

Inquiry into the Practices and Procedures relating to Question Time

House of Reps Committee on Procedure - Inquiry into the Practices and Procedures relating to Question Time.

Some key points on civics and citizenship education (CCE), school excursions to Canberra and MoAD in particular

1. Naplan - Civics and Citizenship 2016

Relevant conclusions from most recent NAP-CC 2016 (released in 2018) under '*student attitudes to and engagement in civics and citizenship issues*'.

- Overall results

The report shows that 55% of Year 6 students achieved at or above the achievement standard. By contrast the rate of Year 10 attaining this standard was just 38%. The lowest to date.

- Trust in civic institutions and processes

Over time, it appears that students across both year levels are expressing greater degrees of trust with each of the groups (e.g. police, media) and institutions (e.g. Australian Parliament, law courts). All items that were administered in the 2013 survey, with the exception of the item on trust in the police at Year 10, showed significantly higher percentages of student trust at Year 6 and Year 10 in 2016. Larger increases were observed for trust in Australian political parties (seven per cent and eight per cent at Years 6 and 10 respectively), the Australian parliament (six per cent and seven per cent at Years 6 and 10 respectively) and the media (eight per cent at Year 10). This follows a similar pattern from the previous cycle of the study that saw an increase in trust levels from 2010 to 2013.

- Civic related activities, including excursions to civic institutions

Generally, fewer Year 10 (21%) than Year 6 (44%) students reported involvement in school activities. The activities reported by majorities among Year 10 students were: representation of the school in activities outside class (76 per cent), participation in community activities (62 per cent) and voting for class representatives (59 per cent). Somewhat less than half of Year 10 students reported participation in peer support programs (46 per cent) and in excursions to parliaments, local governments or law courts (41 per cent). A focus of both the Australian Curriculum: Humanities and Social Sciences and Australian Curriculum: Civics and Citizenship is to provide students with the knowledge, skills and understanding associated with civic action and participation. Teachers, schools and systems may choose to reflect on the nature, role and effectiveness of student representative bodies and explore alternative ways of positively engaging in civic processes.

- Article on NAP-CC results - <https://bit.ly/2XNJiZq> 'Schools are not adequately preparing young Australians to participate in our Democracy' (The Conversation, Dec 2017)

2. University of Queensland research and evaluation project with schools on excursions to Canberra (NCETP 2016)

'Measuring the impact of school visits to the national capital on students' civic literacy' Jan Parker, University of Queensland (UQ).

- Aim was to measure the impact of school visits to Canberra on students' knowledge of C&C concepts, attitudes regarding C&C, and active engagement in citizenship behaviour.
- Specific findings regarding the impact of an excursion - the findings indicated that there were pre-visit and post visit differences in students understanding, interest, attitudes and actions.

- Three items stood out that were significantly increased for the excursion students from pre-visit to post visit:
 - I understand how Australia's voting system works.
 - I understand the significance of the Constitution and how it affects me
 - If I wanted to say something about a government decision, I would know how to do it.

The UQ study clearly showed the effectiveness of a school excursion to Canberra in increasing students' understanding of how Australia is governed, and how they can contribute as citizens.

3. Some recent school statistics:

- In 2019 – 3,822,827 students in Australia
- In 2018 – 164,967 students visited Canberra. That translates to around 4.5% of students visit Canberra annually.

4. General anecdotal feedback from teachers and colleagues regarding Question Time:

- It is difficult for schools to time their visit to book into Question Time
- Tends to be booked by teachers who are passionate about politics
- Most schools state that meeting their MP is the highlight
- Teachers and students value seeing the actual chambers
- Question Time is like theatre
- Students value seeing all the MPs including the Prime Minister and the Leader of Opposition and their local member, in the Chamber altogether
- Students have been shocked/surprised on occasion by the behaviour of MPs in Question Time
- It would be valuable to have a better understanding of the role/purpose of Question Time so students could better understand its place in the parliamentary sitting day.

5. General and schools visitors by postcode

| General 2019-20 | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| State | % of total |
| ACT | 43.01% |
| NSW | 26.04% |
| VIC | 11.92% |
| QLD | 6.62% |
| NT | 0.19% |
| SA | 2.72% |
| TAS | 0.71% |
| WA | 2.27% |
| OS | 6.53% |
| Total | 100.00% |

| Schools 2019-20 | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| State | % of total |
| ACT | 4.5% |
| NSW | 46.0% |
| VIC | 15.9% |
| QLD | 18.1% |
| NT | 0.7% |
| SA | 6.0% |
| WA | 6.6% |
| TAS | 2.0% |
| OS | 0.1% |
| Total | 100.0% |

| Schools and General 2019-20 | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| State | % of total |
| ACT | 29.1% |
| NSW | 33.2% |
| VIC | 13.3% |
| QLD | 10.8% |
| NT | 0.4% |
| SA | 3.9% |
| WA | 2.8% |
| TAS | 2.2% |
| OS | 4.2% |
| Total | 100.0% |