
A Education preface

Part A: Education preface

Education is a lifelong activity, delivered both informally (for example, by family, through the community or at work) and formally through the three sectors that comprise Australia's education and training system (the school education, vocational education and training (VET) and higher education sectors).

Australia's formal system of education and training has a range of objectives, some of which are common across all sectors of education (for example, to increase knowledge) while others are more specific to a particular sector. The objectives of:

- the school education sector, as reflected in the national goals for schooling (box 3.1, *Report on Government Services 2007* (2007 Report)), include a focus on developing the capacities and talents of all young people so they have the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and values for a productive and rewarding life
- the VET sector, as reflected in the national strategy for VET 2004–10 (2007 Report, box 4.3), include a focus on giving industry a highly skilled workforce to support strong performance in the global economy; making employers and students the centre of VET; strengthening communities and regions economically and socially through learning and employment; and giving Indigenous Australians skills for viable jobs and to ensure their learning culture will be shared
- the higher education sector, as reflected in the *Higher Education Report for the 2003–2005 Triennium*, include advancing and applying knowledge and understanding to benefit the Australian economy and society.

Australian, State and Territory governments fund government and non-government providers to deliver formal education and training services within each of the three education and training sectors. Government providers include government schools (preschool, primary and secondary), technical and further education (TAFE) institutes, and universities. Non-government providers include privately operated schools and preschools, and private registered training organisations (RTOs) in the VET sector.

Chapter 3 covers the performance of school education. Some comparison between the government and non-government school systems is included. Chapter 4 covers the performance of the VET sector. Preschool programs, which provide a variety of educational and developmental experiences for children before full time schooling, are covered in chapter 14.

Some of the performance indicators in chapters 3 and 4 were also reported as key indicators of Indigenous disadvantage in the report *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2005* (SCRGSP 2005).

References

SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2005, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2005*, Productivity Commission, Canberra.