.9	16.5
	1993	0.8	7.2	36.9	35.1	20.1

Queensland, 1994, effectiveness

Social Outcomes

Results for Queensland government school student responses to the ACER School Life Questionnaire are shown in Figures 5.19 and 5.20 below. See Section 5.7 for a brief discussion of the school life questionnaire.

Figure 5.19 Government school primary students school life responses, 1994 (per cent agreement)

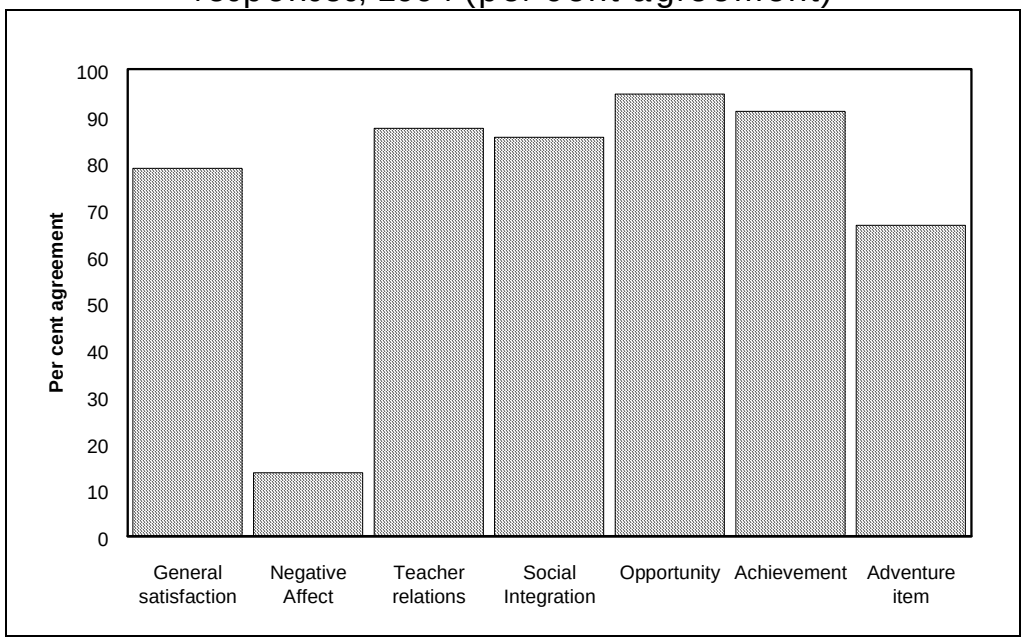
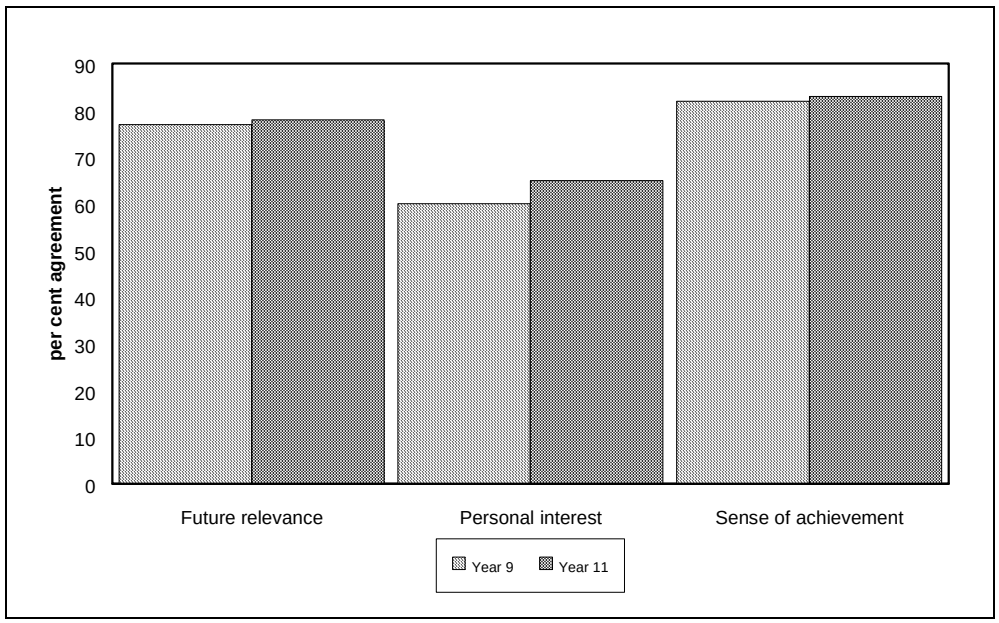


Figure 5.20 Year 9 and 11 students school life responses, 1994 (per cent agreement)



Source: Queensland Department of Education.

Queensland, 1991–92 — 1994–95, unit costs and productivity

Table 5.17: Average expenditure and student staff ratios

	Notes	*Units*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Expenditure per student		$/student				
In-school primary				**3,290**	**3,866**	**3,916**
Capital				231	288	238
Recurrent				3,059	3,578	3,678
Staff				2,337	2,746	2,871
Other				722	832	807
In-school secondary		$/student		**4,912**	**5,523**	**5,616**
Capital				392	368	464
Recurrent				4,520	5,155	5,152
Staff				3,412	3,964	4,022
Other				1,108	1,191	1,130
Out of school		$/student		**279**	**300**	**323**
Capital				2	7	2
Recurrent				277	293	321
Staff				168	193	201
Other				109	100	120
Student/staff ratios		ratio				
In-school primary						
teacher			18	18	18	18
non-teacher			54	55	47	47
In-school secondary						
teacher			13	13	13	12
non-teacher			53	50	52	53

The following data were requested from each jurisdiction for 1993–94

Expenditure per student	1	$/student	*metro*	*non-metro*	*SES*	*size*
In-school primary			na	na	na	na
In-school secondary			na	na	na	na
Student/staff ratios	1	ratio	*metro*	*non-metro*	*SES*	size
In-school primary						
teacher			18.2	17.5	na	na
non-teacher			na	na	na	na
In-school secondary						
teacher			13.8	12.5	na	na
non-teacher			na	na	na	na

Source: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years.

Note: 1 Data for Queensland were generally not available in the required format.

Western Australia - jurisdiction's own comments

"WA occupies some 2.5 million square kilometres. Agricultural, pastoral, mining, industrial and urban settlement patterns have historically required the provision of a very large number of small, widely-dispersed schools. In 1995, there are some 770 government schools with enrolments ranging from less than 10 to over 1700 students.

WA has a highly accountable system and collects and publishes a great deal of performance data that are not included in this document. These are reported in detail in the Education Department's Annual Report and also reported in the National Report. The performance information in this report, therefore, represents only a small sample of the total available. For example, the system wide Monitoring Standards in Education project (MSE) has provided performance data on Science, Studies of Society and Environment, Health and Physical Education as well as English and Mathematics. This MSE project, the instruments used and the performance data collected is highly recognised throughout Australia for its quality and coverage of the curriculum.

The results of school leavers provide ample and significant sets of performance data yielding information in all key learning areas.

As well as performance data on the contents of courses, information is also collected, analysed and reported on attendance, participation and retention. For all of these variables, the performance data are disaggregated and analysed in terms of a range of social groups, including gender, Aboriginality, NESB and location."

Western Australia, 1991–92 — 1994–95, descriptors

Table 5.18: Size of system

	Notes	Units	1991	1992	1993	1994
Students, staff and schools						
Students		FTE	**218,871**	**221,034**	**222,451**	**223,105**
primary			141,702	142,897	143,871	144,885
secondary			77,169	78,137	78,580	78,220
Staff		FTE	**17,448.8**	**17,859.2**	**18,256.9**	**18,082**
primary teacher			7,735.9	7,802.7	7,899.2	7,812.8
primary other			2,004	2,117.6	2,211.7	2,203.4
secondary teacher			6,018.9	6,199.8	6,315.9	6,242.4
secondary other			1,690	1,739.1	1,830.1	1,823.4
Schools		number	**761**	**761**	**766**	**767**
primary			512	520	522	517
secondary			95	95	94	94
combined			94	88	92	94
special			60	58	58	62
Mean school sizes		mean	**287.6**	**290.5**	**290.4**	**290.9**
mean primary			239.0	238.7	240.7	245.5
mean secondary			764.4	776.1	788.4	785.4
Total expenditure and assets						
Total expenditure		$'000		**956,880**	**1,072,881**	**1,131,503**
In-school primary total				*481,012*	*544,655*	*571,172*
Capital				36,779	31,758	34,652
Recurrent				444,233	512,897	536,520
Staff				337,451	401,185	419,241
Other				106,782	111,712	117,279
In-school secondary total		$'000		*406,361*	*459,275*	*484,592*
Capital				22,569	19,799	33,641
Recurrent				383,792	439,476	450,951
Staff				276,471	330,669	345,430
Other				107,321	108,807	105,521
Out of school		$'000		*69,507*	*68,951*	*75,739*
Capital				528	215	381
Recurrent				68,979	68,736	75,358
Staff				35,710	35,947	39,187
Other				33,269	32,789	36,171
Value of capital stock	1					na

Source: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years.

Note: 1 Not available in the required format for WA.

Western Australia, 1991–92 — 1994–95, descriptors

Table 5.19: School environment

	Notes	Units	1991	1992	1993	1994
Participation (15-19)		%	na	**28.6**	**29.1**	**27.8**
Participation age 15		%	62.4	62.4	62.5	62.0
Participation age 16		%	47.5	49.4	50.3	45.8
Participation age 17		%	24.4	25.9	26.3	25.6
Participation age 18		%	4.9	5.3	5.5	5.3
Participation age 19		%	na	1.9	1.6	1.5
Apparent retention rates						
to Year 10		%	99.92	99.9	100.7	99.3
to Year 11		%	81.3	86.8	86.5	84.6
to Year 12		%	67.1	69.0	72.9	70.5
Year 12 male		%	63.2	65.2	69.0	66.3
Year 12 female		%	71.2	73.1	77.1	75.1
Enrolment index (1994)			**Year 11**		**Year 12**	
English		%	18.1		18.6	
LOTE		%	1.1		1.0	
Mathematics		%	17.8		17.6	
Arts		%	5.8		5.9	
Personal development		%	11.4		10.7	
Science		%	16.5		16.9	
Society & Environment		%	11.6		13.1	
Technology		%	17.7		16	
Student body mix			per cent of government school student population			
NESB		%	na	18.0	20.0	20.0
Aboriginality		%	4.5	4.6	4.8	5.1
Students with disabilities		%	na	2.0	2.0	2.0
Seniority profile		%	11.4	11.9	12.1	11.7
Government students	1	%	75.5	75.3	75.0	74.5
Source of income				per cent of total State expenditure		
Private income		%		na	na	na
Commonwealth		%		12	11	12

Source: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years. Retention rates calculated by DEET from ABS *Schools Australia*, Cat No. 4221.0, various years.

Enrolment index from the Education Department of WA.

NESB and students with disabilities from DEET National Equity Program for Schools.

Note: 1 Government students as a percentage of all school students.

Western Australia, 1991–92 — 1994–95, effectiveness

Table 5.20: Destination of school leavers

	Units	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Destination of school leavers					
Further education & Training	%	56	43	51	47
Employed	%	25	31	30	33
Not employed	%	12	22	13*	15*
Not in labour force	%	8*	3*	6*	6*

Source: Destination of school leavers from ABS, *Transition from Education to Work*, Cat No. 6227.0, unpublished tables.

Note: * The figures used to derive these percentages have a relative standard error of greater than 25 per cent, and care should be exercised when using them.

Learning outcomes

Table 5.21: Monitoring Standards in Education, Years 3, 7 and 10, various subjects, 1990, 1992, 1993 (per cent of students achieving at or above the specified level)

Subject	*Units*	*Year 3 > Level 2*	*Year 7 > Level 3*	*Year 10 > Level 3*
Mathematics (1990)	%	73	28	71
Mathematics (1992)	%	76	46	77
Reading (1992)	%	95	70	93
Writing (1992)	%	93	82	94
Working scientifically (1993)	%	98	90	97

Western Australia, 1991–92 — 1994-9, unit costs and productivity

Table 5.22: Average expenditure and student staff ratios

	Notes	*Units*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Expenditure per student		$/student				
In-school primary				**3,380**	**3,799**	**3,956**
Capital				258	221	240
Recurrent				3,122	3,577	3,716
Staff				2,371	2,798	2,904
Other				750	779	812
In-school secondary		$/student		**5,233**	**5,861**	**6,181**
Capital				291	253	429
Recurrent				4,942	5,609	5,752
Staff				3,560	4,220	4,406
Other				1,382	1,389	1,346
Out of school total		$/student		**316**	**311**	**335**
Capital				2	1	2
Recurrent				314	310	333
Staff				162	162	173
Other				151	148	160
Student/staff ratios		ratio				
In-school primary						
teacher			18	18	18	19
non-teacher			71	67	65	67
In-school secondary						
teacher			13	13	12	13
non-teacher			46	45	43	43

The following data were requested from each jurisdiction for 1993–94

Expenditure per student	1	$/student				
			metro	*non-metro*	*SES*	*size*
In-school primary			na	na	na	na
In-school secondary			na	na	na	na
Student/staff ratios	1	ratio				
			metro	*non-metro*	*SES*	*size*
In-school primary			na	na	na	na
In-school secondary			na	na	na	na

Source: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years.

Note: 1 Data for WA were not available in the required format.

South Australia - jurisdiction's own comments

"South Australia had a government school system of 674 school sites in 1994. The Department of Education and Children's Services also had responsibility for the administration of Children's Services, including pre-schools. The Children's Services aspect of the Department is not included in the indicators.

As the table of descriptors indicates, the enrolments in the government schools have declined from 1991 to 1994, mainly due to the demographic effects of a reduced birth rate in the middle and late 1970s, as well as a small increase in the proportion of students enrolled in non-government schools.

The number school sites has been reduced in the period 1991 to 1994 from 696 to 674. At the same time new sites have been established in new development areas.

Average primary school size has grown slightly from 170 to 177 in 1994. Average secondary school size has dropped from 625 to 601.

Total expenditure for the school system was $1.07 billion in the 1993–94 financial year.

Retention rates to Year 12 dropped to 76 per cent in 1994, consistent with a general national trend of slightly reduced retention. The South Australian rate of 76 per cent to Year 12 is higher than most other systems, with the female rate being 80 per cent and the male rate 71 per cent.

Cost per student was $4621 for primary level students and $7222 for secondary level students in 1994. The expenditure appears to be greater per student than the larger education systems but the assessment of this is inhibited by the lack of appreciation of the distributions of school size in each school system and the impact of the proportion of smaller non-metropolitan schools. When school size is considered there is a significantly reduced per student cost for primary schools in the 300 to 500 enrolment range, and similar reduction for secondary schools in the 500 to 1000 enrolment range.

The aspects of small size and schools with large proportions of students from lower socio-economic backgrounds (SES) can compound the cost per student, in smaller schools with a high proportion of low SES students. There are however clear indications that schools, in the lowest quartile when schools are ranked by proportions of low SES students, are being resourced at a higher per capita level than schools in the upper quartile. This effect is reflected in cost per student, student teaching staff ratios and student non-teaching staff ratios."

South Australia, 1991–92 — 1994–95, descriptors

Table 5.23: Size of system

	Notes	Units	1991	1992	1993	1994
Students, staff and schools		FTE				
Students			**186,804**	**187,556**	**184,620**	**181,640**
primary			122,129	124,254	124,802	124,043
secondary			64,675	63,302	59,818	57,597
Staff		FTE	**16,407**	**16,541**	**16,385**	**16,073**
primary			9,171	9,321	9,279	9,333
secondary			7,236	7,220	7,106	6,740
Schools		number	**696**	**682**	**677**	**674**
primary			510	503	499	498
secondary			94	91	89	88
combined			68	66	67	67
special			24	22	22	21
Mean school sizes		mean	**268**	**275**	**273**	**270**
mean primary			170	176	178	177
mean secondary			625	637	616	602
Total expenditure and assets		$'000				
Expenditure total				**899,616**	**1,026,571**	**1,074,167**
In-school primary total				*468,464*	*541,224*	*574,917*
Capital				31,932	35,900	39,489
Recurrent				436,532	505,324	535,428
Staff				362,724	431,376	451,278
Other				73,808	73,948	84,150
In-school secondary total		$'000		*369,758*	*422,091*	*424,006*
Capital				24,472	31,493	29,195
Recurrent				345,286	390,598	394,811
Staff salaries				286,558	336,402	340,300
Other				58,728	54,196	54,511
Out of school		$'000		*61,394*	*63,256*	*75,244*
Capital				448	507	1,595
Recurrent				60,946	62,749	73,649
Staff				31,313	32,526	36,008
other				29,633	30,223	37,641
Value of capital stock	1	$m			**2,851**	

Source: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years.

Note: 1 Provided by SA — value as at 30 June 1993: land: $396m; buildings: $2345m; plant & equipment: $73m; buses: $37m.

South Australia, 1991–92 — 1994–95, descriptors

Table 5.24: School environment

	Notes	*Units*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Participation (15-19)		%	**na**	**31.4**	**30.7**	**29.5**
Participation age 15		%	66.9	64.3	64.1	62.2
Participation age 16		%	56.2	55.4	53.1	52.8
Participation age 17		%	27.8	30.6	30.0	27.3
Participation age 18		%	6.6	8.7	8.0	6.7
Participation age 19		%	na	2.5	2.0	1.8
Apparent retention rates						
to Year 10		%	97.7	98.3	96.1	92.9
to Year 11		%	93.5	92.2	90.5	86.1
to Year 12		%	76.8	87.6	80.5	75.5
Year 12 Male		%	72.3	85.0	76.8	71.4
Year 12 Female		%	81.9	90.4	84.4	79.9
Enrolment index (1994)			**Stage 1 (Yr 11)**		**Stage 2 (Yr 12)**	
English		%	15.44		13.81	
Maths		%	18.02		17.40	
Society and environment		%	23.44		24.47	
Science		%	14.67		18.29	
Arts		%	5.42		6.09	
LOTE		%	2.36		2.29	
Technology		%	15.14		14.58	
Health and PE		%	5.69		4.08	
Student body mix			per cent of government school student population			
NESB		%		21.3	18.7	19.0
Aboriginality		%	2.1	2.3	2.4	2.6
Students with disabilities		%		3.2	4.5	na
Seniority profile		%	13.3	13.4	12.3	11.2
Government students	1	%	75.7	75.4	74.7	73.8
Source of income				per cent of total State expenditure		
Private income	2	%				3.5 - 4.0
Commonwealth		%		10	9	10

Source: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years. Retention rates calculated by DEET from ABS *Schools Australia*, Cat No. 4221.0, various years.
Enrolment index from SA Department of Education and Children's Services.
NESB and students with disabilities from DEET National Equity Program for Schools.

Notes: 1 Government students as a percentage of all school students.

2 Estimated private income for School Year 1994 from SA Department of Education and Children's Services based on a random sample of 1993–94 school financial statements for the 1994 school year. Primary schools were estimated at 4 per cent and secondary schools at 3.5 per cent. Fees ranged from $35 to $300 per student.

South Australia, 1991–92 — 1994–95, effectiveness

Table 5.25: Destination of school leavers

	Units	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Destination of school leavers					
Further education & Training	%	40	41	29	35
Employed	%	31	32	39	30
Not employed	%	23	23	24	30
Not in labour force	%	6*	4*	8*	4*

Source: Destination of school leavers from ABS, *Transition from Education to Work*, Cat No. 6227.0, unpublished tables.

Note: * The figures used to derive these percentages have a relative standard error of greater than 25 per cent, and care should be exercised when using them.

Learning outcomes

Table 5.26: Basic Skills Test, Years 3 and 5, literacy and numeracy, 1995 (per cent of students in skills band)

Subject	*Band 1*	*Band 2*	*Band 3*	*Band 4*
Year 3 Literacy	17	22	31	30
Year 3 Numeracy	14	19	28	39
Year 5 Literacy	13	21	29	37
Year 5 Numeracy	13	22	38	27

South Australia, 1991–92 — 1994–95, unit costs and productivity

Table 5.27: Average expenditure and student staff ratios

	Notes	*Units*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Expenditure per student		$/student				
In-school primary				**3,803**	**4,346**	**4,621**
Capital				259	288	317
Recurrent				3,544	4,058	4,303
Staff				2,944	3,464	3,627
Other				599	594	676
In-school secondary		$/student		**5,779**	**6,857**	**7,222**
Capital				382	512	497
Recurrent				5,396	6,345	6,725
Staff				4,478	5,465	5,797
Other				918	880	929
Out of school		$/student		**328**	**340**	**411**
Capital				2	3	9
Recurrent				326	337	402
Staff				167	175	197
Other				158	162	206
Student/staff ratios						
In-school primary		ratio				
teacher			17	17	17	17
non-teacher			62	60	63	61
In-school secondary		ratio				
teacher			11	11	11	11
non-teacher			46	44	42	42

Source: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years.

South Australia, 1991–92 — 1994–95, unit costs and productivity

Table 5.27: Average expenditure and student staff ratios (continued)

The following data were requested from each State for 1993–94

Expenditure per student 1,2

		Primary		*Secondary*	
School size	$/student	*metro*	*non-metro*	*metro*	*non-metro*
1-100		4,036	4,678	na	na
101-300		3,238	3,223	7,138	5,677
301-500		2,872	2,834	5,596	4,862
501-1000		2,582	2,384	4,358	4,199
1000+		na	na	4,124	na

SES - primary	$/student	*least*	*medium*	*most disadvantaged*
		2,173	3,034	3,834
SES - secondary	$/student	*least*	*medium*	*most disadvantaged*
		4,128	4,589	5957

Student/staff ratios 1,3

In-school primary		*Teachers*		*Non-teachers*	
School size	ratio	*metro*	*non-metro*	*metro*	*non-metro*
1-100		13.3	13.3	38.0	38.4
101-300		16.7	17.1	73.0	67.3
301-500		19.0	19	96.0	81.1
501-1000		20.4	20.8	116.0	103.3
1000+		na	na	na	na

SES	*least*	*medium*	*most disadvantaged*
teacher	19.3	18.1	14.9
non-teacher	94	79.1	58.5

In-school secondary		*Teachers*		*Non-teachers*	
School size		*metro*	*non-metro*	*metro*	*non-metro*
1-100	ratio	na	na	na	na
101-300		8.0	9.7	33.2	31.4
301-500		10.2	11.5	45.2	42.3
501-1000		11.9	12.6	63.1	63.3
1000+		12.3	na	72.6	na

SES	ratio	*least*	*medium*	*most disadvantaged*
teacher		12.4	11.6	9.6
non-teacher		66.4	55	42.2

Source: SA Department for Education and Children's Services.

Notes: 1 In SA's case it was impossible to allocate all schools to either Primary or Secondary schools. Accordingly data relating to 56 schools that are combined primary and secondary schools were provided separately (but not reported in this Table). Aboriginal schools and special schools are not included in the data.

2 Total expenditure does not include building maintenance costs and may not include all staff overheads.

3 Although data for teaching and non-teaching staff were based on NSSC definitions, counselling staff were returned to the teaching category for the calculations.

Tasmania - jurisdiction's own comments

"

Student Learning Outcomes

In the Tasmanian government school system there is a well-developed process to provide quality assurance to parents and the community. During 1994–95, with the establishment of an Office for Educational Review, procedures and protocols for internal school reviews were trialed. For 20 years Tasmania has conducted a rolling program of tests of literacy and numeracy skills for 10-year-olds and 14-year-olds in government schools, with public reporting of results at system level. Over this period there has been a significant improvement in the performance of 14-year-olds in basic reading skills while in the early part of the period there was a slight improvemrnt in numeract skills for the age group with a slight decline in the latter part of the period.

Size of the Tasmanian Education System

Tasmania has a relatively small school system, characterised by small schools (averaging 215 for primary schools and 512 for high schools). Most of the large establishments are secondary colleges (averaging 833 enrolments).

The School Environment in Tasmania

Retention rates to Year 11 and 12 are lower in Tasmania than in the other states, but have followed the same recent pattern: a sharp increase to 1992 and a falling-off since then. Participation in education is more accurately reflected by the proportion of a given age-group who are in school than by retention rates which appear to reflect differences between the states in the ages of children in a particular grade. Participation of 16 and 17 year olds is higher in Tasmania than in most states.

The student population in Tasmania reflects the State's demography: a relatively small proportion of students from non-English-speaking backgrounds, a relatively small proportion of students in non-government schools (25 per cent), and Aboriginal students comprise 4 per cent of the total.

Unit costs and productivity

Unit costs in Tasmania show differences in recurrent funding levels between primary and secondary schools: $4056 in primary schools, and $5380 in secondary schools.

The high costs of schools in the 1-100 range partly reflects the fact that special schools are in this category. Finally, in Tasmania additional resources are made available to schools in disadvantaged areas: primary schools in the most disadvantaged areas receive 36 per cent more than in the least disadvantaged areas, and secondary schools 51 per cent more.

"

Tasmania, 1991–92 — 1994–95, descriptors

Table 5.28: Size of system

	Notes	Units	1991	1992	1993	1994
Students, staff and schools						
Students		FTE	**65,662**	**65,713**	**64,727**	**64,061**
primary			37,674	37,918	37,380	37,033
secondary			27,988	27,795	27,347	27,028
Staff		FTE	**5,226**	**5,411**	**5,492**	**5,467**
primary			2,595	2,714	2,821	2,899
secondary			2,631	2,697	2,671	2,568
Schools		number	**247**	**243**	**237**	**233**
primary			163	160	154	151
secondary			42	42	42	42
combined			26	26	26	26
special			16	15	15	14
Mean school sizes		mean	**265.8**	**270.4**	**273.1**	**274.9**
mean primary			200.4	207.9	212.8	212.4
mean secondary			599.3	595.8	591.7	582.5
Total expenditure and assets						
Total expenditure		$'000		**282,468**	**329,193**	**334,575**
In-school primary total				*124,681*	*150,115*	*154,193*
Capital total				5,458	4,448	3,291
Recurrent				119,223	145,667	150,902
Staff				91,037	114,196	116,724
Other				28,186	31,471	34,178
In-school secondary total		$'000		*131,766*	*152,536*	*154,079*
Capital				4,198	7,020	7,813
Recurrent				127,568	145,516	146,266
Staff				95,996	112,018	108,589
Other				31,572	33,498	37,677
Out of school		$'000		*26,021*	*26,542*	*26,303*
Capital				240	217	211
Recurrent				25,781	26,325	26,092
Staff				14,511	14,443	13,918
Other				11,270	11,882	12,174
Value of capital stock	1	$'000		**na**	**686,065**	**681,299**

Source: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years.

Note: 1 Value of Capital assets provided by Tasmania. The statements are prepared in accordance with the cash basis of accounting and in most cases amounts have been rounded to the nearest one thousand dollars. The value of capital stock was $658,527,000 at 30 June 1995.

Tasmania, 1991–92 — 1994–95, descriptors

Table 5.29: School environment

	Notes	Units	1991	1992	1993	1994
Participation (15-19)		%	**na**	**47.4**	**34.6**	**34.4**
Participation age 15		%	73.5	71.3	71.8	71.8
Participation age 16		%	55.4	53.0	52.1	50.6
Participation age 17		%	36.2	38.9	37.6	35.5
Participation age 18		%	9.5	13.0	9.1	10.0
Participation age 19		%	na	3.4	2.2	1.9
Apparent retention rates						
to Year 10		%	97.0	97.7	98.5	98.39
to Year 11		%	75.3	74.9	70.2	71.35
to Year 12		%	52.1	59.5	58.9	56.16
Year 12 male		%	47.8	60.0	54.9	53.6
Year 12 female		%	57.0	59.0	63.4	59.0
Enrolment Index (1994)		%	**Year 11**		**Year 12**	
English		%	20.1		15.3	
Mathematics		%	20.3		10.5	
Society and the environment		%	19.7		29.4	
Science		%	12		17.2	
Arts		%	7.7		6.7	
LOTE		%	1.7		2.2	
Technology		%	11.8		12.3	
Health &PE		%	5.2		4.6	
Not classified		%	1.4		1.8	
Student body mix			per cent of government school student population			
NESB		%	na	8.0	6.9	6.9
Aboriginality		%	2.9	3.4	3.8	4.4
Students with disabilities		%	na	3.5	3.5	3.6
Seniority profile		%	11	11	10	10
Government students	1	%	76.7	76.2	75.5	75
Source of income			per cent of total State expenditure			
Private income		%				6
Commonwealth		%		12	11	11

Sources: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years. Retention rates calculated by DEET from ABS *Schools Australia*, Cat No. 4221.0, various years.

Enrolment index and private income estimate from Tasmanian Department of Education and the Arts.

Non-English speaking background and students with disabilities from DEET National Equity Program for Schools.

Note: 1 Government students as a percentage of all school students.

Tasmania, 1991–92 — 1994–95, effectiveness

Table 5.30: Destination of school leavers

	Units	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Destination of school leavers					
Further Education & Training	%	35	48	36	43
Employed	%	37	27	29	26
Not employed	%	19	13*	23	15*
Not in labour force	%	10*	12*	11*	16*

Source: Destination of school leavers from ABS, *Transition from Education to Work*, Cat No. 6227.0, unpublished tables.

Note: * The figures used to derive these percentages have a relative standard error of greater than 25 per cent, and care should be exercised when using them.

Learning outcomes

Table 5.31: 10 and 14 year old, Reading and Numeracy tests, 1975 to 1994 (mean scores—index)

Subject/index	*Years*					
10 year old numeracy	*1977*	*1979*	*1982*	*1986*	*1990*	*1992*
Index	77	77.5	78	79	74	75
10 year old reading	*1975*	*1978*	*1981*	*1984*	*1988*	*1993*
Index	100	97.1	99.5	99.8	97.8	97.4
14 year old numeracy	*1975*	*1978*	*1981*	*1985*	*1989*	*1994*
Index	100	102	99.2	102.5	100.4	96.5
14 year old reading	*1975*	*1977*	*1979*	*1983*	*1987*	*1991*
Index	100	107.1	110.5	114	114.2	114.5

Tasmania, 1991–92 — 1994–95, unit costs and productivity

Table 5.32: Average expenditure and student staff ratios

	Notes	*Units*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Expenditure						
In-school primary		$/student		**3,299**	**3,987**	**4,144**
Capital				144	118	88
Recurrent				3,154	3,869	4,056
Staff				2,409	3,033	3,137
Other				746	836	919
In-school secondary		$/student		**4,724**	**5,532**	**5,667**
Capital				151	255	287
Recurrent				4,574	5,278	5,380
Staff				3,442	4,063	3,994
Other				1,132	1,215	1,386
Out of school total		$/student		**396**	**407**	**408**
Capital				4	3	3
Recurrent				392	404	405
Staff				221	221	216
Other				172	182	189
Student/staff ratios		ratio				
In-school primary						
teacher			18	18	18	17
non-teacher			73	58	54	50
In-school secondary						
teacher			13	13	13	13
non-teacher			52	52	51	52

Source: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years.

Tasmania, 1991–92 — 1994–95, unit costs and productivity

Table 5.32: Average expenditure and student staff ratios (continued)

The following data were requested from each State for 1993–94

Expenditure per student

		In-school primary		*In-school secondary*	
School size	$/student	*metro*	*non-metro*	*metro*	*non-metro*
1-100		11,140	6,016	18,935	15,345
101-300		4,105	4,198	na	6,487
301-500		3,905	3,914	5,548	5,431
501-1000		3,817	3,604	5,593	5,387
1000+		na	na	6,290	5,832

SES - degree of disadvantage	$/student	*least*	*medium*	*most disadvantaged*
Primary		3,781	4,017	5,131
secondary		5,002	5,501	7,575

Student/staff ratios 1

In-school primary		*Teachers*		*Non-teachers*	
School size - teachers	ratio	*metro*	*non-metro*	*metro*	*non-metro*
1-100		6.8	12.2	4.0	8.8
101-300		17.9	16.9	12.9	12.6
301-500		18.3	17.9	14.0	13.9
501-1000		18.7	19.2	15.6	15.4
1000+		na	na	na	na

SES	ratio	*least*	*medium*	*most disadvantaged*
teacher		19.2	17.3	14.4
all staff		14.4	13.1	10.2

In-school secondary		*Teachers*		*Non-teachers*	
School size		*metro*	*non-metro*	*metro*	*non-metro*
1-100	ratio	3.8	4.6	2.4	2.6
101-300		na	11.2	na	8.5
301-500		13.1	13.1	10.3	10.2
501-1000		13.8	14.1	11.4	11.6
1000+		12.7	14.6	10.2	12.0

SES	ratio	*least*	*medium*	*most disadvantaged*
teacher		14.4	13.6	10.4
all staff		11.7	11.1	7.6

Source: Tasmanian Department of Education and the Arts.

Note: 1 Includes combined and special schools and students. The data represent 'in-school' student/staff ratios for 1994.

Northern Territory - jurisdiction's own comments

"The statistical data for the Northern Territory must be interpreted with great care and any attempt to draw comparisons with other States and the ACT must take the following major factors into account.

The geography of the Northern Territory present very significant distance and isolation disadvantages. The Northern Territory has a population of 171,440 and a land area of 1,348,000 square kilometres (an area 30 per cent larger than the combined areas of NSW and Victoria) with a population density of less than 13 people per 100 square kilometres. Many small centres are accessible only by air or sea and are often not accessible at all during the wet season.

It is important to note that 54.4 per cent of Northern Territory schools and 24.1 per cent of students are located in remote areas - many of these are in the most isolated centres in Australia.

Educational services are provided to a diverse multi-cultural and multi-lingual population. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students make up about 35 per cent of the total student population. In the States the proportion is between 1 per cent and 3 per cent. A significant number (over 70 per cent) of school-aged Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have English as a second or third language and, for many, English is not in common use in their homes or communities. Many also suffer a significant degree of economic disadvantage.

While many schools are in remote communities and have predominantly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments, even in urban schools Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolment is significant, with an average between 10 per cent and 30 per cent and, in some cases as high as 60 per cent.

Northern Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school-aged children experience a range of living condition disadvantages which set them apart from other Australians. A high percentage of these children suffer from hearing and sight impairment and other health problems which inhibit educational participation and achievement. A high percentage live in housing conditions which are well below the standard for other Australian children.

The factors noted above significantly influence all aspects of school education in the Northern Territory, being reflected, for example in higher unit costs and lower student/teacher and student/non-teacher ratios."

Northern Territory, 1991–92 — 1994–95, descriptors

Table 5.33: Size of system

	Notes	Units	1991	1992	1993	1994
Students and schools						
Students		FTE	**27,161**	**26,803**	**26,837**	**26,934**
primary			19,135	18,900	19,400	19,764
secondary			8,026	7,903	7,437	7,170
Staff		FTE	**2,534.3**	**2,483.4**	**2,506.4**	**2,621.6**
primary teacher			1,250.5	1,260.6	1,302.4	1,329.7
primary other			332.3	316.9	336.6	373
secondary teacher			733.7	687.5	645.7	661.4
secondary other			217.8	218.4	221.7	257.5
Schools		number	**148**	**146**	**146**	**147**
primary			94	94	93	92
secondary			13	11	11	11
combined			34	33	34	36
special			7	8	8	8
Mean school sizes		mean	**183.5**	**183.6**	**183.8**	**183.2**
mean primary			159.4	157.7	163.5	167.4
mean secondary			541.8	586.3	570.4	544.4
Total expenditure and assets		$'000				
Total expenditure				**179,634**	**197,488**	**206,486**
In-school primary total		$'000		*98,909*	*109,215*	*115,707*
Capital				7,090	4,378	6,237
Recurrent				91,819	104,837	109,470
Staff				53,915	68,334	71,398
Other				37,904	36,503	38,072
In-school secondary total		$'000		*57,824*	*61,039*	*63,965*
Capital				2,992	1,272	1,966
Recurrent				54,832	59,767	61,999
Staff				36,714	42,732	44,751
Other				18,118	17,035	17,248
Out of school		$'000		*22,901*	*27,234*	*26,814*
Capital				125	100	97
Recurrent				22,776	27,134	26,717
Staff				15,286	18,203	17,224
Other				7,490	8,931	9,493
Value of capital stock	1	$'000				
Buildings & equipment						657,000
Land						na

Source: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years.

Note: 1 Provided by the NT. School buildings and equipment valued at replacement cost. Land is not included in the valuation. There was a further $11 million for support and administration assets.

Northern Territory, 1991–92 — 1994–95, descriptors

Table 5.34: School environment

	Notes	Units	1991	1992	1993	1994
Participation (15-19)		%	**na**	**31.5**	**31.8**	**30.8**
Participation age 15		%	60.8	61.7	61.6	61.0
Participation age 16		%	61.1	52.2	51.5	49.7
Participation age 17		%	33.0	33.3	33.6	32.9
Participation age 18		%	11.4	9.7	10.0	8.4
Participation age 19		%	na	2.4	2.6	2.1
Apparent retention rates						
to Year 10		%	81.6	78.8	71.3	71.02
to Year 11		%	68.1	67.9	62.1	60.71
to Year 12		%	60.9	58.8	50.7	44.36
Year 12 male		%	60.6	58.0	49.1	42.5
Year 12 female		%	61.3	59.7	52.6	46.4
Enrolment index (1994)			**Year 11**		**Year 12**	
English		%	16.1		18.7	
Mathematics		%	16.8		17.6	
LOTE		%	1.9		1.5	
Creative Arts		%	10.2		6.9	
Personal development & PE		%	5.2		4.6	
Tech. & Applied studies		%	12.2		9.1	
Human Society and Envir.		%	23.0		25.7	
Science		%	12.3		15.9	
Other		%	2.2		0	
Student body mix			per cent of government school student population			
NESB		%	na	18.0	33.0	33.0
Aboriginality		%	34.6	35.5	35.2	35.7
Students with disabilities		%	na	5.5	6.2	7.0
Seniority profile		%	9.5	9.2	8.1	7.5
Government students	1	%	81.2	79.8	79.2	78.9
Source of income				per cent of total State expenditure		
Private income		%		na	na	na
Commonwealth		%		7	8	8

Source: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years. Retention rates calculated by DEET from ABS *Schools Australia*, Cat No. 4221.0, various years.

Enrolment index from NT Department of Education .

Non-English speaking background and students with disabilities from DEET National Equity Program for Schools.

Note: 1 Government students as a percentage of all school students.

Northern Territory, 1991–92 — 1994–95, descriptors

Table 5.34: School environment (continued)

	Notes	Units	1991	1992	1993	1994
Additional data provided by NT						
Average attendance rates						
ATSI - government schools						
- Primary		%		72.5	74.9	73.5
- Junior secondary		%		68	68.4	68.2
- Senior secondary		%		na	90	na
Urban government schools						
- Primary		%		89.2	88.3	88.5
- Junior secondary		%		85.9	86.5	84.5
- Senior secondary		%		90.1	90.6	91.9
- Ungraded		%		90.7	89.6	90.6
Average attendance rates						
All government schools						
- Primary		%		78.6	79.8	79.3
- Junior secondary		%		74.8	75.3	74.5
- Senior secondary		%		90.7	91.4	92.5
- Ungraded		%		90.4	89.9	90.7
Participation rates	1					
Age						
5		%			92.7	
6		%			93.7	
7		%			96.0	
8		%			98.2	
9		%			103.4	
10		%			95.9	
11		%			95.5	
12		%			94.5	
13		%			97.0	
14		%			94.6	
15		%			86.0	
Total		%			95.3	
Apparent retention rates						
Grade						
8 to 9		%				78.8
8 to 10		%				71.0
8 to 11		%				60.7
8 to 12		%				44.4

Note: 1 ABS *Estimated Resident Population*, Cat no. 3201.0 at June 1993 and enrolments as at August 1993.

Northern Territory, 1991–92 — 1994–95, effectiveness

Table 5.36: Destination of school leavers

	Notes	*Units*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Destination of school leavers						
Further Education & Training		%	61*	61*	61*	66*
Employed		%	19*	23*	25*	23*
Not employed		%	19*	6*	7*	0*
Not in labour force		%	0*	10*	7*	11*

Source: Destination of school leavers from ABS, *Transition from Education to Work*, Cat No. 6227.0, unpublished tables.

Note: * The figures used to derive these percentages have a relative standard error greater than 25 per cent, and care should be exercised when using them.

Learning outcomes

Table 5.37: Multi-level Assessment Program, Years 5 and 7, mathematics and reading, urban non-ATSI students, 1990 to 1994 (proportion achieving per cent in range)

Subject		*Range*				
	Year	*0-20*	*21-40*	*41-60*	*61-80*	*81-100*
Year 5 Mathematics	*1990*	5	16	33	34	12
	1991	2	13	31	38	17
	1992	2	17	37	34	11
	1993	3	14	30	38	15
	1994	4	15	36	35	10
Year 7 Mathematics	*1990*	10	25	33	24	7
	1991	4	17	28	32	19
	1992	4	21	29	30	17
	1993	1	10	24	36	29
	1994	3	14	27	34	22
Year 5 Reading	*1990*	2	8	21	32	37
	1991	1	6	17	42	34
	1992	0	3	9	32	56
	1993	1	9	23	44	22
	1994	2	7	21	43	27
Year 7 Reading	*1990*	1	7	18	38	36
	1991	0	6	18	38	38
	1992	1	5	17	36	42
	1993	2	12	25	38	22
	1994	3	9	21	40	28

Northern Territory, 1991–92 — 1994–95, unit costs and productivity

Table 5.38: Average expenditure and student staff ratios

	Notes	*Units*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Expenditure						
In-school primary		$/student		**5,201**	**5,703**	**5,909**
Capital				373	229	319
Recurrent				4,828	5,475	5,590
Staff				2,835	3,568	3,646
Other				1,993	1,906	1,944
In-school secondary total		$/student		**7,260**	**7,958**	**8,758**
Capital				376	166	269
Recurrent				6,885	7,792	8,489
Staff				4,610	5,571	6,127
Other				2,275	2,221	2,362
Out of school		$/student		**849**	**1,015**	**997**
Capital				5	4	4
Recurrent				844	1,012	994
Staff				567	679	641
Other				278	333	353
Student/staff ratios		ratio				
In-school primary						
teacher			15	15	15	15
non- teacher			58	60	58	53
In-school secondary						
teacher			10	11	12	11
non- teacher			37	36	34	28

Source: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years.

Northern Territory, 1991–92 — 1994–95, unit costs and productivity

Table 5.38: Average expenditure and student staff ratios (continued)

The following data were requested from each jurisdiction for 1993–94

Expenditure per student	1	$/student	*metro*	*non-metro*	*SES*	*size*
In-school primary			na	na	na	na
In-school secondary			na	na	na	na
Student/staff ratios						
In-school primary		ratio	*Teachers*		*Non-teachers*	
School size			*metro*	*non-metro*	*metro*	*non-metro*
1-100			na	13	na	52
101-300			na	13	na	60
301-500			na	17	na	68
501-1000			na	18	na	79
1000+			na	0	na	0
Student/staff ratios						
In-school secondary		ratio	*Teachers*		*Non-teachers*	
School size			metro	non-metro	*metro*	*non-metro*
1-100			na	15	na	62
101-300			na	10	na	62
301-500			na	11	na	26
501-1000			na	13	na	32
1000+			na	0	na	0
SES- all schools	2	ratio	*least*	*medium*	*most disadvantaged*	
teacher			15	15	13	
non-teacher			15	51	59	

Source: NT Department of Education.

Notes: 1 Data for NT were not available in the required format.

2 SES status: The majority of schools (61 per cent) are in the *most disadvantaged* category. There is one school in the *least disadvantaged* category located in a mining town that has one teacher and one non-teacher and 15 students.

Australian Capital Territory – jurisdiction's own comments

"*The ACT Government Senior Secondary System*

In 1994 there were 97 schools catering for nearly 40,000 students in the ACT. Of those there are nine senior secondary colleges catering for 6,500 students in Years 11 and 12.

The outcomes of the ACT government system of education is characterised by a high apparent retention rate to Year 12. 93 per cent of 17 year olds participate in school of which 64 per cent are in the government system. The apparent retention rates of over 100 per cent to Year 12 reflect the transfer of students from non-government schools after Year 10. Over 80 per cent of students beginning Year 11 receive a Year 12 Certificate and two thirds of these students choose to complete tertiary requirements and receive a tertiary entrance rank. Approximately 20 per cent of students receive a vocational certificate. Around 30 per cent of Year 12 Certificate receivers enter university and another 25 per cent enter TAFE.

Curriculum Participation in Year 11 and 12

The senior secondary college system enables a broad curriculum to be offered. Curriculum in the ACT is college based although there is an increasing trend toward system wide courses especially with vocational courses. There are no mandatory subject requirements in Years 11 and 12 in the ACT. However, there is a participation in English of 98 per cent, Science of 64 per cent, Mathematics of 96 per cent and Social Science of 39 per cent. This does not reflect the increasing option of a vocational option within a general education.

Performance in Year 12

The ACT system is based on school based assessment. There are no central exams apart from a moderating test "the Australian Scaling Test" which is used to moderate scores between colleges. The results of all T (tertiary accredited) courses for all subjects in all colleges are reported annually. All unit assessments are graded. These have been examined and graphed in terms of the Key Learning Areas.

The distribution of grades categorised by Key Learning Areas reflect a grading system linked to the ranking of students. This will change from 1997 when assessments will be made against specified criteria defined in some 44 Course Frameworks. Analysis of the ACT Australian Scaling Test results by ACER over time indicate no diminution of standards, even though retention rates have increased."

Australian Capital Territory, 1991–92 — 1994–95, descriptors

Table 5.39: Size of system

	Notes	Units	1991	1992	1993	1994
Students, Staff and schools						
Students		FTE	**40,890**	**41,094**	**40,547**	**39,865**
primary			22,418	22,527	22,583	22,412
secondary			18,472	18,567	17,964	17,453
Staff		FTE	**3,380**	**3,425**	**3,432**	**3,592**
primary			1,525	1,568	1,591	*1,760*
secondary			*1,855*	*1,855*	*1,841*	*1,832*
Schools		number	**94**	**95**	**96**	**97**
primary			63	64	65	66
secondary			25	25	25	25
combined			1	1	1	1
special			5	5	5	5
Mean school sizes		mean	**435.0**	**432.6**	**422.4**	**411.0**
mean primary			345.8	341.6	337.5	329.2
mean secondary			708.6	709.9	685.6	665.6
Total expenditure and assets						
Total expenditure		$'000		**194,035**	**231,797**	**240,286**
In-school primary total				*84931*	*104,279*	*107,725*
Capital				6,904	7,020	6,408
Recurrent				78,027	97,259	101,317
Staff				61,997	79,085	81,818
Other				16,030	18,174	19,499
In-school secondary total		$'000		*91,393*	*112,137*	*115,500*
Capital				3,486	7,695	4,698
Recurrent				87,907	104,442	110,802
Staff				71,778	86,738	92,498
Other				16,129	17,704	18,304
Out of school total		$'000		*17,711*	*15,381*	*17,061*
Capital				179	0	0
Recurrent				17,532	15,381	17,061
Staff				9,120	10,105	10,940
Other				8,412	5,276	6,121
Value of capital stock	1	$'000				

Property, plant & equipment	556,773	843,060	830,418
Provision for depreciation	23,275	323,002	331,422
Written Down Value	**533,498**	**520,057**	**498,995**

Source: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years.

Note: 1 ACT Department of Education and Training, Annual Management reports 91-92, 92-93 and 93-94.

Australian Capital Territory, 1991–92 — 1994–95, descriptors

Table 5.40: School environment

	Notes	*Units*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Participation (15-19)		%	**na**	**40.2**	**39.4**	**35.1**
Participation age 15		%	61.3	63.0	61.6	59.6
Participation age 16		%	67.6	66.7	69.0	66.5
Participation age 17		%	59.6	62.7	61.0	64.2
Participation age 18		%	21.3	22.6	19.2	7.5
Participation age 19		%	na	3.7	3.3	3.3
Apparent retention rates	1					
to Year 10		%	97.1	101.2	99.8	98.4
to Year 11		%	123.2	125.5	124.4	125.3
to Year 12		%	114.6	116.4	112.6	111.8
Year 12 male		%	114.5	114.3	109.4	114.3
Year 12 female		%	114.8	118.7	115.8	109.4
Enrolment index (1994)	2			**Years 11 & 12**		
English		%		23.2		
Maths		%		19.7		
Society and environment		%		19.0		
Science		%		14.9		
Arts		%		4.9		
LOTE		%		3.0		
Technology		%		10.2		
Health and PE		%		5.1		
Student body mix				per cent of government student population		
NESB		%	na	24.0	25.0	25.0
Aboriginality		%	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.3
Students with disabilities		%	na	3.1	3.4	3.7
Seniority profile		%	16.9	17.1	16.3	16.3
Government students	3	%	66	66	66	66
Source of income				per cent of total State expenditure		
Private income		%		na	na	na
Commonwealth		%		10	8	10

Sources: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years. Retention rates calculated by DEET from ABS *Schools Australia*, Cat No. 4221.0, various years.

Non-English speaking background and students with disabilities from DEET National Equity Program for Schools.

Note: 1 Apparent retention rates of over 100 percent may be due to students migrating to the ACT, and from non-government schools in senior years, and students repeating years.

2 Enrolment index from ACT Department of Education and Training (includes non-government schools).

3 Government students as a percentage of all school students.

Australian Capital Territory, 1991–92 — 1994–95, effectiveness

Table 5.41: Destination of school leavers

	Notes	*Units*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Destination of school leavers						
Further Education & Training		%	58	56	48	44
Employed		%	24*	36*	40	37
Not employed		%	15*	0*	10*	19*
Not in labour force		%	3*	8*	3*	0*

Source: Destination of school leavers from ABS, *Transition from Education to Work*, Cat No. 6227.0, unpublished tables.

Notes: * The figures used to derive these percentages have a relative standard error of greater than 25 per cent, and care should be exercised when using them.

Learning outcomes

Table 5.42: ACT Year 12, Key Learning Areas, 1992 to 1994 (per cent students achieving grade[1])

	1994	*1993*	*1992*		*1994*	*1993*	*1992*
English				**Art**			
A	20	21	24	A	23	24	22
B	30	30	37	B	34	34	34
C	35	34	44	C	28	26	28
D	12	11	14	D	10	12	11
E	4	4	5	E	5	4	5
Mathematics				**LOTE**			
A	20	21	21	A	34	32	29
B	26	26	25	B	35	36	37
C	35	34	36	C	24	23	25
D	13	13	13	D	7	6	7
E	6	6	6	E	1	2	3
Society & environment				**Design & technology**			
A	25	25	25	A	23	24	22
B	28	27	30	B	28	30	31
C	32	33	32	C	33	32	33
D	11	11	10	D	12	11	11
E	4	4	3	E	3	4	3
Science				**Health & PE**			
A	22	23	22	A	19	19	21
B	28	27	28	B	28	32	32
C	32	34	35	C	36	34	41
D	13	12	10	D	13	11	19
E	4	4	4	E	4	4	7

Note: 1 "A" is the highest grade and "E" is the lowest grade. Comparisons cannot be made between years.

Australian Capital Territory, 1991–92 — 1994–95, unit costs and productivity

Table 5.43: Average expenditure and student staff ratios

	Notes	*Units*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*
Expenditure/student						
In-school primary total		\$/student		**3,779**	**4,623**	**4,788**
Capital				307	311	285
Recurrent				3,472	4,312	4,503
Staff				2,759	3,506	3,637
Other				713	806	867
In-school secondary total		\$/student		**4,935**	**6,139**	**6,522**
Capital				188	421	265
Recurrent				4,747	5,718	6,257
Staff				3,876	4,749	5,223
Other				871	969	1,034
Out of school		\$/student		**432**	**377**	**424**
Capital				4	0	0
Recurrent				428	377	424
Staff				222	248	272
Other				205	129	152
Student/Staff ratios						
In-school primary						
teacher		ratio	19	18	18	17
non-teacher		ratio	64	65	62	49
In-school secondary						
teacher		ratio	12	12	12	12
non-teacher		ratio	54	55	50	44

Source: Unless otherwise stated, information provided by DEET based on the NSSC, various years.

Australian Capital Territory, 1991–92 — 1994–95, unit costs and productivity

Table 5.43: Average expenditure and student staff ratios (continued)

The following data were requested from each State for 1993–94

Expenditure per student

		Primary	*Secondary*	*SES Primary*	*SES Secondary*
School size	$/student	*metro*	*metro*	na	na
1-100		11,197	15,118		
101-300		4,621	na		
301-500		4,403	6,970		
501-1000		4,147	5,856		
1000+		na	na		

Student/staff ratios

In-school primary		*ratio*	*Teachers*		*Non-teachers*	
School size - teachers	1	ratio	*metro*	*non-metro*	*metro*	*non-metro*
1-100			6	na	5	na
101-300			18	na	67	na
301-500			18	na	81	na
501-1000			19	na	77	na
1000+			na	na	na	na

SES - degree of disadvantage	*least*	*medium*	*most disadvantaged*
teacher	na	na	na
non-teacher	na	na	na

In-school secondary			*Teachers*		*Non-teachers*	
School size - teachers	1		*metro*	*non-metro*	*metro*	*non-metro*
1-100		ratio	5	na	8	na
101-300			na	na	na	na
301-500			11	na	53	na
501-1000			12	na	62	na
1000+			na	na	na	na

SES - degree of disadvantage	ratio	*least*	*medium*	*most disadvantaged*
teacher		na	na	na
non-teacher		na	na	na

Source: ACT Department of Education and Training.

Notes: 1 Care should be taken in the use of these figures as staff and student numbers are derived from different sources and, for secondary schools, represent aggregation of junior secondary high schools and senior secondary colleges.

5.7 Definitions and explanatory notes

This section provides definitions of the indicators included, and definitions for the variables making up the indicators.

Descriptors, effectiveness, efficiency, unit costs and productivity

Those items sourced from the NSSC are defined according to the definitions developed by the Taskforce on School Statistics (TOSS) under MCEETYA as part of the Annual National Reporting process. Data from other sources or where NSSC-based data differ from the TOSS definitions, are defined below. Unless otherwise stated, the figures and definitions refer to government schools and students only.

Aboriginality	The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students (FTE students only) as a proportion of the total student population.
Apparent retention rates	The percentage of students (based on mid-year full time enrolments) who continued to Years 10, 11 and 12 from their respective cohort groups at the commencement of their secondary schooling. Calculated by DEET from ABS, *Schools Australia*, Catalogue number 4221.0, various years.
Average expenditure per student	Based on the NSSC definitions as used in the *Statistical Annex* of the *National Report on Schooling Australia*, MCEETYA. Total expenditure (including superannuation liabilities) divided by total students (the average of the previous two years total students). (See 'Expenditure' below).
Destination of School leavers	The percentage of students aged 15-24 that left school in the previous year that are identified as being in the following categories:
Further education and training	Including higher education, TAFE, business colleges and skills centres.
Unemployed	Persons actively looking for and available for work.
Not in workforce	Persons not defined as employed or unemployed. Eg, Not seeking or unable to seek work.
Employed	Including full and part time.
Enrolment index	The FTE enrolments in each subject as a proportion of all FTE enrolments in the state or territory, grouped into the eight Key Learning Areas.
Expenditure	Financial data is all in financial years: eg. 1994 equals financial year 1993–94. Data after 1992 (1991–92) includes estimated superannuation liabilities and is therefore not comparable with 1992 expenditure data. Figures differ from NSSC published data as they include superannuation in the expenditure figures for 1992–93 and 1993–94 and rentals are included in recurrent and not capital expenditure. No superannuation data is available for 1991–92. (See 'Source of income' below).
Mean school size	For the overall mean, students at special schools are allocated to primary/secondary. Primary and secondary mean size exclude combined and special schools and students: eg. mean primary school size = number of students attending primary schools (FTE) / number of primary schools.
Metropolitan	Schools located in metropolitan areas which include all capital cities and population centres of greater than 100,000 people. See table notes for details of average expenditure calculations for metropolitan students which do not necessarily correspond to NSSC definitions.

Non-English Speaking Background	Includes 'New Arrivals' as well as 'English as a Second Language (ESL)' students. New Arrivals data are based on annual system reports to DEET. The ESL General Support funding formula used up to and including program year 1992 was based on data from a 1983 survey of NESB students and did not take into account perceived language need. The ESL General Support funding formula for 1993 and subsequent years uses weighted data on NESB student numbers from the 1991 National Census.
Non-metropolitan	Schools located in non-metropolitan areas.
Participation (15-19)	Participation rate calculated as the proportion of full time students in government schools of a particular age group multiplied by the participation rate for all schools of that particular age group.
Seniority profile	The number of senior secondary full time equivalent (Years 11 and 12) students as a proportion of the total student population. Seniority profile does not provide a complete picture of the number of students involved in study at this level due to the increase in part-time study.
SES	Socio-economic status is identified by each jurisdiction.
Source of income	Income as a percentage of total government expenditure. *Private income* includes income from fees, fundraising and other commercial activities. *Commonwealth* expenditure were derived from Specific Purpose Payments (SPPs) (current and capital) for government schools from Budget Paper No. 3, 1993–94, Tables 31 and 32 for 1991–92 and 1992–93. DEET provided data for 1993-94. It should be noted that Commonwealth SPP funding indicates the level of monies allocated, not necessarily the level of expenditure incurred in any given financial year. The data therefore provide only a broad indication of the level of Commonwealth funding.
Staff	FTE of staff generally active in government schools and ancillary education establishments.
Student/staff ratios	The number of full time students per full time teaching/non-teaching staff. Students at special schools allocated to primary/secondary. FTE of staff includes those generally active in government schools and ancillary education establishments.
Students	Full time equivalent students at special schools are allocated to primary/secondary.
Students with disabilities	Number of students based on the annual system reports to DEET. The definitions of students with disabilities refer to individual State criteria. Figures are not comparable between States and Territories due to different definitions.

ACER School Life questionnaire

The Australian Council of Educational Research has developed various School Life (ASL) questionnaires that asks students to indicate their level of agreement with about 40 items designed to assess identified aspects of schooling. Examples are presented in Box 5.4.

Box 5.4: ACER Aspects of school life

The ACER School Life (ASL) questionnaires distinguish general feelings of well being (positive affect), general negative feelings (negative affect), and feelings related to specific aspects of school life. The general aspects of school life are:

Positive Affect which is sometimes called general satisfaction. A typical item is *My school is a place where I really like to go each day*.

Negative Affect which refers to negative feelings about school and is typified by an item such as *My school is a place where I feel worried.*

The five specific aspects of schooling embodied are:

Achievement which reflects a sense of confidence in ones ability to be successful in school work. A typical item is *My school is a place where I always achieve a satisfactory standard in my work.*

Opportunity which represents a belief in the relevance of schooling for the future. A typical item is *My school is a place where the things I am taught are worthwhile learning*.

Status which indicates the relative degree of prestige accorded to the individual by significant others within the school. A typical item is *My school is a place where I know people think a lot of me*.

Identity which is concerned with a sense of learning about other people and getting along with other people. A typical item is *My school is a place where I get on well with other students in my class*.

Teachers which refers to a feeling about the adequacy of the interaction between teachers and students. A typical item is *My school is a place where teachers take a personal interest in helping me with my school work.*

In the primary school version two general (positive and negative affect) and three specific scales (teachers, achievement and opportunity) parallel scales of the same name in the secondary school version, although with some different items. The positive affect scale has often been referred to as "general satisfaction" in the primary school version. In addition there were two scales which were different from those in the secondary school version.

Social Integration which reflects a sense of learning about getting along with other people-combining the ideas of the identity and status scales from the secondary versions of the questionnaire. A typical item is *My school is a place where I get on well with other students in my class*.

Adventure which represents a sense of self motivation in learning and that learning is enjoyable for its own sake. A typical item is *My school is a place where I get excited about the work we do.*

The response key for each item is a four-point Likert scale and student responses are scored from 1 for strongly disagree to 4 for strongly agree. Scale scores are obtained by summing the item scores for the items constituting that scale. In some analyses the scale scores are transformed to correspond to a common range of one to ten. Means are the average scale scores for a group of students. An alternative method of summarising student responses is in terms of the percentage agreement (combining percentage ‘agree’ and percentage ‘strongly agree’) with an item or set of items.

References

ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics), *Expenditure on Education Australia*, Catalogue Number 5510.0, various years.

ABS, *1993–94 Government Finance Statistics Australia*, Catalogue Number 5512.0.

ABS, *Schools Australia*, Catalogue Number 4221.0, various years.

ABS, *Transition from Education to Work*, Catalogue Number 6227.0, unpublished tables.

ACER (Australian Council for Educational Research), *Progress through High School: A Study of Senior Secondary Schooling in New South Wales*, Research Monograph No. 43, 1992.

ACER, *Primary Schooling in Victoria: A Study of Students' Attitudes and Achievements in Years 5 and 6 of Government Primary Schools*, Research Monograph No. 37, 1990.

ACER, *School Organisation and the Quality of Schooling: A Study of Victorian Government Secondary Schools*, Research Monograph No. 29, 1986.

AEC (Australian Education Council) 1989, *National Report on Schooling*, Curriculum Council, Melbourne.

Dawkins J. (Treasurer) 1993, *1993–94 Budget Paper No. 3 Commonwealth Financial Relations with Other Levels of Government*.

DEET (Department of Employment, Education and Training) 1994, *Subject Choice in Years 11 and 12*, AGPS, Canberra.

MCEETYA (Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs) 1994, *National Strategy for Equity in Schooling*.

MCEETYA 1994, *National Report on Schooling in Australia – Statistical Annex*, Curriculum Corporation, Melbourne.

MCEETYA, *National Schools Statistics Collection*, various years.