

AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION DIGEST

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FEDERAL SCENE

Over 2,300 new places to boost university entry

Hon Julie Bishop MP Media Release 11 September

The Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Julie Bishop, today announced more than 2,300 new Commonwealth-supported places to help meet demand for higher education next year.

"Places have been allocated to areas of skills need and student demand, including 560 places for the training of engineers, 390 for science professionals, 395 for nurses, 375 for teachers and 210 for other health professionals," Minister Bishop said.

"Other areas to benefit from the new places are accounting, social work, foreign languages, and higher education pathways for Indigenous students as well as South Australia's first veterinary science school at the University of Adelaide.

"The majority of the new places have been provided to public universities, with private higher education providers receiving 260 places in the national priority areas of nursing and teaching."

The Australian Government is providing new engineering places as part of the Skills for the Future package and other places as part of the Our Universities: Backing Australia's Future package. The majority of these places will commence in 2008.

"These new places are in addition to the more than 4,600 new places the Government allocated in 2006. Around 50,000 new university places are being funded by the Australian Government by 2011," Minister Bishop said.

"The number of eligible students missing out on a place is at historically low levels, with a record 92% of home-state Year 12 eligible applicants receiving an offer this year, up from 90% last year, which was the best result in more than two decades.

Read more at <http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Bishop/2007/09/B002110907.asp>

\$68 million to help our universities become more efficient

Hon Julie Bishop MP Media Release 5 September

The Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, today announced \$68 million in funding to assist universities achieve greater productivity and operational efficiencies.

"The 36 projects funded under the second round of the Workplace Productivity Programme will strengthen the capacity of our universities to manage and implement workplace change," Minister Bishop said.

"Universities that embrace the opportunity for workplace reform and greater efficiency are able to free up resources to help retain and reward our best and brightest academics and researchers."

The successful projects include:

- \$4.8 million for the University of Canberra to reform its business processes and improve its budget modelling and financial management;
- \$4.5 million for Murdoch University to reform its governance and decision-making structures for increased efficiency in resource allocation for teaching and research;
- \$3.7 million for Victoria University to progress workplace reform through more flexible working arrangements and strategic workforce planning;
- \$3.2 million for the University of the Sunshine Coast for a major upgrade of administrative systems capacity that will enhance student and staff services;
- \$3.3 million for The University of Adelaide to simplify its business processes and relieve the administrative workload on academic staff to improve teaching and research capacity; and
- \$1.6 million for Macquarie University to streamline its academic structure and implement a new expense management system.

Read more at

<http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Bishop/2007/09/R001050907.asp>

Further \$7.6 million investment in higher education

Hon Julie Bishop MP Media Release 11 September

The Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, today announced funding of \$7.6 million for 11 innovative projects that will support universities to diversify and to provide high quality education.

"These important new projects, funded through the Collaboration and Structural Reform Fund (CASR), will promote structural reform in higher education and encourage stronger links between universities and industry, business, the local community, education and training providers," Minister Bishop said.

"This funding will also help ensure that courses offered by our universities can effectively respond to the needs of industry and the community.

"Our economy is booming, which is creating demand for skills in key industries, and several of the new projects will help address this."

Almost \$900,000 is being provided to Charles Darwin University, in collaboration with regional universities in Queensland and New South Wales, to develop shared, high-quality learning materials in chemistry, physics and environmental science.

Other projects involve advanced mathematics, information technology and communications, power engineering, electronic engineering, water management and human anatomy.

Read more at <http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Bishop/2007/09/B001110907.asp>

\$50 Million investment for indigenous boarding school facilities

Hon Julie Bishop MP Media Release 31 August

The Australian Government is supporting Indigenous education through a \$50 million boost to enhance and expand accommodation for Indigenous students.

The Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, today announced state specific funding for non-government boarding schools as part of the Indigenous Boarding Infrastructure Programme.

"Schools will be able to repair and replace aged and deteriorating student accommodation facilities, and build further capacity to accommodate increasing numbers of Indigenous students," Minister Bishop said.

"This significant investment in education infrastructure is further evidence of the Australian Government's support for Indigenous education outcomes over the long term."

Read more at <http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Bishop/2007/08/B001310807.asp>

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AROUND THE STATES

NSW: School shrinks week to four days

Sarah Price The Sydney Morning Herald 9 September

A SENIOR state high school will move to a four-day week next year in a move designed to provide more flexibility to students completing their HSC.

Bankstown Senior College has just received approval from the Department of Education to introduce the reduced school week following the successful trial of the program at Illawarra Senior College.

Principal Col Harris said the move would cater for the diverse student population, which ranges in age from 15 to 69, many of whom work to support themselves and their families. Ninety per cent of them have a non-English-speaking background.

"Some of our students work up to 12 hours a night and then come to school," he said. "It allows them to balance work, family and school commitments."

The students will attend the college, known as a "second chance" school for those who have been previously unsuccessful in completing their HSC, or for those who have recently moved to Australia, many as refugees, for longer hours on Mondays to Thursdays to make up for having Fridays off.

Instead of 9am-3.30pm Monday to Friday, school hours will be 8.30am-3.30pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays and 8.30am-4.30pm on Tuesdays.

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/school-shrinks-week-to-four-days/2007/09/08/1188783555768.html>

SA: Teachers want 'bad-child' ban

Xanthe Kleinig & Tory Shepherd, AdelaideNow 10 September

TEACHERS want primary students with extreme behavioural problems banned from mainstream schools.

The South Australian Primary Principals Association is calling for an estimated 50 students with "extreme behaviours" to be taught in separate, specialist facilities.

Some children are so violent they are a "constant danger" to classmates and teachers, association president Glyn O'Brien says. The situation is escalating, with 1400 dangerous incidents reported to the Education Department from last year.

Records obtained by The Advertiser reveal violence including:

A YEAR 7 boy in the Riverland threatening to murder staff and students
A YEAR 6 boy hit, punched and kicked an unidentified person and threw a brick, narrowly missing the assistant principal at a school in Salisbury; and
A YEAR 2 boy was "physically abusive" to staff in Salisbury.

Children can be put in a "learning centre" for up to 10 weeks of intensive rehabilitation but are returned to normal schools, regardless of their progress.

Read more at <http://www.news.com.au/adelaidenow/story/0,22606,22390023-5006301,00.html>

ACT: New focus on early childhood schools

ABC.net.au 3 September

The ACT Government has released a policy paper to focus attention on early childhood education.

The policy recognises the need to invest in early education to improve standards for children later in their school years.

The Education Minister Andrew Barr says a key part is the commitment to establish four new early childhood schools at Belconnen, Narrabundah, Lyons and Isabella Plains.

Mr Barr says research shows such programs have long-term benefits.

"All of the studies demonstrate that good early childhood education and good quality investment there results in higher school completion rates, further education participation, better employment outcomes, higher earnings for students and improves the general social wellbeing," Mr Barr said.

VIC: Quality study triumphs over quantity

Elisabeth Tarica The Age 10 September

Setting goals is the key to success, say VCE veterans.

PLANNING and balance were the keys to Ashray Gunjur's approach to the VCE final exams - a strategy that led him to become one of the state's top-performing students.

"Failing to plan is planning to fail," says Ashray, who studied in 90-minute blocks during eight-hour shifts.

"I tried to set goals for the day. It sounds a bit contrived but I wrote up what I wanted to do like maybe seven hours of work and I would timetable that in.

"For example, I would try to achieve pre-practice exams during the day and correct them."

Ashray was one of four year 12 graduates at Glen Waverley Secondary College who achieved the perfect tertiary ranking of 99.95 last year.

The four are now studying medicine at the University of Melbourne. As almost 80,000 VCE students prepare for end-of-year exams, Ashray recommends preparing a study timetable now as his most useful tip for getting the most out of the final weeks.

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/news/education-news/quality-study-triumphs-over-quantity/2007/09/08/1188783507152.html>

COMPETITIONS, AWARDS & PRIZES

Australian Vocational Student Prize winners announced

Hon Julie Bishop MP Media Release 5 September

The Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, and the Minister for Vocational and Further Education, the Hon Andrew Robb AO MP, today jointly announced the 442 outstanding winners of the 2007 Australian Vocational Student Prize.

This annual prize recognises that vocational pathways are valuable and rewarding for young people, and is awarded to students who have demonstrated outstanding skills, ability and commitment in undertaking an Australian School-based Apprenticeship or Vocational Education and Training in Schools Programme.

"I am delighted to reward the successes of our nation's highest achieving vocational and technical education students, selected from each state and territory. They each receive a certificate and prize of \$2,000 in recognition of their important achievements," Minister Bishop said.

"The Australian Government is determined to promote and recognise vocational education and training pathways as vital to the development and continued growth of our nation's skills base," Mr Robb said.

"We are committed to working with schools and business to give our young people practical hands-on learning that helps them develop the vital skills they need for today's world of work."

Read more at

<http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Bishop/2007/09/R002050907.asp>

CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

Third International Conference on Pedagogies and Learning: Meanings Emerge in Practice

27-28 September 2007

University of Southern Queensland, Springfield Campus, Brisbane

Come along and enjoy and learn from presentations by speakers from Queensland, interstate and overseas about a wide range of current educational hot topics, including:

- developing the globalised learning environment
- engaging the student voice in practice
- exploring the challenge of pedagogical change
- features of successful educational practice
- inclusive pedagogy
- language and pedagogy
- meeting the pedagogical challenges in new contexts
- researching personal pedagogies
- understanding transformative pedagogies

Keynotes

Father Chris Riley (Founder & CEO of Youth Off the Streets, Sydney)

How values such as tolerance, respect, compassion and integrity can transform pedagogy and learning

Dr Caroline Lodge (Institute of Education, University of London)

Engaging student voice in practice

Denise Murray (Professor Emeritus, Macquarie University)

How interactions between language, society and technology impact on knowledge creation in practice

For enquiries, please contact: Dr Shirley O'Neill (Conference Convenor) email: oneills@usq.edu.au or Ms Lorraine Hawes (Conference Secretary) email: hawes@usq.edu.au

Read more at <http://www.usq.edu.au/education/research/conf/pedagogies2007/default.htm>

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REMINDERS

Australian Government's 2008 National Awards for Quality Schooling

Nominations Close 15 October 2007... Who will you nominate?

Good teachers invest a great deal in their teaching and make a genuine difference in the lives and opportunities of students.

Have the professions achievements recognised and rewarded.
Nominate an inspirational teacher, principal, support staff member or school for a 2008 national award.

Read more at <http://www.teachingaustralia.edu.au> Free call: 1800 131 323

Flexible & Distance Learning Conference - Brisbane - 19 to 21 September - <http://www.aades.edu.au>

National Outdoor Education Conference - Ballarat - 20 to 23 September
<http://www.outdooreducationaustralia.org.au>

Linking Latitudes India Conference - New Delhi & Agra, India - 30 September to 4 October - http://www.asiaeducation.edu.au/index_flash.htm

Humane Education: a compassionate ethic for animals - Brisbane - 5 & 6 October - <http://www.ciwf.org.au>

2007 ACEL International Conference - Sydney - 10 to 12 October
<http://www.aceconference2007.com>

Anti-Poverty Week - 14 to 20 October - <http://www.antipovertyweek.org.au>

UNICEF Day for Change - 24 October - <http://www.unicefdayforchange.org.au/>

ACSSO National Education Conference - Darwin - 22 & 23 October
<http://www.acsso.org.au/natconf>

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RESOURCES

Fundraising Directory - <http://www.fundraisingdirectory.com.au> and
<http://www.fetesandfestivals.com.au>

Drug Awareness Website - <http://www.drugawareness.com.au/>

Australian Schools Directory - <http://www.australianschoolsdirectory.com.au>

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