

MEDIA STATEMENT

25 October 2014

ACARA WELCOMES THE MOVE TO BETTER AND FASTER ASSESSMENT

The Chairman of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, Professor Barry McGaw AO, welcomed today's announcement by the Commonwealth Minister for Education, the Hon. Minister Pyne, of a commitment from the Australian Government of \$24.7 million to move NAPLAN online.

"ACARA looks forward to moving NAPLAN online as soon as possible – to provide better assessment, more precise results and faster turnaround of information," said Professor McGaw.

"When students take NAPLAN online, they will get test items that are matched to their level of performance. They will not get items that are too difficult or too easy for them," Professor McGaw said. "The computer will tailor the test to the students' achievement level by marking their responses as they work through the items in the tests."

"The same NAPLAN achievement scale will be used, but students' achievements will be measured more precisely, particularly for students in the high- and low-achieving categories, and results will be returned much more quickly than at present. NAPLAN test items will reflect the Australian Curriculum in English and mathematics, meaning that the best preparation for NAPLAN is for teachers to focus on teaching the curriculum."

Professor McGaw said, "In recent research, funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, ACARA confirmed that online delivery of tests, tailored by the computer to students' level of achievement, works well and is more engaging for students".

ACARA is already managing an online assessment program on a smaller scale through the National Assessment Program (NAP). Last year, over 11 000 students across Australia took an online assessment of their knowledge and understanding in civics and citizenship assessment online. Currently, around 12 000 students are taking NAP assessments in ICT literacy online. These tests will conclude across the country on 14 November.

ALL MEDIA QUERIES AND REQUESTS FOR INTERVIEWS WITH PROFESSOR BARRY MCGAW AO, CHAIRMAN, SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO: ROBYN ZIINO, DIRECTOR, COMMUNICATIONS AND STRATEGIC RELATIONS: 0404 746 263