

Foreword

The Defence Community Organisation welcomes you and your family to your posting to the Australian Capital Territory or Wagga Wagga and trusts that you will find your stay both beneficial and enjoyable.

Education is a key issue for many ADF personnel. Whether it is one's own personal education, the ongoing needs of an ADF member's spouse or partner, or the education of school-aged children, education is important and the issues can be potentially complex.

Interestingly, mobility and changing schools is increasing globally and mobile students are seen to have greater flexibility and social awareness. Such attributes can have a positive benefit in the development of greater resilience in children, particularly allowing them to deal with and accommodate change, which is so much a part of our lives in today's society.

This Education Book has been prepared by the Regional Education Liaison Officer (REDLO) to provide a brief overview of education in the ACT, Queanbeyan and Wagga Wagga areas. This book addresses many issues and questions raised by ADF families. If more information is required, then it is recommended that parents contact the REDLO, who has in-depth knowledge of the education systems within the ACT and NSW. A distinctive feature of the ACT/Queanbeyan area is that families may be posted to the ACT but housed in Canberra or NSW (Jerrabomberra or Queanbeyan). This means that, because of state differences in policies and resourcing, there may be differences in access to, availability of and levels of services in therapies, preschooling, transport and schools, depending on whether you are living in the ACT or NSW.

The REDLO is located in the Canberra Office, 21 Napier Close, Deakin and can be contacted by phone on (02) 6265 8746. Please do not hesitate to contact the REDLO or any other member of the local DCO teams. DCO encourage you to view their services as a specific resource to you and your family while in location or as you prepare to move.

Suzanne McBride

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ACT / Wagga Wagga
DCO Canberra
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The information in this book is current at the time of printing.

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Defence Community Organisation Services

The Defence Community Organisation (DCO) provides confidential services to the Australian Defence Force, its members (including single members) and their families through a broad range of specialised services.

DCO supports Commanders, members and their families by providing assistance in case of accident, illness, hospitalisation, financial difficulty, managing casualties and estates and at times of bereavement.

DCO Canberra – contact details:

Canberra Office

Ground Floor
21 Napier Close
Deakin ACT 2600
Tel: (02) 6265 8777

Wagga Wagga Office

First Floor, Suite 104
76 Morgan Street
Wagga Wagga NSW 2650
Tel: (02) 6931 0011

Your local DCO team employs the following staff:

Defence Social Workers are qualified professionals trained to assist members and their families to address a wide range of personal, family and work-related issues in a confidential setting.

Military Support Officers (MSOs) are uniformed personnel from the three Services who offer support and assistance to members and their families, and undertake a liaison function with Units and Command.

Family Liaison Officers (FLOs) assist members and families to settle into new communities and are a source of information about local and Australian Defence Force resources and support activities.

Regional Education Liaison Officers (REDLOs) are qualified, experienced teachers who assist Defence families with matters related to education.

They provide information, advice, referral and specialised assistance to Service members and their families, the ADF and education systems on education matters. REDLOs provide advice about the impacts of posting mobility on education. They can assist with the transition between the various state and territory primary, secondary and tertiary education systems.

REDLO ACT can be contacted on:

Tel: (02) 6265 8746
Email: redlo.act@defence.gov.au

Education Assistance Scheme

Defence recognises that the mobile lifestyle can create particular challenges for school-aged children. One purpose of the Education Assistance Scheme (EAS) is to assist with the cost of additional educational services, such as extra tuition costs to bring the child's academic achievement up to the standard achieved in the child's former school.

The basic elements of the EAS are as follows:

- tuition must be provided by a qualified person or a properly accredited organisation
- tuition must be provided within 18 months of the child enrolling at the new school
- the principal or class teacher certifies that the tuition is required
- tuition can be provided for one hour per week, per subject
- for previously studied compulsory subjects, this tuition can last for 14 weeks
- for compulsory subjects not previously studied, it can be for up to six months
- in Years 10, 11 or 12 some tuition can last for the school year
- tuition may be undertaken during or outside school hours
- the CO/OC of the member's unit or REDLO gives approval for the 14 weeks of tuition
- there is provision for an extension of EAS if the disruption was not reduced to a reasonable degree by the initial tuition.

Other aspects covered by the EAS scheme include:

- boarding assistance for students in Years 10, 11 or 12 who do not relocate on posting with their family
- accommodation costs, in certain circumstances, for tertiary students



- student reunion travel for those students who board or are at a tertiary institution
- assistance for assessment, therapy and additional support for special needs students who were receiving this support in their previous posting and who are unable to access such services in the government system in the new state/territory, provided they have been recognised by Defence under the Dependants with Special Needs policy
- compensation to a member whose child forfeits a scholarship or bursary because of the member posting to another locality.

The EAS also contains a variety of discretionary clauses relating to the above provisions.

Under some elements of the scheme, there remains a parental contribution component.

Full details of the Education Assistance Scheme are available at PACMAN, Vol. 2 Ch. 8, Part 4. A copy is available online at <http://intranet.defence.gov.au/pac/>

Application forms are available on DEFWEB:

Tutoring Assistance	AD 301
Tutoring Assistance (Discretionary)	AD 301-1
Boarding Assistance	AD 302
Tertiary Assistance	AD 303

Note: Child tuition assistance under the Education Assistance Scheme is not Fringe Benefits Tax reportable.

For further assistance or advice, please contact your local REDLO.

Age of Entry for Schooling

The age of entry to formal schooling varies from state to state/territory and each sets its own guidelines. As you can see from the table below, a child may be eligible to commence schooling in one state but not eligible to do so in another. For further information or to discuss any concerns about age of entry, contact the REDLO.



State/territory	Name of first year	Eligibility	Date of commencement
Australian Capital Territory (ACT)	Kindergarten	Five years of age on or before 30 April	January of that year
New South Wales (NSW)	Kindergarten	Five years of age on or before 31 July	January of that year
Northern Territory (NT)	Transition	Five years of age on or before 30 June	January of that year
Queensland (QLD)	Preparatory	Five years of age on or before 30 June	January of that year
South Australia (SA)	Reception	Five years of age	The beginning of the term after the child turns five years of age
Tasmania (TAS)	Preparatory	Five years of age on or by 1 January in any year	Must start school in that year
Victoria (VIC)	Preparatory	Five years of age on or before 30 April	January of that year
Western Australia (WA)	Pre-primary	Five years of age on or before 30 June	January of that year

On the Move Again

Moving is a major life change. It is an event filled with a variety of emotions such as excitement, anticipation, fear, sadness, anxiety, confusion and optimism. Recognise that your children may particularly experience a sense of loss as a result of a move. It takes time to work through this loss. Encourage children to express their emotions. Accept their feelings and respond with understanding. By expressing your own feelings in healthy ways, children will recognise that they are not alone in their feelings.

Encourage children to keep a scrapbook or photo album of their former community, school, home and friends. Allow children to maintain contact with former friends for as long as necessary (telephone, email, letters, photographs, etc).

Be prepared for signs of stress from children of any age. Preschoolers may regress to thumb-sucking, baby talk or other behaviour they had left behind. School-age children may intensify natural habits; for example, a shy child may become more shy, an aggressive child more aggressive.

Talk to them about the posting – early and often. Give your child as much information as possible before the move; more lead time means more time for the child to get used to the idea. Having information or knowledge about the new location can also increase the likelihood of making a smooth and positive transition.

The most important aspect of settling children into any environment, whether it is school or not, is to make them feel secure. This security may just be a feeling that the family is together, or that someone will be there when they need to talk. Younger children may feel more secure if they have a treasured possession with them.

After the move, resume normal family routines as soon as possible (bedtime, chores, discipline, storytime, traditions). Consider allocating special time to just sit down with your child to discuss his/her day as well as sharing items about your day. These few minutes spent with your child will probably confirm in your child's mind your interest in all that he/she is doing. Congratulate your child on managing the challenging experience of moving.

Children need time to adjust. In general it takes children six months to adjust to a move. If you have concerns about your child's adjustment contact a GP, the school counsellor or other health professional.

Changing Schools

So, your family has another posting?

Among other challenges and opportunities that this event entails, there is that unenviable task of preparing your child for a change in schools. Here are some hints that may help your child during this transition.

Before you leave:

- notify the present school of the move
- ask the school for reports, samples of work and other relevant information for collection prior to departure
- prepare a student information portfolio for each child (see next page)
- return all library items, texts, equipment, etc. that belong to the school
- ensure all outstanding fees are paid
- encourage your child to collect mementos, gather contact details, and email addresses of friends
- contact the REDLO for information on education in the new location
- contact the new school for enrolment forms, school prospectus, curriculum details, web address and other details required
- explore the new school via the internet if possible
- ensure that all information needed to enrol at the new school is carried with you.

On arrival:

- make an appointment with the principal or relevant enrolment officer
- at the appointment, discuss your child's strengths and weaknesses, special needs (if applicable), appropriate year level placement, student information portfolio, subject choices, etc.
- accompany your child on a tour of the school

- familiarise yourself with the established forms of communication between the school and the home
- allow approximately four weeks for your child to settle in and for teachers to get to know them, then ring the school to discuss progress
- access the Education Assistance Scheme if appropriate
- contact the REDLO for further assistance or advice if required. Issues may include handwriting styles, behaviour management, communication with the school, school discipline, suspension and expulsion, etc.

As a parent it may be worth noting that in April 1989 the members of the Australian Education Council accepted the recommendation that:

‘systems accept differences in handwriting styles and that this information be distributed to teachers showing the accepted styles’ and that ‘all Australian Government school systems will now accept that a child taught a handwriting style in one State will not have to change it on transfer to another State which teaches a different style’.

State Education Departments

Address	Telephone/Fax	Website
Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Department of Education and Training 220 Northbourne Ave BRADDON ACT 2612	Tel: (02) 6207 5111 Fax: (02) 6205 9333	www.decs.act.gov.au
New South Wales (NSW) NSW Department of Education and Training GPO Box 33 SYDNEY NSW 2001	Tel: (02) 9561 8000	www.schools.nsw.edu.au
Northern Territory (NT) Department of Employment, Education and Training GPO Box 4821 DARWIN NT 0801	Tel: (08) 8999 5659 Fax: (08) 8901 1326	www.deet.nt.gov.au
Queensland (QLD) Department of Education, Training and the Arts 30 Mary Street BRISBANE QLD 4000	Tel: (07) 3237 0111	www.education.qld.gov.au
South Australia (SA) Department of Education and Children's Services 31 Flinders Street ADELAIDE SA 5000	Tel: (08) 8226 1000 Tel: 1800 088 158	www.decs.sa.gov.au
Tasmania (TAS) Department of Education 116 Bathurst Street HOBART TAS 7000	Tel: 1300 135 513 Fax: (03) 6231 1576	www.education.tas.gov.au
Victoria (VIC) Department of Education 2 Treasury Place MELBOURNE VIC 3000	Tel: (03) 9637 2000	www.education.vic.gov.au
Western Australia (WA) Department of Education and Training 151 Royal Street EAST PERTH WA 6004	Tel: (08) 9264 4111 Fax: (08) 9264 5005	www.det.wa.edu.au

Student Information Portfolio

A student information portfolio is a collection of materials designed to show your child's schooling experience and achievements. Constructing the portfolio can be a cooperative project with your child and can help generate confidence and enthusiasm for a move.

A digital student information portfolio has been developed by DCO. It is an interactive multimedia program that captures the academic, sporting, cultural and social history of a child over each year of their schooling. A copy of this digital version can be obtained from your local REDLO or DCO office.

A well-constructed portfolio can:

- provide a documented history of the student's progress
- provide details about the student to assist the new school in placing the student in an appropriate year level
- encourage your child to feel he/she is making a contribution to his/her schooling
- help parents to relate more confidently to new schools.

If you are unable to access the digital program then a sturdy two-ring binder and a number of clear plastic inserts or a display book is suitable for the portfolio.

Suggested items for inclusion are:

Introductory section

- Personal details
- A recent photograph
- Details of siblings at the same school
- Copy of birth certificate
- Immunisation record
- Baptismal certificate (if applicable)

School information

- Schooling history sheet
- Current subjects and levels
- Reports
- Dated samples of student's work
- Awards and certificates

Special information

- Guidance assessment reports, medical reports, school recommendations
- Involvement with school-based activities, for example canteen duty, coaching or umpiring a sporting team, Rock Eisteddfod etc.

Co-curricular activities

- Sports, hobbies, club membership
- Art, music, languages, drama

Resources

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) has developed two resources to assist schools and parents when students change schools.

- 'Changing Schools' is a kit for parents containing an information booklet and a checklist brochure
- 'Interstate Student Data Transfer Note' – with parental approval this system allows student information to be transferred from the old school in one state or territory to the new school in another.

Further information can be obtained from:

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)
PO Box 9880
Canberra City ACT 2601

General enquiries: 1300 363 079

Canberra switchboard: (02) 6240 8111

Copies of the 'Changing Schools' booklet and brochure can be accessed at

Internet: www.dest.gov.au/changingschools

Internet: www.deewr.gov.au

Email: publications@dest.gov.au

Information on the transfer note can be found at

Internet: www.mceetya.edu.au/transfernote

NSW Public School Term Dates

(Note: The first day of terms 1–3 are school development days for staff only)

2009	2010
Term 1 Tuesday 27 January to Thursday 9 April	Term 1 Wednesday 27 January to Thursday 1 April
Term 2 Tuesday 28 April to Friday 10 July	Term 2 Monday 19 April to Friday 2 July
Term 3 Monday 27 July to Friday 2 October	Term 3 Monday 19 July to Friday 24 September
Term 4 Monday 19 October to Friday 18 December	Term 4 Monday 11 October to Friday 17 December

Term dates can be accessed at

Internet: www.schools.nsw.edu.au/calendar/viewtermdates.php

Note: Some non-government schools do not follow this calendar. Please check with your non-government school to confirm their school term dates.

ACT Public School Term Dates

(Note: Day 1, Term 1: Staff only; Day 2, Term 1: New students; Day 3, Term 1: Classes commence, except for 2010 – Day 1 and 2, Term 1: Staff only; Day 3, Term 1: New students; Day 4, Term 1: Classes commence.)

2009	2010
Term 1 Friday 30 January to Thursday 9 April	Term 1 Thursday 28 January to Friday 9 April
Term 2 Tuesday 28 April to Friday 3 July	Term 2 Tuesday 27 April to Friday 2 July
Term 3 Monday 20 July to Friday 25 September	Term 3 Monday 19 July to Friday 24 September
Term 4 Monday 12 October to Friday 18 December	Term 4 Monday 11 October to Friday 17 December

Term dates can be accessed at

Internet: www.det.act.au/schools/termdates.htm

Note: Some non-government schools do not follow this calendar. Please check with your non-government school to confirm their school term dates.

Education in New South Wales

The overall goal of the Department of Education and Training is to provide all young people in New South Wales with a broad and balanced, high quality, contemporary school education, relevant both to their individual development and fulfilment and to the social and economic challenges facing Australia.

A parallel system of education is operated on a fee-paying basis by religious and other independent organisations.

The New South Wales education system consists of three stages:

1. Non or Pre-Compulsory Education

The NSW Department of Education and Training operates 77 preschools across the state. These preschools provide educational programs to children for one year prior to enrolment in Kindergarten – which is the first year of compulsory schooling.

The majority of preschools in New South Wales are privately run and are overseen by the Department of Community Services.

2. Compulsory Education

Parents are required to ensure that their children are enrolled at school from the age of six to 15 years. However, children may be enrolled at school earlier, provided they turn five **on or before 31 July** of that year.

All primary and the vast majority of secondary schools have a **designated local enrolment area**. Parents may apply to enrol their child at a school outside their enrolment area. Schools can accept enrolments outside their area **if space permits**. Parents should make contact with the principal of the school(s) they would like their child to attend to find out whether places are available.

When a child is transferred from one New South Wales public school (primary and secondary) to another public school in New South Wales, parents must obtain a **Transfer Certificate** from the child's previous school.

Students transferring from interstate can normally be expected to join the same age group that they occupied in their previous school system. However, the circumstances of each case are considered individually and parents are encouraged to discuss these matters with the school principal. It is vital that each student has a well-constructed student information portfolio.

3. Post-Compulsory Education

Students may choose to continue their education by attending a range of secondary schools, senior colleges, colleges of technical and further education (TAFE), university and higher education institutions.

Pre-Compulsory Education Options

1. Preschool Education (Department of Education and Training)

Attendance – most departmental preschools operate on a sessional basis with sessions lasting 2.5 hours each. Children in sessional preschools attend for either five mornings or five afternoons per week. Some preschools offer full-day attendance, either for two or three days per week, usually from 9am until 3pm, while a limited number offer full-time attendance for five days per week.

Eligibility – children attend departmental preschools for one year before they enter kindergarten, the first year of formal school. They may enter departmental preschools at the beginning of the school year if they turn four on or before 31 July of that year.

Program – all departmental preschools are staffed with teachers qualified in early childhood education. They provide an educational program that caters for each child's individual stage of development. The program includes activities which develop children's literacy, numeracy, physical, social, emotional and self-help skills.

2. Community and Centre-Based Preschools/Kindergartens

Attendance – preschools/kindergartens that are **centre-based** childcare services usually open between 9am and 3pm Monday to Friday in the school term.

Preschool/Kindergartens that are **community-based** usually operate on a daily sessional basis, i.e. one, two or three days per child per week, and may enrol children aged two years prior to formal school entrance. These centres operate on a non-profit basis.

Operation – preschools may be privately owned, managed by non-profit organisations or parent groups.

3. Child Care

Childcare services must meet numerous minimum NSW standards in order to be licensed to operate. This includes long day care, family day care, preschools, home-based care and occasional care. Long day care centres that offer child care assistance must also meet the requirements of the National Childcare Accreditation Council. To be accredited, services must meet an acceptable standard on 52 principles of quality child care. Each centre should have its Accreditation Certificate displayed.

There are several types of child care available, including:

- **Long day care** – provides child care for a minimum of eight hours per day, 48 weeks per year, in a special-purpose building. It is designed primarily for use by children whose parents are working, seeking employment or studying. Centres may be privately owned, managed by non-profit organisations or parent groups. Some centres also provide preschool care.
- **Family day care** – provides care for up to seven children aged from birth to 12 years with no more than five under six years in a day carer's home. Trained childcare advisers who oversee the children's activities coordinate the scheme. The days and hours of care can be very flexible and include nights and weekends. Children can attend regular excursions to organised playgroups with other children. Phone (02) 9391 9000 for more information.
- **Home-based care** – provides a similar service independently of a family day care scheme. Information about local carers can be sought by phoning the Department of Community Services.
- **Occasional care** – provides short periods of care for children aged from birth to school age. Parents use occasional child care for a variety of reasons, including respite care, during appointments, shopping, or during casual work.

Occasional care services can be found in a variety of forms in shopping malls, specialist centres or community halls. Hours of operation will differ, some open five days a week and others open just one day. A centre will have at least one trained staff member to coordinate and oversee the services.

Child Care Access Hotline: 1800 670 305

This toll free number provides up-to-date information on childcare services in your area, including the type of care available and government help with the cost of child care.

If you need advice or information or have any concerns about your child care arrangements in the ACT, please call (02) 6207 1114 and ask for the Children's Services Adviser.

Out of School Hours Care

There are several types of child care for primary school children. The most common is out of school hours care centres. The other types are family day care and home-based care.

1. Out of school hours care centres are often located in or near school grounds. The services may run before and after school and/or during the school holidays. These centres largely focus on recreation and leisure rather than education.

2. Family day care is able to offer care to school-aged children as long as they do not exceed the total number of children for which they are licensed to care.

3. Home-based carers are able to offer care to school-aged children as long as they do not exceed the total number of children for which they are licensed.

Compulsory Education

1. Primary Education (Kindergarten to Year 6)

Parents of primary school children, in partnership with teachers, have an important part to play in encouraging young children to develop a love of learning.

Children may enter kindergarten at the beginning of the school year in the NSW Department of Education and Training schools if they turn five on or before 31 July in that year. Some gifted or talented children may be ready to start school at an earlier age. Others may benefit from being a little older but, by law, all children must start school by their sixth birthday.

The NSW school curriculum is organised into key areas of learning as required by the *Education Reform Act 1990*. There are six primary school key learning areas:

- English – including listening, talking, reading and writing. Students are encouraged to develop their spoken and written English skills for a range of purposes.
- mathematics – students study patterns and relationships. Children analyse, count and sort numbers and solve problems in the areas of space, measurement and number.
- science and technology – helps students understand their environment, both man-made and natural, by investigating, designing, making and using technology.
- human society and its environment (HSIE) – encourages students to study relationships between people, cultures and languages, with a special focus on civics and citizenship.
- creative and practical arts – students participate in the art forms of dance, drama, music and visual arts through creating and making their own works.
- personal development, health and physical education (PDHPE) – helps students develop self-esteem, social responsibility, personal fitness and the ability to make informed decisions about health and lifestyle decisions.

Schools must provide learning experiences in each of these areas for each child during each year of primary schooling.

While all the Key Learning Areas are important, teachers spend the greatest time on English and mathematics.

All schools carefully monitor the progress of each student and report regularly to parents. All students are assessed in Year 3 and Year 5 to determine levels of achievement in aspects of literacy and numeracy. These tests are commonly called the Basic Skills Tests. Parents receive a personal report on their child's results in Term 4.

Specialist classes for academically gifted primary school students exist in some public schools in NSW. These classes usually operate in Years 5 and 6 with students being nominated and assessed during Year 4. These classes are called Opportunity Classes.

The ACT REDLO can provide a list of government and non-government primary schools near your residence. If one has not been provided with this book, please contact the REDLO.

Defence School Transition Aide Program

The Defence School Transition Aide (DSTA) Program has been expanded to include some secondary schools.

The DSTA Program has two elements:

- Defence School Transition Aide – Primary
- Defence School Transition Mentor – Secondary

DSTAs are located in a limited number of schools throughout Australia. In the ACT and Wagga Wagga region they are working in the following schools:

ACT Primary Schools

Non Government

- Holy Spirit Primary School
Tel: (02) 6241 8640
- St Thomas More's Primary School
Tel: (02) 6249 8869
- Good Shepherd Primary School
Tel: (02) 6255 7888
- St Benedict's Primary School
Tel: (02) 6295 8027

Government

- Gold Creek Primary School
Tel: (02) 6205 2955
- Palmerston Primary School
Tel: (02) 6205 7241
- Campbell Primary School
Tel: (02) 6205 6300
- Ngunnawal Primary School
Tel: (02) 6205 8182

- Amaroo Primary School
Tel: (02) 6205 2808
- Red Hill Public School
Tel: (02) 6205 7144
- Harrison School
Tel: (02) 6205 9555
- Jerrabomberra Public School (NSW)
Tel: (02) 6299 8860

ACT Secondary Schools

Defence Transition Mentors work in the following secondary schools:

Government

- Campbell High School, Campbell
Tel: (02) 6205 6344
- Chisholm High School, Chisholm
Tel: (02) 6205 7277
- Amaroo (Secondary) School, Amaroo
Tel: (02) 6205 2808

Non Government

- Merici College, Braddon
Tel: (02) 6243 4100
- St Clare's College, Griffith
Tel: (02) 6260 9400
- St Edmund's College, Griffith
Tel: (02) 6295 3598
- Marist College, Pearce
Tel: (02) 6286 7000
- Canberra Grammar School (Secondary Boys), Red Hill
Tel: (02) 6260 9740

Wagga Wagga Primary Schools

- Tolland Public School
Tel: (02) 6931 1263
- Kapooka Public School
Tel: (02) 6931 2703
- Forest Hill Public School
Tel: (02) 6922 7251
- Koorringal Public School
Tel: (02) 6922 6443

Wagga Wagga Secondary Schools

- Wagga Wagga High School
Tel: (02) 6925 3611
- Koorringal High School
Tel: (02) 6922 5155

2. Secondary Education (Year 7 to Year 10)

The NSW Board of Studies awards the School Certificate to eligible students at the end of Year 10. To receive the School Certificate the student is required to study the following key learning area subjects each year in Years 7–10:

- English
- mathematics
- science
- human society and its environment, which includes mandatory courses in Australian history and Australian geography and may include Aboriginal studies, Asian social studies, commerce, geography, history, studies in society and studies of religion.

At some time during Years 7–10, the student is also required to study in the key learning areas of:

- personal development, health and physical education
- creative arts, which includes mandatory courses in each of visual arts and music
- technological and applied studies, which includes a mandatory course in design and technology with some learning about and using computers. There may also be opportunities to study some of the following: agriculture, computing studies, food technology, sheep husbandry and wool science, technical drawing, technics and textiles and design
- languages other than English, with courses of study which may include Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Spanish and Vietnamese.

All students in Year 10 sit for statewide external tests in English, mathematics, science, Australian history, geography, civics and citizenship. A compulsory computing skills test has been part of the School Certificate examinations since 2006.

Government High School Options

Local Comprehensive High School

The foundation of public secondary education in NSW is the local comprehensive high school.

Comprehensive high schools offer students the opportunity to undertake secondary school studies in an atmosphere closely reflecting the local community in which the school is located. These schools offer quality education for students of all ability levels, including programs to challenge the gifted and talented and programs to cater for students with special needs.

Comprehensive high schools also provide opportunities for students to select from a wide range of sporting, social and cultural events.

Single-Sex High Schools

Single-sex high schools have a particular enrolment area. Students living within that area will be able to enrol, especially if enrolling at the beginning of the year. Students living outside the area will be enrolled if a place and suitable subjects are available.

Some single-sex high schools may also be academically selective or specialist. Other policies and procedures may relate to enrolment in these types of schools.

Specialist High Schools

Some high schools have a special emphasis, either in curriculum or in the nature of the student enrolment.

Enrolment at technology, languages, sports and performing arts high schools for students who reside outside the local enrolment area will depend on the student meeting special criteria for enrolment. In some of these schools, for example sports and performing arts high schools, the criteria for enrolment could include performance or audition.

At technology high schools students have a choice between a curriculum emphasising technology or a traditional one. Students are also free to move between these two options.

Academically Selective High Schools

Selective and agricultural high schools cater for high-achieving, academically talented students. These schools provide intellectual stimulation by grouping talented students together, concentrating school resources and using specialised teaching methods.

Parents may apply for students to be enrolled in Year 7 at selective high schools or at selective agricultural high schools. These applicants are required to sit for the selective high school tests that are held each year in the June prior to commencing Year 7. A small number of vacancies may also occur in Years 8–12 at selective high schools. These vacancies are filled according to procedures developed at particular selective high schools.

Alternative procedures operate for students living interstate or overseas.

Post-Compulsory Education Options

1. Secondary Education (Years 11 and 12)

The Higher School Certificate is the highest educational award a student can gain in NSW schools through the study of courses developed by the NSW Board of Studies. It is a credential awarded to students by the NSW Board of Studies following external examinations at the end of a student's secondary school education.

The Higher School Certificate can be studied at government schools, accredited non-government schools or colleges, or colleges of TAFE. More than 100 courses are available from more than 60 subject areas. In some situations, prior study and/or relevant life experience can be recognised.

Curriculum

Courses for the Higher School Certificate (HSC) are divided into two parts – a Preliminary component usually studied in Year 11 and a HSC component usually studied in Year 12. Students must complete the Preliminary component of a course before starting the Higher School Certificate component.

Students may repeat one or more HSC courses to gain higher results, may accelerate in one or more Preliminary or HSC courses ahead of their cohorts, or may accumulate Preliminary or HSC courses over a period up to five years.

Pattern of Study

Candidates for the HSC must undertake a program of study comprising at least:

- 12 units of Preliminary courses
- 10 units of HSC courses.

Both the Preliminary course pattern and the HSC pattern must include at least:

- six units of Board-developed courses
- at least two units of a Board-developed English course
- at least three courses of 2 units value or greater
- at least four subjects.

Types of Courses

Courses are of two broad types: Board-developed courses and Board-endorsed courses.

For each **Board-developed course**, the Board of Studies designs and develops a syllabus setting out its purpose, aims and desired outcomes. These are the courses for which the Board sets Higher School Certificate examinations. Board-developed courses contribute to the student's Universities Admission Index (UAI).

There are two types of **Board-endorsed courses**:

- school-designed courses are developed by individual schools in response to local interest or need
- content-endorsed courses are standardised courses available in popular study areas. Content-endorsed status has also been given to a large range of TAFE courses. This gives students the opportunity to follow a pattern of school and TAFE courses for the Higher School Certificate.

All Board-endorsed courses count towards the Higher School Certificate, are accredited on a student's Record of Achievement and can be used to meet the Board's requirements for breadth of study across the key learning areas. **Because these Board-endorsed courses are not externally examined, they cannot count towards the Universities Admission Index (UAI).**

Vocational Education

Senior secondary students across NSW are currently engaged in a wide range of vocational initiatives built upon strong links between schools and industry. In addition, there are many general education courses which provide learning experiences that are relevant to the workplace.

Increasing numbers of senior students are electing to study dual accredited vocational courses which are accredited by the NSW Board of Studies for the purposes of the Higher School Certificate and by the Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) for the purpose of meeting the training needs of the industry. These vocational courses cover the industry areas of business services (administration), construction, information technology, metal and engineering, primary industry, retail and tourism and hospitality.

TAFE-delivered vocational HSC courses for school students are available in a wide range of vocational areas. TAFE NSW HSC Pathways enable students who have a clear vocational focus to undertake a full TAFE NSW certificate as part of their HSC. By studying for the HSC in TAFE NSW, students can combine studies in a vocational area with general education subjects such as English, mathematics, geography etc.

HSC Examinations

The HSC examinations are held each year in late October and November. Students completing the Higher School Certificate will receive their HSC testamur and also their HSC Record of Achievement, that will show their subjects and results.

Universities Admission Index (UAI)

The UAI is a rank between 0.00 and 100.00 which provides a measure of overall academic achievement in the NSW HSC. It assists institutions to rank applicants for university admission. It is calculated by the universities and released by the Universities Admission Centre. Only Board-developed courses for which there are examinations conducted by the Board of Studies can be used to calculate the UAI.

The ACT REDLO can provide a list of government and non-government secondary schools near your residence. If one has not been provided with this booklet then please contact the REDLO.

Tertiary Education

1. Colleges of Technical and Further Education (TAFE)

TAFE NSW delivers post-secondary education studies through flexible study programs and services to meet the needs of students, industry and the community. TAFE NSW Colleges offer more than 1,000 courses at locations across the state.

Most TAFE NSW courses have no rigid entry requirement, but some courses may require completion of Year 10 or Year 12, or for the applicant to be an apprentice or trainee, or to have finished other vocational courses.

TAFE NSW offers four levels of Certificate, Diploma and Advanced Diploma courses. Most of these courses are offered as part of the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF). The AQF is a qualifications system, which allows the courses to be nationally and institutionally consistent and recognised.

Internet: www.tafensw.edu.au

2. Universities

Higher education is provided by universities located in major provincial centres throughout New South Wales. Undergraduate and postgraduate courses include architecture, agriculture, business, engineering, medicine, law, science, arts, social welfare, performing arts and teacher education.

To enter an undergraduate course, a student must satisfy the specific entry requirements of the institution, usually by the successful completion of Year 12 or its equivalent. Access to some tertiary courses is available to mature-age students who lack formal entry qualifications.

Students intending to enrol in undergraduate courses should contact the Universities Admission Centre (UAC) on (02) 9752 0200 for details of enrolment procedures. It is also advisable that course information be obtained from the relevant university prior to your proceeding with an application for enrolment through UAC.

Internet: www.uac.edu.au

3. Distance Education

The primary function of choosing an external course of study is to enable students to complete a tertiary course while minimising disruption to their lifestyle. It is also pertinent when there is a degree of family mobility and the course is offered away from the current residential location.

(a) University External Studies

Programs in selected areas are provided by most universities, with applications being made directly to the university before November each year.

Working with carefully prepared multimedia materials engenders independent learning and more effective time management. Renewing or adding to skills used in the workforce can be facilitated by courses that can be fitted in around work hours and do not require regular attendance at a university campus.

(b) OTEN (TAFE Distance Education)

The Open Training and Education Network (OTEN) offers distance education programs. The courses are delivered by a range of alternative media such as printed lesson notes, satellite broadcasts, videos, audio cassettes and electronic mail.

(c) Open Learning Australia

Open Learning Australia offers TAFE and university courses. The courses offered require no prerequisites and can lead to a degree from one of the participating institutions. Many of the units also feature ABC television programs and these provide students with an excellent opportunity to experience tertiary education without leaving home.

Tel: (03) 9903 8955 for a free information brochure.

Alternative Entry to Tertiary Institutions

Adults (18 years and over) wishing to complete secondary school and/or qualify for admission to tertiary institutions have several options:

1. Local High School

Mature-age students may return to study at their local high school. Contact your nearest high school for information on enrolment procedures.

2. Senior Colleges

These colleges cater for students in Year 11 or 12 and offer a wide variety of courses – tertiary entrance subjects, career-oriented courses, pre-vocational programs and recreational courses. Most of these colleges are linked with colleges of TAFE.

3. Tertiary Preparation Certificate

TAFE colleges offer a Tertiary Preparation Certificate course for people returning to study. It is a flexible Year 12 equivalent course designed for people who wish to gain the range of skills and subject content necessary to succeed in tertiary study and to gain entry to TAFE courses, including diplomas and to university.

4. Matriculation at TAFE NSW

TAFE NSW also offers a program of studies for the HSC and Universities Admission Index (UAI) by accumulating the HSC for up to a period of five years. The pattern of study can be designed to suit your needs – full-time, part-time or distance education – selecting from a broad range of modules.

5. Australian Preparation Studies for Tertiary Entrance

A number of institutions offer tertiary preparation courses. These are normally designed for applicants who have not completed Year 12. There is usually a minimum age requirement.

Most institutions consider the courses offered by other institutions for admission purposes. However, it is advisable to check which institutions consider which tertiary preparation courses.

6. Special Tertiary Admissions Tests (STAT)

The Special Tertiary Admissions Tests (STAT) are a series of related tests. These are designed to assess a range of competencies commonly considered important for success in tertiary study.

STAT is a nationally administered test, therefore, if applying to an interstate institution, the results of STAT NSW will be accepted by most other states.

The decision to use STAT is made by each institution. It is advisable to contact the university/TAFE to ascertain these requirements, as some tertiary institutions do not accept the STAT score.

Careers Information and Advice

Career counselling and Careers Advisers, who are based in each high school, provide information. Career Information Centres are specialist libraries offering comprehensive career and study information. They work on a self-help basis. Staff provide assistance with career, education and training information. Please telephone your nearest centre for hours of opening.

Sydney	Tel: (02) 9209 1650
Newcastle	Tel: (02) 4985 8781
Wollongong	Tel: (02) 4251 4229
Canberra	Tel: (02) 6219 3272

Adult and Community Courses

Adult and Community Education (ACE) courses are open to all adults in NSW, regardless of age or previous education. Many people enrol to provide a foundation for further study at TAFE or university. ACE provides nationally endorsed training that helps adults enter the workforce or add to their existing work-related skills.

ACE courses are available through:

- Adult and Community Education (ACE) centres and colleges
- Workers Education Associations (WEAs)
- Neighbourhood Houses and community centres.

Internet: www.bace.nsw.gov.au

Government Education in the Australian Capital Territory

Accountability

A major feature of government education in the ACT has been the devolution of power in 1973 to School Boards. This enabled many interesting, successful and parent-supported initiatives from the more usual school programs.

The curriculum, management and operation of every ACT government school is comprehensively reviewed by the school community and a panel of senior departmental officers once every five years. The formal review covers the school programs, curricula, management, climate, student welfare/management and outcomes. School programs are monitored periodically by independent panels. Monitoring is used as the focus for a continuing program of planning and development to maintain a high-quality education program.

Government schools in the ACT are very accessible and parents are encouraged to visit them and discuss their views with teachers and board members and to play a vital part in the development of their children's school and education.

The high level of participation from the community results in a better government education system and enhanced outcomes for students.

School Boards

Each school is administered by a School Board which is composed of elected parents, teachers, a departmental nominee, the school principal and, in secondary schools, student representatives. In this way the people most concerned with individual schools have a direct say in the form of education they want provided in their own school.

In addition to a board, most schools have a Parents' and Citizens' Association that provides support through fund-raising and social activities.

Modern Programs

Government schooling in the ACT has a balance of 'traditional' academic strengths and opportunities for intellectual, sporting, social and cultural development. Courses developed in schools assisted by the Department's Studies Section are examined and approved by school boards and approved and registered by the ACT Department of Education and Community Services.

Certificates

There are no external examinations set for schools in the ACT. Year 10 and Year 12 Certificates are awarded on the basis of continuous assessment of students' progress. This not only takes into account the regular internal exam results and other forms of assessment used to check knowledge of subjects and intellectual development, but all of a young person's abilities, interests and achievements. The ACT Year 10 and Year 12 Certificates are recognised equals to comparable certificates issued in other parts of Australia for young people seeking work or further education.

The ACT Year 12 Certificate is recognised by all Australian higher education authorities. ACT students gain admission to universities and tertiary institutions throughout Australia on the same basis as students in other parts of Australia.

School Finance

Funding for the ACT government schools is provided by the ACT and Commonwealth Governments and is administered by the ACT Department of Education and Training. School Boards have a significant level of responsibility in the use of resources in schools. Most schools ask parents to make contributions towards the cost of additional resources such as computers, library books, sporting equipment and other materials. The amount parents are asked to contribute is decided by each school. Payment of these contributions is voluntary but is important for the maintenance of quality programs in schools.

Enrolment

Education is compulsory for all students from six to 15 years of age. There are no enrolment zones for ACT government schools but each school gives priority to the enrolment of children living in its designated area. This may be one suburb, part of a suburb, or a group of suburbs. If a school has room available in the appropriate age group after accepting students from its enrolment area, it may accept students who live outside the area.

Parents contact the schools directly to arrange enrolment of their children. To enrol a child in a primary school it is necessary to provide the child's immunisation record, copy of birth certificate and names and contact numbers of parent(s)/guardian(s).

Special Education

Special schools provide education for students with disabilities. Different programs are available in regular schools to support students with disabilities. This support may be provided either in mainstream classes or in special classes. An education unit at the Canberra Hospital assists students who are confined to hospital for long periods.

Provision is made within schools to cater for the needs of children with special skills and abilities as well as for students with learning or behavioural difficulties.

Additional information on programs for students with special needs and placements may be obtained from ACT Department of Education and Training, telephone (02) 6205 9365 or the REDLO on (02) 62658746. Placements in special school settings and support programs cannot be made until an address has been provided but information on services is available prior to housing being finalised.



The Special Needs Counsellors service special educational needs by identifying, arranging placement and coordinating services for students with special needs in special classes, special schools or mainstream settings. For information prior to posting contact the REDLO on (02) 6265 8746.

Guidance and Counselling

The ACT Department of Education and Training provides access to Guidance and Counselling Services in all its schools. The service aims to maximise the educational potential of students by providing psychological services and related educational programs.

School counsellors who have a psychology degree and postgraduate qualifications in counselling are also qualified and experienced teachers. They have a range of skills which enables them to assist students,

parents and teachers with issues that can affect the student's educational progress and adjustment. The guidance and counselling personnel work jointly with teachers, parents, administrators and professionals from the wider community.

The Special Needs Counsellors service special educational needs by identifying, arranging placement and coordinating services for students with special needs in special classes, special schools or mainstream settings. For information prior to posting, contact the REDLO on (02) 6265 8746.

Special Education Resources in the ACT

Centre	Telephone	Fax
Northside – Primary Introductory English Centre, Nth Ainslie PS Majura Ave AINSLIE ACT 2602	(02) 6205 6674	(02) 6205 6534
Southside – Primary Introductory English Centre, Hughes PS Kent St HUGHES ACT 2605	(02) 6205 5669	(02) 6285 2307
Tuggeranong – Primary Introductory English Centre, Village Creek PS Kingsmill St KAMBAH ACT 2902	(02) 6205 7671	(02) 6205 7454
Secondary Introductory English Centre, Phillip Ave DICKSON ACT 2602	(02) 6205 6334	(02) 6205 6335
Behaviour Management/Student Support Services Lyons Education Centre, 67 Launceston St LYONS ACT 2602	(02) 6205 9700	
Birrigai Outdoor School RMB, 142 THARWA ACT 2620	(02) 6237 5135	(02) 6237 5138
Dairy Flat Adolescent Program, 2 Dairy Flat Rd FYSHWICK ACT 2609		
Dairy Flat Education Centre, 2 Dairy Flat Rd FYSHWICK ACT 2609	(02) 6205 7141	(02) 6205 7090
Early Intervention Service Cnr Blackwood Tce and Weingarth St HOLDER ACT 2611	(02) 6205 1586	(02) 6207 1266
Hospital School Canberra Hospital, Yamba Drive GARRAN ACT 2605	(02) 6285 3267	(02) 6244 3246
Therapy ACT	(02) 6205 1277	(02) 6205 1266

Early Intervention and Therapy

Therapy ACT is a free therapy and education service for ACT residents that offers assessment, information and advice for families on children's developmental needs; therapy and early intervention education programs. The services are for children from birth to 12 years who have delays or are at risk of delayed development and/or who have a disability. The contact number is (02) 6205 1246. If your child is receiving therapies or an Early Intervention Program it is important to contact Therapy ACT as early as possible before your move.

School Uniforms

Uniforms are not compulsory in ACT government schools but most primary schools have a uniform and high schools have a dress code. All schools actively encourage students to wear the uniform and adhere to the dress code.

ACT Department of Education Online

EdNA Online has been designed to assist parents and the community to quickly obtain information about the ACT Department of Education and Community Services.

Internet: www.det.act.gov.au

This will link you to individual school websites.

Before- and After-School Care and Vacation Care

Many primary schools in the ACT offer before- and after-school care and some offer vacation care.

To find more information contact the school direct or telephone Children's Policy and Regulation on (02) 6207 1114 or look on www.decs.act.gov.au

Child Care in the ACT

Centre-based children's services are licensed under the *Children and Young People Act 1999* and must comply with the ACT Centre Based Children's Services and Conditions for Approvals in Principle and Licences.

Centre-based children's services provide education and care for children in the years prior to school. Most services also provide a preschool program. Some services offer after-school care and vacation care for up to eight years.

Further information may be obtained from your centre or from the Family Assistance Office:

Tel: 13 24 13 or

Internet: www.nac.gov.au

Further information on accreditation can be obtained by contacting the National Childcare Accreditation Council:
Tel: 1800 655 545

Family day care schemes are licensed under the *Children and Young People Act 1999*.

Family day care schemes coordinate and support family-based childcare workers/carers who may care for up to seven children under 12, with a maximum of four children under school age, including their own. Families can access full-time care, part-time care, before- and after-school care, vacation care and emergency care. The coordination unit is the first point of contact for parents.

Families can apply for childcare benefits but must be assessed by Centrelink.

For further details contact

Family Assistance Office:

Tel: 13 24 13

Early Childhood Education in the ACT

Each child is a unique individual with specific needs, abilities and potential, and early childhood education should encourage exploration and creativity, offer opportunities for social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth in a safe and caring environment, and progress with the child's development. Parents are the most important educators of their children and some parents provide all of the above until their child starts formal schooling. The majority of parents employ the services of early childhood educators by taking their children to playschools and preschools. Early childhood educators should always work in tandem with parents to encourage small children to develop self-confidence and become independent. Before enrolling your child in any early childhood



education program, read all information supplied about the program offered and make an appointment to observe a session in progress to make sure it will suit you and your child's needs.

What is the Difference Between Playgroups, Playschools, Preschools and Kindergartens in the ACT?

New parents and families who have come to Canberra from other states and countries are often confused by these titles.

Playgroups provide opportunities for parents and very young children to meet regularly. They are run by parents and provide play activities for the children.

Playschools are generally structured educational programs for three-year-olds, run by fully qualified early childhood teachers for independent organisations. They operate on a sessional basis during school terms. To be eligible, children are generally required to be toilet-trained.

Government preschools provide one year of structured education for all four-year-old children in the year before they commence school. (Exceptions to this are children identified as having special educational needs; for example children who are hearing impaired are eligible to apply for early entry to preschool.)

Independent preschools offer educational programs for children aged three to six years. In addition to paying fees, parents are often actively involved in administration and services to the preschool.

Kindergarten is the first year of formal schooling at primary schools. Children who turn five years of age before 30 April are eligible to start primary school at the beginning of the year. Children in kindergarten attend five days per week during the school term. They are part of the primary school, commence the primary school educational program, and are expected to wear the primary school uniform.

Note: Preschooling in Canberra is provided by the ACT Department of Education and Training. Parents contribute a small amount in fees on a term basis for eligible children to attend 10.5 hours per week. NSW preschools are provided by community or council groups and set their fees individually. Because of this, the cost of preschooling differs between the ACT and NSW. Children living in NSW can apply for preschool placement in the ACT.

Preschool Registrations and Enrolments in the ACT

The ACT Department of Education and Training provides one year of sessional preschool education for children of ACT residents in the year prior to entry into primary school.

Preschools are conducted in specially designed buildings, run by qualified staff that develop an educational program based on shared understandings of early childhood education. Parents are actively involved in the administration of the preschool. Children attend for 12 hours per week in a two or three session configuration.

Who is eligible for preschool?

Children who turn four years of age on or before 30 April.

What do I need to know about enrolment procedures?

To enrol your child in preschool, go to the school that is amalgamated with the preschool to access and lodge your child's enrolment.

Schools will need to sight official documentation of your child's date of birth (birth certificate, passport etc.), proof of residence and proof that your child is cared for in area (if applicable) for you to lodge your child's enrolment form. You will also be asked to supply your child's immunisation record before they start preschool.

Please direct all enquiries to the school amalgamated with your preschool, or Early Childhood Education on (02) 6205 9168.

Registration for children living in NSW

Parents of children eligible for preschool but living in NSW can apply for a place at an ACT preschool by registering in the same way as ACT residents. If you are Defence and apply for Duntroon preschool by the registration date you will be offered an available place in the second week of Term 1.

Children with Special Needs

Children with special needs may be eligible for placement in a special preschool program from the age of three years.

Further details on all preschool matters in the ACT can be obtained by calling Preschool Services: Tel: (02) 6205 9320 or (02) 6205 9355

Primary Schools – ACT

Kindergarten to Year 6

Children who turn five years of age on or before 30 April are eligible to enrol at an ACT primary school in their priority enrolment area. Children at primary school are generally between five and 12 years of age.

Primary education covers seven years of schooling. The first year is called kindergarten and then schooling progresses from Year 1 through to Year 6.

Primary schools place a major emphasis on teaching children the basic skills of reading, writing, language and mathematics. The arts, languages other than English, social education programs, health and physical recreation play important roles in the primary education programs. All students are assessed when they undertake the Basic Skills Test in Years 3 and 5 to determine levels of achievement in aspects of literacy and numeracy.

As most government primary schools have a different degree of autonomy, there may be differences between one school and another.

Primary schools may be structured around straight year levels, composite or multi-age classes. In multi-age classrooms, children of mixed ages and abilities are intentionally grouped together for learning. Programs are often planned and organised to take into account children's different stages of learning and development. Within this structure all children have opportunities to develop academic and social skills suited to their learning needs. Sometimes placement difficulties caused by interstate differences may be resolved by placement in composite or multi-age classes. Class structure is determined by individual schools.

Close contact is maintained between primary and high schools so that students make a smooth academic, personal and social transition between schools.

**School websites can be viewed at
Internet: www.det.act.gov.au/schools**

The ACT REDLO can provide a list of government and non-government primary schools near your residence. If one has not been provided with this booklet, please contact the REDLO.

High Schools – ACT

Year 7 to Year 10

High schools in the ACT are co-educational and cater for students from 12 to 16 years of age in Years 7 to 10.

Year 7 is an introductory year in which students commence the core subjects as well as sampling many of their school's curriculum options to help them make informed choices in later years. Throughout high school, students are encouraged to make choices that will broaden their interests and assist them to prepare for a career or further education.

Students' subject choices are selected in consultation with teachers and parents.

High schools provide a comprehensive range of programs that offer all students a balanced curriculum suited to the needs and interests of the individual, the challenges of secondary college and life as a productive and contributing member of the community. Each high school is different and may offer some different courses of study.

A handbook is produced by each high school that outlines curriculum and organisation. Middle schools are being adopted in some high schools. These generally cater for students in Years 6–8.

A Year 10 certificate is awarded to students who have completed Years 9 and 10. High school students are assessed in literacy and numeracy in Years 7 and 9.

**School websites can be viewed at
Internet: www.det.act.gov.au/schools**

The ACT REDLO can provide a list of government and non-government high schools near your residence. If one has not been provided with this booklet, please contact the REDLO.

Secondary Colleges – ACT

Years 11 and 12

At the completion of Year 10, students in the ACT may proceed to a secondary college. Enrolment for secondary colleges commences in September of each year. There is a very high retention rate in the ACT from Year 10 to Years 11 and 12, as secondary colleges have proved to be effective in preparing young people for both work and further education.

Students are given guidance in arranging courses of study that will best prepare them for careers and further education. At the same time they are expected to make decisions for themselves, to develop maturity and judgement and to set and achieve realistic goals. To succeed they must organise themselves effectively, work very hard and accept responsibility for their learning.

Each college develops its own range of courses. These are accredited by the ACT Board of Secondary Studies. The Board also ensures that courses leading to tertiary entrance qualifications will meet the requirements of tertiary institutions throughout Australia.

Courses available may be one of the following:

- Tertiary (T) – these prepare students for higher education
- Accredited (A) or Vocational (V) – designed to prepare students for the workplace and TAFE-type courses.

No subjects are compulsory in secondary colleges; however, students are encouraged to choose courses from all areas of the curriculum to develop a comprehensive range of knowledge and skills.

Students enrolling at colleges part-way through Year 11 or 12 are entitled to status for study completed at the previous school. Their UAI will be calculated on the work completed at the ACT school. They will need to bring reports from their previous school.

**School websites can be viewed at
Internet: www.det.act.gov.au/schools**

The ACT REDLO can provide a list of government and non-government secondary colleges near your residence. If one has not been provided with this booklet, please contact the REDLO.

Certificates

ACT Year 12 Certificate

This is awarded by the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies to students who have completed an approved program of studies at a secondary college. A full-time student completing Years 11 and 12 normally completes at least 17 standard units. The Year 12 Certificate is used by a variety of people including employers and education or training institutions. It can be used to apply for awards, scholarships and voluntary work with community organisations.

Students can complete an ACT Year 12 Certificate through a package of studies as a Mature Age Student. To qualify you must be over 20 by 1 March in the year you start your study.

In addition to the Year 10 and Year 12 Certificates students who have been enrolled in high schools or colleges are entitled to receive official statements of their attainments if they leave or change schools before completing Year 10 or Year 12. These statements are termed the High School Record and the Secondary College Record. Further information about ACT Certificates and the Universities Admission Index (UAI) is available from the:

Executive Officer
Board of Senior Secondary Studies
(Located at Lyons Education Centre)
PO Box 1584
Tuggeranong ACT 2900
Tel: (02) 6205 7181

Universities Admission Index (UAI)

Students who wish to apply for entrance to a university must complete a Tertiary Entrance Package, the Australian Scaling Test (AST), and achieve a sufficiently high Universities Admission Index (UAI). The UAI is a percentile ranking used by universities to assist in the selection of school-leavers for entry to their undergraduate courses. The universities use it as an indication of a student's suitability for entry into any given course. It is reported with a range from 100 for the highest-ranking students down to 30.

Information on the Tertiary Entrance Package is available from the colleges or their handbooks or the REDLO.

Australian Scaling Test (AST)

The AST is a test attempted by all ACT Year 12 students wishing to gain a Universities Admission Index (except students at the Boys' Grammar School, who sit the Higher School Certificate). It aims to measure a range of general skills considered to be relevant to success in a variety of courses and to studies at university. If you are a Year 12 student who intends to apply for university entry or are unsure of what you will do after Year 12, you should sit the AST. This will allow you to gain a UAI and use it at a later date. The AST is generally conducted in September each year.

Applications for University Entrance

Applications for places in all public universities in NSW and ACT are made through the Universities Admission Centre (UAC). Entry to particular courses is competitive and offers of a place are made on the basis of the Universities Admission Index (UAI). Other criteria such as portfolio, interview, audition or questionnaire may also be taken into account for certain courses instead of, or in conjunction with, the UAI. Applications must be lodged by the end of September each year.

Educational Access Schemes

Most universities that participate in the University Admission Scheme have an educational access scheme for applicants who have experienced long-term educational disadvantage. If you think you are eligible, lodge an application under the Educational Access Scheme with UAC.

Special Consideration

If you believe that you have been disadvantaged in your secondary or tertiary studies but do not qualify for any of the Educational Access Schemes, you may be able to apply for special consideration directly with the relevant university.

Employment Pathways at Senior Secondary Colleges

Some secondary colleges offer a variety of practical work-based programs designed to articulate into further study or assist students to obtain employment upon graduation. Some of these programs have been prepared in partnership with industry, unions, employers and government bodies.

Vocational Courses

'V' courses are fully accredited courses with a strong industry focus and opportunities for work placement. They align with national standards in their respective industries. If the course requirements are successfully completed students receive credit towards a Year 12 Certificate and are credited with a Certificate Level 1 or 2 under the Australian Recognition Framework. The courses develop pathways to employment or further study with automatic recognition by other Registered Training Organisations (for example Canberra Institute of Technology).

Statement of Attainment

A Statement of Attainment is issued in recognition of achievement in a specific vocational area, for example hospitality. A statement is awarded where students complete at least one competency but not the full certificate.

School-Based New Apprenticeship (SNAP)

This involves the employment of a student who is undertaking a traineeship part time while enrolled in a program leading to a Year 12 Certificate. Students undertaking a vocational course at a college may wish to seek a SNAP in the related industry area. Colleges can help students to explore SNAP options.



Enrolment

Kindergarten is the child's first year at school. The usual minimum enrolment age is five years by 30 April in the year of enrolment.

Parish Primary School

All primary schools are zoned to a suburb or suburbs. School children may be accepted by the principal of a school in a different zone depending on enrolment pressures. Acceptance into an out-of-area school is not a guarantee of secondary enrolment in that area. Parish primary schools in

the ACT are all co-educational and operate from kindergarten to Year 6. Two congregational Catholic colleges accept boys at upper primary level. These are Marist College and St Edmund's College which accept boys from Year 4.

Secondary Schools

The CEO facilitates the secondary schools in collaboratively enrolling Year 7 students. The enrolment ceilings reflect the policy 'Catholic Schools for the 21st Century'. Each school agrees to an enrolment ceiling and makes offers of enrolment in Term 3.

There are three congregational secondary schools operated by religious orders. These are Daramalan College, operated by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart; St Edmund's College, operated by the Christian Brothers; and Marist College, operated by the Marist Brothers.

The Diocesan secondary Catholic schools are Merici College, St Francis Xavier High School, St Clare's College and MacKillop College.

There is a shortage of places in Catholic secondary schools. It is recommended that you apply as early as possible.

Curriculum

Primary: As in all primary schools in the ACT, the curriculum is school based.

Secondary: The curriculum for secondary schools is school based and approved by the ACT Department of Education. School-based assessment has replaced public examinations.

Uniforms

With the exception of a distinctive sports uniform, ties and badges, all ACT Catholic primary schools have a standard uniform.

Fees

The Catholic Education Commission, Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn sets the tuition fees in November of each year.

In addition to tuition fees, parents are encouraged to contribute to the Canberra Catholic Schools Building Fund (CCSBF). Schools will levy additional fees for specific purposes (book hire, cleaning, etc). The school should be contacted to obtain details of these levies.

Further information concerning curriculum or policies may be obtained by contacting the individual school or the Catholic Education Office at:

PO Box 3317
Manuka ACT 2603
Tel: (02) 6234 5455
Fax: (02) 6239 6567

ACT Independent Schools

Parents can choose to have their child educated in an independent school in the ACT. An independent school is a separate and autonomous school registered by the government under the terms of the ACT Education Act.

Although the number of independent schools in the ACT is small, it includes a wide range of schools in terms of their size, philosophy, type and affiliation. Independent schools offer primary, junior secondary and senior secondary schooling to students. A number of them also offer a preschool education.

Many independent schools also offer a wide variety of after-school programs, including music and sport.

Independent schools are only partially funded by government and augment their income through school fees. The level of school fees varies from school to school, the amount often dependent on the level of government subsidy, educational priorities and policies on discounts etc. There may be other fees and charges; for example, enrolment fees.

In many independent schools uniforms must be worn by students. School uniform shops exist to assist parents in the acquisition of the uniform.

Enrolment enquiries must be made directly to the school. Open days to inspect the school are held a number of times during the school year. Many schools will conduct individual tours on request.

Further details on a number of independent schools can be found through links available on the website of the Association of Independent Schools of the ACT (an umbrella organisation for independent schools): Internet: www.ais.act.edu.au

School websites can be viewed at

Internet: www.det.act.gov.au

The ACT REDLO can provide a list of government and non-government schools near your residence. If one has not been provided with this booklet, please contact the REDLO.

Tertiary Institutions in the ACT

Canberra Institute of Technology (TAFE)

Tel: (02) 6207 3188

Internet: www.cit.act.edu.au

Australian National University

Tel: (02) 6125 5111

Internet: www.anu.edu.au

University of Canberra

Tel: (02) 6201 2225

Internet: www.canberra.edu.au

Australian Defence Force Academy

(Developed in cooperation with the University of New South Wales)

Tel: (02) 6268 8716

Internet: www.unsw.adfa.edu.au

Australian Catholic University

Tel: (02) 6209 1198

Internet: www.acu.edu.au

Open Learning Australia

Tel: (03) 9903 8955 or (02) 6247 2800

Internet: www.ola.edu.au

Offers TAFE and university courses. No prerequisites are required. Many units feature ABC television programs that allow the students the opportunity to experience tertiary education without leaving home.

Other institutions which provide specialty tertiary courses in Canberra are:

- The Canberra School of Art
- The Canberra School of Music
- The Australian Institute of Sport

Alternative Entry to Tertiary Institutions

Adults (18 years and over) wishing to complete secondary school and/or qualify for admission to tertiary institutions have several options:

Senior Secondary Colleges

All colleges cater for students in Years 11 and 12. Some colleges also offer a variety of subjects for pre-vocational programs, career-orientated courses, recreational courses and tertiary preparation.

For more information, contact the colleges.

Canberra Institute of Technology

(CIT is the name of the ACT TAFE College)

The CIT offers an adult literacy and numeracy course for students wanting entrance to vocational or further education or general employment.

The CIT offers a Year 10 equivalent course for entrance to further study or employment. Entry requirement for this course is a successful completion of a skills assessment test.

The CIT offers a one-year intensive Year 12 program for students wanting to:

- enter a tertiary institution
- enter a specific career
- gain skills and qualifications for employment.

For more information contact CIT.

Tel: (02) 6207 3188

Email: course.information@cit.act.edu.au

The CIT offers careers information and advice. An adviser can be contacted on (02) 6207 3616.

Distance Education through Open Training Network (OTEN)

OTEN offers a Basic Education course for students who would like to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. OTEN offers a School Certificate course as well as the Higher School Certificate. You can contact OTEN at:

Open Training Education Network

51 Wentworth Rd
Strathfield NSW 2135

Tel: (02) 9715 8000

Tertiary Preparation Courses

A number of institutions offer a tertiary preparation course. These are usually designed for applicants who have not completed Year 12 at a college. Contact your nearest university for more information.

Special Tertiary Admission Test (STAT)

The Special Tertiary Admission Test is a series of related tests designed to assess a range of competencies commonly considered important for success in tertiary study. It is a nationally administered test so the results of STAT ACT will be accepted by most other states. The decision to use STAT is made by each institution. Contact the university or TAFE/CIT to see if they accept the STAT score for entry to study.

Parental Involvement in School Community — How you can help

All parents are encouraged to play an active part in their local school community. Depending on your skills, experience and personal interests, there are many different ways in which you can be involved in your child's education.

Classroom help is always welcomed and may include listening to children read, involvement with learning assistance programs, setting up activities or helping with electives. You may be surprised at the skills or activities you will be able to offer or assist with.

Excursions take children to interesting and informative places. Volunteers can enjoy these outings too, while assisting the teachers with the organisation and supervision of the children.

School camps are a common activity for many schools, and a good way to enjoy the less formal context of out-of-school learning.

Tuckshop/Canteen activities are part of the normal day-to-day life in most schools, and a great way to involve parents with preparation and serving of food, usually during school hours.

Fundraising at some time is a part of most school activities. This may include participating in auctions, barbecues, book fairs, t-shirt printing or lolly drives. Parents have the opportunity to contribute new and exciting ideas to this activity.

Library assistance is usually welcomed by all resource centre staff. Covering, repairing, sorting and shelving books are ongoing tasks that are essential to ensure that children gain maximum access to borrowing resources.

Working bees are a great way to help beautify the surroundings of your school, and can involve the whole family in planting bulbs, paving, weeding or small maintenance jobs around that favourite playground.

School Board membership ensures you, as parents, have a direct say in the form of education provided at the school. Each school is administered by a School Board, composed of elected parents, teachers, a departmental nominee, the principal and often student representatives. Meetings are usually held after working hours, so can be a good way for the working parent to get involved.

Contact your school to be involved. You will benefit from being an active participant, as will your child and the school community. Never underestimate your own contribution, because you have skills and attributes that no-one else does. You also have a vested interest in your own family and their future.

Participate, and enjoy the benefits.

Assistance for Children with Special Needs

The Department of Education and Training provides a wide range of services and resources to support the educational needs of students with disabilities and students with learning difficulties, as well as to support their teachers and parents.

These services assist students in regular classes in local schools, in support classes in regular schools, in special schools, hospitals and at home through distance education.

The Department is committed to the active involvement of parents and carers in all aspects of their child's education, the earliest possible intervention to prevent learning failure, and the provision of support to schools and teachers to assist them in delivering quality teaching and learning programs for students.

Students experiencing learning difficulties are not achieving at a level expected for their age and stage of development. Students may have difficulty learning and maintaining new skills and information. These difficulties may vary in cause, nature, intensity and duration.

Students with learning difficulties, their class teachers, schools and parents are assisted by Support Teachers (Learning Difficulties). Support Teachers (Reading) and Support Teachers (Language) provide intensive programs for students with severe reading or language difficulties. Special Education Support Centres are also available to provide educational assessment, programming advice for parents and teachers, and support for students with learning difficulties.

Students with behavioural difficulties present a management problem in their school and their behaviour is often unacceptable in the classroom and/or playground. Inappropriate behaviour frequently interferes with their learning and safety and the learning and safety of other students and staff.

The general principles governing enrolment apply to students with learning or behaviour difficulties. In addition to these general principles, there are particular criteria for enrolment of some students, including students with disabilities.

A disability results in a loss or reduction in ability to function day to day, caused by one or a combination of impairments including intellectual disability, physical disability, vision impairment, learning impairment and psychological impairment.

Students with disabilities can be enrolled in regular classes with additional support, in a support class in a regular school, or in a special school.

The decision on where to enrol a student with a disability, and with what level of support, will depend on a number of factors:

- the expressed desires of parents
- the learning support needs of the student
- the capacity of the Department of Education and Training to provide the level of support services required generally, and at a particular location, and the availability of support services at alternative locations.

The appraisal of the student's educational needs is the basis from which decisions are made. Appraisal is the process of identifying the student's educational achievements, future goals, parent expectations and the level and type of support needed to access an educational program.



Appraisal involves consideration of the student's learning support needs in areas such as curriculum, mobility, social skills, personal care and communication. It involves a detailed examination of the level of assistance required for the student to participate in all aspects of class and school programs and will include:

- any modification required to curriculum materials and teaching strategies
- the type and level of technology or support equipment required
- modifications required to buildings or facilities
- the need for special transport services.

After the appraisal process, a determination is made about the most appropriate option that meets the student's learning needs, identifies the resources available to support the enrolment and to arrange access to services as required. The principal of the school (if known) where the child is to be enrolled coordinates the appraisal process.

The above information relates to public education in New South Wales. The Catholic and private systems have other support strategies.

For specific information relating to your child, please contact the REDLO.

If your child has special needs, it is important to begin your planning as soon as practicable, and use the assistance measures and support groups available through Defence to ease your child's transition. After all, it is far better to have measures in place and find you do not need to use them, rather than arrive in the new locality unprepared.

Dependants with Special Needs

ADF members who have dependants with special needs (DWSN) attending a registered primary or secondary school full-time may be eligible for education-related assistance. This is detailed in the Pay and Conditions Manual (PACMAN) Volume 2, Chapter 8, Parts 4 and 6, and has been mentioned previously in this booklet. However, Defence recognises that families who have a dependant with a recognised special need can face additional problems when it comes time to relocate. For this reason there is a policy that may assist families at this time.

Determination 2007/36 details this policy, explaining who is eligible, the recognition process, the special needs assistance, and other general conditions and provisions. Families who wish to be recognised or who wish to find out what is available under this instruction should read the instruction and contact their local DCO office.

Educational Aspects of Determination 2007/36

Aspects of the DWSN policy relate directly to educational issues and these are highlighted below:

- Families with school-aged children who have been recognised by Defence under the DWSN policy may be eligible for a special needs pre-posting visit. This visit, at Commonwealth expense, is to enable the family to plan adequately and organise educational arrangements for the child with special needs at the gaining locality, where this cannot be done from the old locality, and when it is necessary for the child with special needs to have direct contact with relevant education authorities/ institutions. It should be pointed out that, in most instances, such pre-posting visits are not necessary, as appropriate placement of a special needs child can be achieved by the provision of all appropriate documentation well in advance to the relevant education authorities in the new locality. The services and advice of the REDLO can be accessed in order to achieve this placement.

- Financial assistance may be available to families with children requiring occupational therapy or speech therapy in the new locality where the state/territory enforces a waiting period. This assistance is a stop-gap provided until the state/territory system can assume responsibility. The eligibility for, and type of, support are aligned with the benchmark standard in the new state or territory.
- A member who has a child who is academically gifted and talented may apply to be recognised as DWSN under Determination 2007/36. The child must be assessed as academically gifted and talented by a psychologist with relevant qualifications and experience in the assessment of children, in that the child achieves a score at or above the 95th percentile on:
 - any individual or group IQ test, or
 - on a subscale (e.g. verbal or performance) of an individual IQ test or
 - on any standardised test of achievement.
- Other than a special needs pre-posting visit (SNPPV), the only assistance available under the Determination is assistance with the provision of housing in the locality of the child's education institution. The member is not eligible for either the payment or reimbursement by Defence of any fees associated with the education of the child.

Please read Determination 2007/36 and contact your local DCO office for further information about all aspects of this policy.

Resources

Useful Websites

- The New South Wales Department of Education and Training (DET) has a very informative website at: www.det.nsw.edu.au. You will be able to access information on the Department's policies on attendance, uniforms, discipline etc. There are also articles on how parents can assist their child's education, the different type and location of schools, the structure of the education system etc.
- The NSW Board of Studies has the responsibility for the curriculum taught in schools in this state. It is also responsible for the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate examinations and awards. For all syllabuses and further information about the Board, go to www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au. There is also a site specialising in the primary curriculum at www.bosnsw-k6.nsw.edu.au
- The Universities Admission Centre website contains information about entry to university, the courses available and contact details for the various universities – www.uac.edu.au
- TAFE NSW will provide information on more than 1200 courses at 130 locations across the state – www.tafensw.edu.au

Specific school information:

Catholic Education Commission of NSW
Internet: www.cecnsw.catholic.edu.au

Association of Independent Schools
Internet: www.aisnsw.edu.au

Anglican Schools
Internet: www.sydney.anglican.asn.au/schools.htm

Uniting Church Schools
Internet: www.nsw.uca.org.au/schools.htm

Christian Schools in NSW
Internet: www.christianschools.edu.au

Christian Parent Controlled Schools
Internet: www.cpcs.edu.au

Website for government and independent schools in ACT and education policies
Internet: www.det.act.gov.au

NSW Schools
Internet: www.schools.nsw.edu.au

Queanbeyan Schools
Internet: www.queanbeyan.nsw.gov.au

Website for syllabus of NSW Education
Internet: www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au

Defence Community Organisation
Internet: www.defence.gov.au/dco

Useful Contacts – ACT

Regional Education Liaison Office (REDLO)
Tel: (02) 6265 8746

Family Liaison Officers
Tel: (02) 6265 8777

Family Information for Defence (FIND)
Tel: 1800 020 031

ACT Board of Secondary Studies
Tel: (02) 6205 7181

Association of Independent Schools
Tel: (02) 6241 2429

Australian Catholic University
Tel: (02) 6209 1198

Australian Defence Force Academy
Tel: (02) 6268 8111

Australian National University
Tel: (02) 6125 5111

Institute of the Arts
Tel: (02) 6249 5711

Catholic Education Office
Tel: (02) 6234 5455

Canberra Institute of Technology
Tel: (02) 6207 3188

Department of Education and Training
Tel: (02) 6207 5111

Queanbeyan Education District Office
Tel: (02) 6200 5000

Universities Admission Centre
Tel: (02) 9330 7200

University of Canberra
Tel: (02) 6201 5111

Publications available from your local DCO Office

Home is where the family is – a book to help parents assist their children to cope with important changes in their life, changing homes and changing schools. A very helpful book when Defence families are posted with young children.

Parenting at home and away – discusses how parents can learn to cope with being away from their children and how they can feel comfortable integrating back into family life. Particularly written for deployed Defence personnel who are parents.

Travelling teens: A parents' guide to family relocation – provides expert advice on how to support teenagers during the process of moving, to turn what is often a difficult situation into a positive experience.

Travelling teens Z-card – a great resource for teenagers with lots of tips to help make moving easier.

Digital Student Portfolio – interactive multimedia designed to capture the academic, sporting and social history of the child over each year of their schooling.

School Passport – enables mobile ADF children to keep a record of their school history by recording school stamp and brief information in passport.

Defence Community Organisation brochures:

The Regional Education Liaison Officer – describes the services offered by the REDLO.

Changing Schools Checklist – contains hints to help your child change schools.

Education Assistance – outlines the financial assistance available under this scheme.

Choosing a Tutor – a guide to help select a tutor for a child.

This book contains information on the most requested issues. If you have any further questions or issues relating to education and schooling in NSW or the ACT, please do not hesitate to contact your REDLO:

Tel: (02) 6265 8746
Email: redlo.act@defence.gov.au