

Research policy

This is a mandated policy under the operational policy framework. Any edits to this policy must follow the process outlined on the [creating, updating and deleting operational policies](#) page.

Overview

This policy outlines the requirements for research undertaken within department sites and services including research initiated by the department and for reporting on research findings within the department.

The policy aims to:

- support the department's commitment to evidence-informed policy and decision making
- be inclusive of all department partners for the purposes of delivering on the department's vision and strategic priorities.

The elements that underpin this policy include:

- Informing key strategic decisions that affect education and child development through evidence from research (including evaluation and data analysis).
- Providing key decision-makers within the department with evidence to inform strategic and operational decisions, and some assessment of the quality of that evidence.
- Supporting continual improvement of services, policies, programs and legislative reform that leads to improvement in education and child development outcomes.
- Transferring knowledge gained from research into improvements in practice by educators and other employees working directly with children and young people.
- Ensuring that research undertaken in the department's sites is ethical, safe and respects the autonomy and rights of children and young people, employees and volunteers, as well as parents, guardians, employees and the community.
- Ensuring that research initiated, commissioned, partnered or sponsored by the department is of high quality and will provide reliable evidence.
- Encouraging research activity by department employees and external parties.

Scope

This policy applies to the following stakeholders who are undertaking or propose to undertake research at a department site or service, or use department data, and is inclusive of any research that is managed by the department, including:

- department employees
- research organisations
- student researchers
- external researchers
- evaluators.

Detail

Reporting on research

The Senior Executive Group (SEG) will ensure that strategic decisions are informed by evidence.

Strategic and operational information will be provided to key decision-makers in the department to support continual improvement of services, policies, programs and legislative reform that leads to improvement in child development and learning outcomes.

Major Australian and international research and evaluation reports and findings, including those commissioned or sponsored by the department will be actively and systematically considered.

Conducting research with employees, students and data

Researchers seeking to undertake research in or involving the department's sites will be required to meet the requirements described within the [conducting research with department employees, students and data procedure](#).

To encourage consistency and guide decision making around research the System Performance division will oversee the review and approval of research applications.

Research will only be undertaken in departmental sites if it:

- does not conflict with department policies
- will be conducted in a manner that is ethical, safe and respects the autonomy and rights of children and young people, employees and volunteers
- complies with the requirements set out in the conducting research with department employees, students and data procedure.

Building research capacity and collaboration

The department will develop and promote the policy across the department and with partners for a shared commitment to conduct research and apply research findings that will inform education and child development policy, program and practice.

Partnerships between and among departmental employees, researchers, educators, parents, families, other education institutions, business and community organisations will be fostered to address priority research needs and share approaches for connecting research findings to policy and practice.

Individual and organisational capacity to access, use and conduct research will be developed to support the department's research culture and internal capacity building.

Roles and responsibilities

System Performance division

Oversee the department's research application submission process.

Provide:

- advice and report on significant research evidence to key decision-makers within the department
- support and quality assurance where feasible to department employees initiating or reporting on research
- an assessment (or review) of the quality of the evidence made
- a summary of the findings and recommendations of the evidence
- a response to those findings drafted in consultation with other divisions, for consideration by key decision-makers in the department.

Where the management response to the recommendations requires a change in practice by teachers and other department employees working directly with children and young people, it will incorporate any necessary recommended changes to policy and a communications plan for operational employees, professional associations and those responsible for teacher and leader professional development.

All employees

Comply with this policy.

Definitions

research

Research is defined as the creation of new knowledge or the use of existing knowledge in new, creative and systematic ways so as to generate new concepts, methodologies and understandings (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2002).

A studious inquiry or examination. Especially an investigation or experimentation aimed at the:

- discovery and interpretation of facts
- revision of accepted theories or laws in the light of new facts
- practical application of such new or revised theories or laws.

evaluation

The systematic collection and analysis of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs to make judgements about the program, guide improvement in program effectiveness and/or inform decisions about future programming. Programs include services, projects, policies, interventions, initiatives, business processes and activities.

key decision-makers

The department's Senior Executive Group (SEG), the Chief Executive, the Minister for Education.

Supporting information

Related policy documents

[Conducting research and evaluation with department employees and students procedure](#)

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Version: 1.0

Approved date: 2013

Amendment(s): revised evaluation policy and established Research and innovation framework.

Contact

Research unit

Email: education.ResearchUnit@sa.gov.au

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