

**The Government's Response to the Report
by the Senate Environment, Recreation, Communications
and the Arts References Committee: *Arts Education***

March 1997

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Section 1 Introduction

Background and Concerns

On 24 February 1994 the Senate asked its Environment, Recreation, Communications and the Arts References Committee to inquire into arts and cultural education. The terms of reference covered: the level and status of education in the arts and the involvement of students in Australian educational institutions; current training practices, skills levels and involvement by teachers and the general community in providing arts education in educational institutions; the allocation of resources to arts education in educational institutions and the use of these resources; and the consistency of arts education policies and programs within and between educational institutions and States and Territories.

The Government welcomes the Committee's report, as an important contribution to arts education across Australia. The Commonwealth Government recognises that arts educators have an important role in the holistic development of students' creativity, expression, and aesthetic appreciation, knowledge and skills. In addition, arts education can enhance quality learning in all curriculum learning areas.

The Government believes that much of people's experiences of the arts is derived from sources other than those provided through formal education, including family and community experiences, as well as those provided through national cultural institutes supported by the Commonwealth Department of Communications and the Arts. The Senate Report seems to be limited to institutional issues of interest to arts educators.

The issues raised by the Inquiry relate to programs for schools, especially those directed towards curriculum, key competencies and professional development, and to vocational education and training, and higher education policy. These policies and programs are administered by the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DEETYA). To some extent the issues also relate to programs administered by the Commonwealth Department of Communications and the Arts (DOCA). The Government's response has been compiled from inputs from these two Departments.

The Committee's report is based on the 131 written submissions, most of which were from arts educators and organisations representing arts educators. The submissions and the Committee's discussion of them covered a number of concerns:

- that arts education policy and practice should not be determined by economic and employment needs, and that an overemphasis on the market economy in government policy has marginalised the true value of arts education;
- that curriculum statements and profiles for Australian schools and the key competencies could have a negative impact on arts education on the basis that the establishment of clearly defined standards and outcomes and an emphasis on competencies are inappropriate for the arts curriculum learning area; and
- that arts disciplines are disadvantaged under current funding arrangements and as a consequence tend to lose status in the university relative to other areas of learning.

It is important, therefore, for the discussion which follows in the Government's response, to put these concerns in the general context of DEETYA programs relating to national collaborative curriculum, key competencies, funding for higher education, vocational education and training and relevant programs administered by DOCA.

This Introduction, Section 1 of the Government's response, provides the general context of relevant Commonwealth programs, while Section 2, Commonwealth Programs Relating to the Arts, summarises past and current initiatives, including those related to the education reforms mentioned above. In Section 3, The Government's Response to the Recommendations, proposed

initiatives are described under the specific recommendations to which they refer. Section 4 summarises the Government's commitments.

DEETYA Programs

Schools

Parts of the Committee's report reflect certain misunderstandings about existing Commonwealth programs. For example, in relation to the curriculum statements and profiles, called "the national curriculum" in the Report, it is said that the arts statement and profile "attempt to squeeze artistic activity into the restrictive mould, determined by the needs of vocational training" (p.vi) and that the arts profile may encourage teachers to teach skills so that they can judge whether or not the student achieved the outcome, ignoring how well the outcome was achieved.

While the arts statement and profile identify five particular art forms, they do not prescribe arbitrary standards and uniformity but, rather, provide for systems and schools to accommodate a wide range of approaches to teaching, learning and assessment. The arts statement and profile are intended to provide a common but broad and flexible framework for curriculum development by education systems and schools and a common language for reporting student achievement to students, parents, schools, systems and employers. They also do not prescribe levels of priority or time allocations to any of the learning areas or strands within them. These are matters which are determined by education systems and schools based on their needs and priorities.

The Report does not give a great deal of consideration to the relationship of the arts area to other learning areas, including the priority and perspective accorded by educators, system authorities and parents. It also gives very little attention to equality of access to arts and cultural education, particularly in settings outside formal learning institutions.

The statements and profiles were prepared as part of a national collaborative curriculum development process, commencing in 1989 and involving the State, Territory and Commonwealth governments. The curriculum statements and profiles are part of a collaborative process to improve education in Australia which is being supported by Commonwealth programs.

One of the significant programs in this process is the National Professional Development Program. This program allows project grantees wide flexibility within program guidelines to design professional development activity. The project which is noted in the response to recommendation 12, for example, included funding for a national Australian Arts Education Conference which enabled arts educators, artists and policy makers to examine developments in arts education, to explore options for future directions and to produce a draft set of principles for arts education.

Similarly, the Government believes that parts of the Committee's report reflect certain misunderstandings among the arts education community about the key competencies. In Chapter 4 of the Report, there is substantial discussion about the fears and concerns of the arts education community relating to the key competencies. The Government acknowledges the importance of these concerns and believes that there are a number of current initiatives that address them, particularly under the Commonwealth's Key Competencies Program, through 1994-96 funding provided to the State and Territory Government pilots and the 1995-96 funding provided to the National Affiliation of Arts Educators. These initiatives are described in Section 3.

The Committee itself identifies some of these misunderstandings. The Government notes and regrets that the Report did not dispel these concerns by referring to the Finn and Mayer reports. For example, the report concludes that "the key competencies are not essential for everyone in all jobs" (p.124), but had the Committee referred to the Mayer report (p.viii) it could have clarified the intention of the key competencies and the need for all young people to acquire them to participate effectively in the emerging forms of work and work organisation. A discussion in the report on emerging forms of work and work organisation in the Arts may have been helpful here. On page 127, the report refers to a confusion about the purposes of the key competencies and whether they are limited to vocational training. But reference to (p.5) of the Finn report and

(p.xiv) of the Mayer report would have clarified the role of the key competencies in regard to general and vocational education and training within schools and their role in promoting flexible post-school education and training pathways.

Higher Education

The Government also believes there is some confusion about the Commonwealth Government's role in funding higher education. Commonwealth funding to higher education institutions is in the form of a single block operating grant to cover teaching and research activities. As autonomous organisations, universities are responsible for the distribution of funds between faculties based on their assessment of priorities and needs so that they can provide a diversity of quality educational offerings that enable people to develop their talents and allow them to participate as fully as possible in society. While it is DEETYA's responsibility to fund public universities this does not preclude universities seeking other sources of income to supplement their objectives.

Vocational Education and Training

The Senate Report does not reflect the current prominence of vocational education and training in arts education. In 1994, there were 28,242 students undertaking competency-based courses through TAFE colleges in the arts, humanities and social sciences and a further 108,662 undertaking courses in visual and performing arts. In addition, the Cultural and Recreation Industry Training Advisory Body and NETTFORCE promote competency-based entry-level training within industry. Competency standards exist in several arts sectors and traineeships targeted at growth areas have been developed. With the advent of new technologies in all arts sectors, vocational education and training will be able to provide flexible and innovative delivery of education and training to students and industry.

Vocational education and training develops traditional skills as well as creative and community skills. These include adaptable, lateral, creative thinking, cultural development, personal creativity and the arts as a communication tool. The demand for arts education is increasing in the VET sector and is met by offering education and training across a range of providers including secondary schools, private providers, adult and community based education providers, industry, TAFE and universities. Often TAFE is the only affordable institution to provide quality post-secondary arts education to individuals, whether for future career development or for leisure pursuits.

DOCA Programs

The Department of Communications and the Arts provides funding for arts and cultural programs in a broader context than education. An outline of the programs and initiatives funded by DOCA is on page 5.

Given this context, the concerns of the Committee that can be addressed through DEETYA and DOCA programs are discussed in Section 3.

Section 2 Commonwealth Programs Relating to the Arts

This section briefly outlines those Commonwealth programs relevant to arts education in the context of the Committee's report into Arts Education.

National Collaborative Curriculum Project

The Commonwealth Government contributed almost \$2 million to the national collaborative curriculum activities from 1989-90 to 1993-94.

The national goals for schooling, agreed to by all Australian Ministers for Education in 1989, provided the foundation for national collaboration on school curriculum matters. At its April 1991 meeting, the former Australian Education Council approved *the arts* as one of eight key learning areas. Following this decision a national literature review of arts curriculum and a curriculum statement and profile for Australian schools for the arts was developed. The development of the arts curriculum statement and profile was jointly funded by the State and Territory governments, with the Commonwealth Government contributing 50% of total funding.

Curriculum Development Projects Program

The Curriculum Development Projects Program provides \$1.6 million in 1996-97 for curriculum development activities to support nationally applicable curriculum, assessment and reporting mechanisms and other nationally identified priority areas. A major priority of this program is to develop a range of support materials to assist schools and teachers in improving the quality of educational outcomes in all learning areas. These include the development of curriculum and assessment resources, professional development materials and research on the use of the statements and profiles.

National Professional Development Program

The National Professional Development Program provides \$60 million, over three years, 1994-96 for professional development activities for teachers. The program provides funding for professional development activities in the arts that support teachers in the use of:

- the curriculum statements and profiles;
- the key competencies; and
- vocational education in schools.

The Program also provides funding to:

- renew teachers' discipline knowledge and teaching skills;
- help teachers to improve work organisation practices and teaching competencies;
- enhance the professional culture of teachers;
- encourage teacher organisations to take a higher profile in promoting the professional development of teachers; and
- promote partnerships between education authorities, teacher organisations, principals' organisations and universities in providing professional development.

Projects of National Significance Program

The Projects of National Significance Program provides \$2.7 million annually to support the development of quality education for all Australian school students and in particular to promote change or innovation in primary and secondary education and to improve the experience, knowledge and skill of teachers and others involved in primary and secondary education in Australia. The Program has provided \$505,000 for arts education activities and initiatives since 1991.

Key Competencies Program

The Key Competencies Program provided \$20 million over three years 1993-94 to 1995-96 to support the development, trialing and evaluation of the key competencies in Australia's general and vocational education and training systems. The Program will produce a professional development package which will be accessible to teachers in 1997 and which will include materials on arts education.

Higher Education

In 1996, the Commonwealth Government provided a total of \$5,340 million for higher education teaching and research through the employment, education, training and youth affairs portfolio. Funding for arts education, including teaching and research, is included in these levels of funding. The major components of this funding are \$4,909 million which was provided through operating grants and \$380 million which was provided through targeted research programs.

The Commonwealth Government does not specify funding for specific discipline areas. As autonomous institutions universities make their own decisions concerning allocation of resources between disciplines.

Department of Communications and the Arts

The Department of Communications and the Arts funds a range of programs and initiatives relating to cultural development in the arts, film, broadcasting and cultural heritage areas. In relation to arts education and training, its main activities are to support the National Institute for Dramatic Art, the National Aboriginal and Islander Skills Development Association, the National Academy of Music, the Australian Ballet School, the Australian Film, Television and Radio School and the Flying Fruit Fly Circus. It also funds educational activities through Youth Music Australia, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, the Special Broadcasting Service and the Australian Children's Television Foundation.

Section 3 The Government's Response to the Recommendations

Recommendation 1

The Commonwealth, in consultation with the Australian Vice-Chancellor's Committee and State education authorities, should review the influence of university entrance arrangements on the school curriculum to discover whether they are having detrimental effect on humanities and arts.

Response

The Commonwealth Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training will write to the State and Territory Ministers for Education, drawing the Committee's concerns to their attention and seeking their advice.

Recommendation 2

The Commonwealth, as part of the outcomes of the competency standards element of the National Project for the Quality of Teaching and Learning, should encourage the States and Territories to give priority to development of more detailed competency standards both for specialist arts teachers and for generalist primary teachers teaching arts.

Response

Nationally consistent generic competencies for beginning school teachers were developed under the National Project for the Quality of Teaching and Learning. They were refined by a working party funded by DEETYA and representing teacher employers and teacher organisations. The National Competency Framework for Beginning Teaching was published in March 1996.

The Government acknowledges this work as providing a useful research benchmark for further work on teacher standards. The Government is interested in the issue of advanced standards and standards for specialist areas and recognises that the National Affiliation of Arts Educators has undertaken some initial work in this area. It may be premature to sponsor the development of competencies for specialist art teachers and generalist primary teachers teaching arts before assessing the response to, and take up of, the generic beginning teachers competencies.

Recommendation 3

As part of the National Curriculum for schools project, the Commonwealth should survey university teacher training courses to identify any deficiencies or systematic biases between disciplines. The Commonwealth, in consultation with the States and Territories, the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee and teacher organisations, should develop guidelines to remedy any deficiencies so that all the Key Learning Areas of the National Curriculum can be taught with equal high quality.

Response

It is inappropriate for the Commonwealth Government to conduct a survey of university teacher training courses. While the Commonwealth, with other education stakeholders, is committed to high standards of teacher education, universities are autonomous organisations that are responsible for determining course offerings based on their assessment of priorities and needs.

The Government agrees that it is important that all key learning areas are taught to an equally high standard, but matters relating to school curriculum and teaching are the responsibility of

State and Territory governments. The Commonwealth Government will therefore refer the committee's concerns about the quality of curriculum and teaching in all key learning areas to the State and Territory governments for consideration.

Recommendation 4

The Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs and the Department of Communications and the Arts should establish a forum of relevant government agencies and peak non-government bodies to facilitate consultation on matters of mutual interest to do with arts education so as to prevent initiatives to both from 'falling between the stools'.

Response

The Government sees merit in establishing a mechanism between key agencies to facilitate consultation on arts and education matters as proposed in the Recommendation.

One suggested means for achieving a consultative mechanism is to establish a regular information exchange forum, bringing together key bodies with responsibilities in the education and cultural development fields. Members might include representatives of the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs, the Department of Communications and the Arts, State and Territory Departments of Education, State and Territory Departments of Arts, Australian National Training Authority, Standards and Curriculum Council, peak professional organisations, including the National Affiliation of Arts Educators, Training and Employment for the Arts, Media and Entertainment and the National Council of Heads of Arts and Design Schools and Culture Recreation Education and Training Australia.

The Department of Communications and the Arts has agreed to prepare an issues paper as a basis for discussion at the initial consultative forum. The issues paper would cover:

- the relationship between arts education and cultural industry development;
- the place of multimedia in arts education;
- the role and responsibilities of the Department of Communications and the Arts in arts education; and
- vocational and professional arts education.

This initiative has already been supported through linkages between Vocational Education and Training Division of DEETYA and the Arts Development Branch of DOCA. DEETYA and DOCA have also jointly funded a survey into the support and/or impediments to the take-up of entry-level trainees in the arts. Recommendations from this survey, together with a paper entitled *Working Together to Provide a Creative Nation* developed by TEAME (Training and Employment for the Arts, Media and Entertainment) outline some options for future policy.

DEETYA and DOCA will consult with the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs and the Cultural Ministers Council to have the forum and its activities recognised.

Recommendation 5

The Commonwealth's National Professional Development Program for teachers (NPDP) should continue beyond the end of the current 1993-96 three year plan.

Response

In the current fiscal environment, the Government has been unable to provide funding to continue the NPDP beyond 1996. However, the 1996-97 Budget provided additional resources for literacy, schools to work programs and language teaching,

some of which will be used to support teacher professional development. The Government is also supporting the establishment of a national body for teacher professional associations. It is expected that the new body will provide advice to the Government on the professional development needs of the teaching profession.

Recommendation 6

To better target the expenditure of NPDP money the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs, in consultation with State education authorities, teacher organisations and the Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee, should investigate the current state of inservice professional development (including by discipline) and identify areas of need for priority action.

Response

An evaluation of the NPDP was conducted over August- November 1995. Personnel from education systems, teacher education faculties and teacher professional organisations as well as project personnel were interviewed. The draft final evaluation report indicates that there was general satisfaction with the priority areas listed in the Guidelines and there were no indications that the NPDP had neglected areas of significant professional development need.

The Government will consult with key stakeholders in its future considerations of professional development needs.

Recommendation 7

The *National Report on Schooling in Australia* should report on the inputs to school education (such as enrolments, lesson time, teachers employed) broken down by the various subjects and Key Learning Areas and level of schooling, to allow a measure of the place of the arts (or other subject areas) in the school curriculum.

Response

In responding to this recommendation, it is important to describe the annual National Report on Schooling (ANR) mechanism. The annual *National Report on Schooling in Australia (ANR)* is an agreed accountability and reporting mechanism which was developed in cooperation with the States. It serves a number of purposes: enabling the States and the non-government sector to meet their educational accountability to the Commonwealth; contributing to the Commonwealth Minister's reporting to Parliament; and enabling all levels of the government and non-government school sectors to report to the Australian community.

Accountability requirements for Commonwealth schools programs are negotiated between the Commonwealth (as provider of the funds) and education authorities (as clients and education providers) and the coverage of the *ANR* is determined by an Agreed Information Framework developed by the Schools Taskforce of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA). This comprises representatives of the Commonwealth, all States and Territories, the Catholic and independent sectors of schooling, and parents. Reporting on the areas recommended by the Committee is therefore a matter for consideration in the MCEETYA forum. The Commonwealth will draw the Committee's concerns and its recommendation to the attention of the MCEETYA Schools Taskforce.

It is the case that statistics on the number of students enrolled in tertiary accredited Year 12 creative and performing arts are already reported annually in the *ANR*. The Australian Council for Educational Research study on *Subject Choice in Years 11 and 12*, to which the Committee refers in its report, also reported extensively on participation in arts subjects at senior secondary level.

Detailed data at levels lower than Year 11 and 12 on the availability of arts subjects, participation and attainment in the arts, and the proportion of class time devoted to the arts are not explicitly covered in the *ANR* at present. States and Territories do, however, report regularly on their priorities and initiatives in key learning areas, including the arts, in the *ANR*.

One factor that the MCEETYA Schools Taskforce is likely to consider is the 'inputs' focus of this recommendation. The Committee will be aware of the view expressed by the Senate Employment, Education and Training References Committee in its *Report of the Inquiry into Accountability in Commonwealth-State Funding Arrangements in Education* that most efforts should be directed towards the production of educational outcomes data. The Commonwealth's objectives for schooling have a particular emphasis on those who are educationally disadvantaged, and student outcomes reporting will assist the Commonwealth in identifying key areas of need and targeting those students or areas of schooling where additional assistance is warranted.

The growing concern about the limited availability of hard data on educational outcomes was reflected in the findings and recommendations of the Senate Inquiry into educational accountability and DEETYA's submission to that inquiry. It should also be noted that the MCEETYA Schools Taskforce is working in consultation with the Schools Working Group established as part of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) *Review of Commonwealth-State Service Provision* to develop nationally agreed performance indicators, and detailed definitions for those indicators, for the government school sector. The aim of the COAG exercise is to enhance both the effectiveness and efficiency of service provision in a number of government service areas, including school education.

Recommendation 8

The National Report on Schooling in Australia should record educational outcomes for all Key Learning Areas, not only literacy and numeracy.

Response

Again, in responding to this recommendation, it is necessary to describe the annual National Report on Schooling processes which have been agreed by the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs. Under the existing framework for the annual *National Report on Schooling in Australia (ANR)*, States and Territories report on each of the eight areas of student learning (which include the arts) by describing:

- State/Territory or sector issues associated with the learning area;
- curriculum development, implementation and assessment activities;
- application to target groups (including, where possible, information on subject participation and achievement by sub-groups); and
- a consideration of cross-curricular processes.

In the 1993 *ANR* all systems reported on curriculum development or review in arts subjects and measures to increase the participation of students in the arts and a number of systems conducted professional development activities in the arts to enhance teaching strategies. Many systems reported on the trialing of the arts curriculum statements and student profiles during 1993. One of the main purposes of the profiles is to provide a framework for reporting student achievement and outcomes in the area of student learning and the Government expects that following the development and implementation of new arts curriculum frameworks, systems will be in a better position to report on student outcomes.

The revised structure for the *ANR* for 1995 and beyond is based on a new format agreed by Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers for Education in October 1994. Ministers have also agreed that future *ANRs* will increasingly report nationally comparable outcomes data. The 1995 Agreed Information Framework provides for an expanded national overview chapter which will provide a more detailed analysis of four focus areas derived from the National Goals for Schooling each year. Two of these four focus areas will be drawn from learning areas. For the

1995 *ANR*, the relevant focus areas are literacy and health and physical education. The arts is one of the designated focus areas for 1998.

At this stage, detailed frameworks for reporting on the focus areas have not been developed beyond 1995 and specific reporting requirements will be negotiated between the Commonwealth and education authorities at the appropriate time. However, as the *ANR* increasingly moves towards the inclusion of student outcomes data and uniformity in data presentation, it is expected that reporting on each of the focus areas will encompass data on participation by area of study (also desegregated by equity target group), student learning contexts, student outcomes, changed emphases and/or emerging issues, and significant achievements. Data can also be expected to include information on numbers of teachers delivering courses in the arts and other characteristics of teachers, such as qualifications held and areas of specialisation.

Recommendation 9

In any further consideration or development of the National Curriculum documents the purpose of education must be clearly and strongly asserted, with a well-rounded and liberal education being the benchmark, so that education will be an effective instrument by which children become socialised, participating, informed and creative adults.

Response

The Government supports this recommendation. The National Collaborative Curriculum Project, of which the development of the curriculum statements and profiles for Australian schools has been the most notable outcome so far, was informed by the common and agreed national goals for schooling. The goals for schooling clearly support national collaborative curriculum development which aims to develop students' talents and capacities to full potential, and is relevant to the social and cultural needs of the nation. The goals for schooling specifically include the development of an appreciation and understanding of, and confidence to participate in, the creative arts; the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which will enable students to participate as active and informed citizens; the development of understandings of and respect for our cultural heritage. The goals also make provision for the creative use of leisure time by all students.

The national goals for schooling have the support of all Australian Ministers for Education and they provide a framework on which further national curriculum development and review can be based.

Any further national collaborative curriculum development, however, requires the cooperation of the State and Territory governments. At the July 1993 meeting of the former Australian Education Council it was decided to refer matters relating to the nationally developed curriculum statements and profiles back to the States and Territories for further review and consultation with their own educational communities. The State and Territory governments have been reviewing and trialing the documents over the last two years. The Government supports current proposals and actions by the States and Territories to review and adapt the curriculum statements and profiles.

The Government supported a national schools forum on educational outcomes and accountability held in Sydney on 3 - 4 October 1996. The forum considered the national collaboration on school education matters and will report to the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs in 1997.

Recommendation 10

Further development of national curriculum initiatives at State level should adapt the national curriculum framework to take account of the particular needs of each discipline, paying particular regard to the creative and unpredictable element of arts learning which cannot easily be accommodated in a framework of pointers and outcomes.

Response

It should be noted that further curriculum development is the prerogative of the State and Territory education systems. The Commonwealth Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training will refer this recommendation to the State and Territory Ministers for Education.

The Government acknowledges that it is vital for teachers and curriculum developers to facilitate the development of creativity through learning in the arts and to guard against stifling such learning. The statement on the arts for Australian schools explicitly acknowledges that learning activities in the arts should be developed and implemented in a way that encourages students to take risks, be imaginative, question prevailing values, explore alternative solutions, engage in arts criticisms, invent, practise and refine techniques, share opinions and extend the limits of the arts.

Recommendation 11

In light of this the Commonwealth and the States should monitor the implementation of national curriculum initiatives to assess whether changes are relatively disadvantaging the arts, and should devise pre-emptive or remedial strategies.

Response

The Government supports this recommendation. In December 1993, the meeting of the former Australian Education Council requested the Curriculum Corporation to coordinate national information about the implementation of the curriculum statements and profiles and to report annually about their implementation to the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs.

The Government acknowledges that the implementation of the curriculum statements and profiles should be monitored so that any identified weaknesses can be investigated and strategies devised to address them and strengths of the documents can be identified and disseminated more widely to relevant national interest groups and key stakeholders.

The national schools forum referred to under the response to Recommendation No. 9 would provided a venue to reaffirm the need for continued monitoring of the statements and profiles and to identify any possible strategies to address their impact on State and Territory curriculum practices.

Recommendation 12

Professional development programs for teachers relating to national curriculum initiatives, including those funded by the Commonwealth's National Professional Development Program, should pay due attention to the particular problems and needs of each discipline in implementing national curriculum initiatives.

Response

The Government agrees with the recommendation that problems and needs specific to disciplines be catered for in designing professional development activities and considers that the flexible structure of the NPDP has allowed this to occur.

Under the 1995 Strategic Element of the NPDP, the peak arts association, the National Affiliation of Arts Educators (NAAE) was funded to provide professional development in relation to the arts statement and profile (Project N4-95). This was applicable to all five artforms specified in the arts statement. The NAAE was also funded separately to provide professional development for discipline renewal in the subject areas of visual arts, music and media.

Under the 1995 General Element of the NPDP in some States, professional development activities relevant to specific arts subjects have been provided. Generally however, these activities are coordinated for the arts key learning area, eg in Victoria, professional development was delivered to specific arts subjects but subject matter was cross-linked to a number of subject areas.

The Committee's report draws attention to some of the concerns held by arts educators about the implementation of the arts statement and profile, such as in relation to defining standards and outcomes. Professional development funded under Project N4-95 has been intended, in part, to develop appropriate strategies to assist teachers in managing assessment and reporting procedures consistent with the arts curriculum profile for Australian schools.

In relation to the key competencies, an interactive multimedia Professional Development Package, currently being developed to assist teachers and trainers in their classroom work to develop the capacity to recognise the key competencies in a variety of contexts. The Package will be released in 1997 and disseminated in a number of ways including CD-ROM, video and print publications.

Funding is also being provided under the Commonwealth's Key Competencies Program to the NAAE to establish the extent and ways the key competencies can be generic across the five arts areas of the profile, and the extent to which the construct of 'competency' is applicable in the arts field.

Recommendation 13

In increasing the profile of vocational training in schools, the Education Ministers should pay particular attention to the need to ensure that a broad general education is not marginalised. Monitoring the implementation of key competencies projects must address this question. Commonwealth special purpose funding of key competencies related projects should be conditional on this.

Response

The Commonwealth's Key Competencies Program concludes in the 1996-97 financial year. Any decision to implement the key competencies in the schools sector is a constitutional responsibility of the State and Territory governments. The issue of monitoring implementation will be considered in the development of any relevant Commonwealth programs for 1997-2000.

Recommendation 14

Professional development programs for teachers (including the National Professional Development Program) should address the relationship between the key competencies and broader educational aims, so the key competencies are not misused outside their proper sphere.

Response

The Government supports the intention that professional development activities in relation to the key competencies should be cognisant of broader educational aims. Although key competencies constitute a priority area of the NPDP, during 1994 and 1995 only a handful of NPDP projects focussed primarily on this area. Most NPDP projects which encompassed key competencies did so in relation to a broader educational content.

Under the Key Competencies Program, school pilots are being conducted in each State and Territory. Progress reports to date indicate that teachers exhibit a high level of understanding of the relationship between the key competencies and broader educational aims. The Key Competencies Interactive Multimedia Professional Development Package will provide teachers with a further opportunity to examine the relationship between the key competencies and the broader educational aims and outcomes of their own discipline area, as well as within community settings.

Recommendation 15

The Education Ministers should initiate a project of comparable status and focus to the present key competencies project to clarify the broad purposes of school education and re-assert their importance beside the employment-related purposes which are the focus of the Mayer report.

Response

The Government does not see the need for a separate project to complement the key competencies project for the purposes stated in the recommendation. The current work on the key competencies needs to be seen as one component of a three part reform package that impacts on the school sector: statements/profiles, key competencies and the Australian Vocational Training System. The development of curriculum statements and profiles of student achievement across the eight learning areas of the school curriculum focuses on the broad purposes of school education. These statements and profiles are based on the common and agreed goals for schooling in Australia endorsed by State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers for Education in 1989 and are further supported by the Commonwealth's National Professional Development Program. As indicated in responses to recommendations 9, 10 and 11 the curriculum statements and profiles and related work are subject to ongoing review and reform.

Recommendation 16

Projects to integrate the key competencies into the school curriculum should monitor the effects on the various disciplines, paying particular regard to the creative and unpredictable element of arts learning which cannot easily be accommodated in a framework of measurable behavioural outcomes. Commonwealth special purpose funding of key competencies related projects should be conditional on this.

Recommendation 17

In light of this the Commonwealth and the States should monitor the integration of the key competencies into the school curriculum to assess whether they have effects that are relatively disadvantaging the arts, and should devise pre-emptive or remedial strategies.

Response to Recommendation 16 and 17

As noted in the response to Recommendation 13 the issue of monitoring implementation are being considered in the development of any relevant Commonwealth programs for 1997-2000.

Nevertheless, there is an inherent difficulty in trying to monitor the impact of the key competencies on the creative and unpredictable elements of arts learning. Monitoring usually occurs within a specified framework that anticipates areas of impacts. Monitoring outside such a framework would need to be more far reaching and consequently would be more resource intensive.

Recommendation 18

A competency relating to aesthetic awareness should be added to the head list of key competencies.

Response

The Government does not support this recommendation. The Commonwealth's Key Competencies Program is in its final stages and concludes in the 1996-97 financial year. Any decision to develop a competency relating to aesthetic awareness would need to be considered in consultation with the States and Territories and informed by the outcomes of the State/Territory pilot projects in the arts learning area, as well as the project being conducted by the National Affiliation of Arts Educators.

There are substantial conceptual difficulties in developing aesthetic awareness as a generic competency, even within the broad definition of competence used by the Mayer Committee. This broad definition focuses on performance that is underpinned by knowledge, skills and understanding and the capacity to transfer the knowledge, skills and understanding to new tasks and situations. Aesthetic awareness may prove to be part of the underpinning knowledge, skills and understandings, rather than a competency. Work to date with the arts statement and profile and the current list of key competencies supports this view and shows that there is a close relationship between aesthetics and two of the key competencies: Collecting, analysing and organising information and Communicating ideas and information.

Recommendation 19

The Commonwealth and the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee, as part of the Quality Assurance Program in higher education, should monitor the effects of the Unified National System reforms to universities on a discipline by discipline basis. They should report on any trends which are disadvantaging some disciplines relative to others. They should suggest strategies for ameliorating these trends.

Response

The Government does not support this recommendation. Discipline reviews are generally slow moving and expensive processes with an uncertain effect on outcomes.

Between 1993 and 1995 under the Commonwealth's Quality Assurance Program the Committee for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (CQAHE) conducted three rounds of quality reviews of Australian higher education institutions covering teaching and learning, research, and community service.

A key aspect of the review process was a holistic approach, as opposed to one that focuses on particular disciplines or faculties.

These whole-of-institution reviews have been very successful in achieving significant improvements in quality assurance within institutions, especially in review and monitoring mechanisms. There has also been a significant commitment to, and evidence of, planning throughout the higher education sector, including strategic, enrolment, capital, research, budget, equipment and other infrastructure planning.

A key element of the Government's higher education policy is the promotion of quality and excellence in teaching and research through a less regulated system that encourages universities to build upon their areas of strength and comparative advantage. The Government has recently announced a new approach to the maintenance and enhancement of quality in Australia's universities, that will allow institutions to develop approaches to quality improvement that are consistent with their individual missions and goals.

Recommendation 20

The Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs should carry out the further investigation of arts teaching costs promised when the Relative Funding Model was introduced, with a view to establishing the extent of any relative disadvantage to the arts under the current model.

Recommendation 21

The information base of the Relative Funding Model should be disaggregated and published, so that universities' internal budgeting decisions may be informed by detailed information rather than by the approximate and possibly misleading information contained in the present clusters and weightings.

Recommendation 22

The Commonwealth should update the Relative Funding Model now and each five years to ensure its continued accuracy, and should use the information as one of the inputs to ongoing recalculation of the allocation of Commonwealth funding among the universities.

Response to Recommendations 20, 21 and 22

In responding to these recommendations it is necessary to clarify the Relative Funding Model (RFM). The Committee has implied that the RFM is the formula which the Commonwealth uses to distribute higher education funds to universities. This is incorrect. The Commonwealth Government provides each higher education institution with a single block operating grant on a triennial basis for a specified level of student load within the context of an educational profile which covers its teaching and research activities. The amount of operating grant an institution receives in any given year is based on the level of funds it received in the previous year, plus or minus any growth or downward adjustment in its Commonwealth funded load. Growth places in recent years have been funded on an average cost of a place regardless of the disciplines involved.

The RFM was a one-off exercise to establish funding relativities among institutions and as a mechanism to move institutions to within an acceptable band of funding variation, thereby enhancing their capacity to compete on equal terms in the UNS. The model comprised a teaching related component designed to reflect the relative costs of teaching in different discipline cost clusters at different levels, and research related component to support research activities and associated research infrastructure.

A relative teaching costs matrix was developed to distribute the teaching component of the model's allocations on the basis of an institution's particular mix of disciplines and levels. While it is recognised that a considerable amount of variation occurs within each discipline cluster in the model, the discipline weightings used in the model were based on three separate studies of relative teaching costs conducted in 1988.

The relative funding model was designed for use at the system-wide level only and was not intended as a mechanism for the internal allocation of institutional resources. It was used to establish the appropriate share of total operating grant funding for each institution based on its particular educational profile. The model was deliberately kept relatively simple and did not aim

to determine precise funding rates for individual disciplines, given the managerial autonomy of universities.

Given that the model was designed as a one off, system-wide application, any further application of the model or conduct of a similar, revised process has not been considered. Institutions are wholly responsible for the allocation of resources between disciplines.

Recommendation 23

The Commonwealth should investigate the general question of whether current research funding arrangements have the effect of discriminating systematically against particular disciplines in unintended ways.

Response

The Government will ask the Australian Research Council to investigate whether current research funding arrangements discriminate against particular disciplines in unintended ways. However, arts education faculties have raised concerns with the Government about the level of funding they are currently receiving and about the manner by which funding is allocated, both to universities from the Government and within individual universities. The Government will bring these concerns to the attention of the committee which is undertaking the review of higher education financing and policy in 1997.

Recommendation 24

The Australian Research Council and the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee should form a working party to address the problems of university research in the arts; including, to investigate whether current definitions of 'research' are appropriate in the light of Australia's goals for cultural development; to consider whether there are activities that ought to be funded by one or other but are now funded by neither; to consider whether current research funding arrangements have the effect of discriminating systematically against the arts; to suggest remedies to any problems.

Response

The Government has established a Working Group, comprising the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (as Chair), the Australian Research Council, the Higher Education Council, and the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs, to develop and refine the Composite Index (CI) which has provided the basis for allocating the Research Quantum (RQ) since 1995. The Government will refer to the Working Group the issue of whether the current definition of research used for the purpose of competitive research funding allocation is appropriate.

The issues of whether activities that ought to be funded by either the Australian Research Council/ Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs grants or Australia Council grants are funded by neither; whether current arrangement discriminate systematically against the arts; and what remedies exist for any identified problems will be jointly considered by the relevant portfolios and their associated funding bodies.

Recommendation 25

The Commonwealth and the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee should investigate whether there are any biases in universities' behaviour in supporting research, biases that could be attributed to the 'research quantum' arrangements; if so, whether the biases affect particular disciplines systematically or specifically disadvantage the arts.

Response

The Government does not support this recommendation. Universities are autonomous institutions that make their own decisions about research funding priorities between, and within, disciplines. A Government initiated investigation into the possibility of bias against certain disciplines by universities in research funding would be contrary to Government policy and funding arrangements. However, the Government will refer the issue of an alleged bias against particular disciplines to the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee for its consideration.

Research funding available to universities in the form of block grants through the operating grant is estimated to be \$813 million in 1995-96, including the RQ component of \$213 million. Universities have discretion over the allocation of these funds.

Prior to the introduction of the CI in 1995, the RQ was allocated, as part of the Relative Funding Model (RFM) applied to the operating grant in 1990, on the basis of the Commonwealth Competitive Grants Index (CCGI). With the introduction of the CI, a much broader range of performance indicators is now used to allocate the RQ.

The Government reiterates that both the RFM, which included the CCGI, and the CI were designed as broad mechanisms to allocate resources at the national level, that is, between universities. Neither was required, or intended, to be used by institutions for the purpose of internal allocations.

The Government notes that some universities are reported to be increasingly adopting internal research funding practices based on the CI and that this has caused concern in the creative arts and some other disciplines. However, this is a matter for consideration by these universities.

Section 4 Summary

The Report generally concentrates on the broad issues of making provision for a well-rounded liberal arts education that is adequately funded and is delivered in a supportive environment by well trained arts educators.

The Government is supportive of the Committee's report, and notes the concerns raised by the Committee about the need for a liberal arts education, allowing for visual and creative expression. The Government also notes the fears expressed in some submissions that arts education could be threatened by apparent tendencies to squeeze artistic activity into a restrictive economic model and that attempts to define arts education in the curriculum statements and profiles further restrict arts education.

The Government believes that Commonwealth education programs and initiatives address a balanced range of social, economic and aesthetic concerns. All of the programs and initiatives for school education described in this Response aim to equip the nation's young people to develop their full potential and share equally in the social, cultural and economic benefits of education. The initiatives have also been developed in consultation with a range of key stakeholders and they have been developed so that they can be used in a flexible way according to the different circumstances and priorities.

The Commonwealth will support the Committee's Report in the following ways:

- The Government will consider relevant concerns about a suitably qualified teaching force and on-going needs for teacher professional development as it pursues its policies for quality teaching, in collaboration with education authorities and universities. The Government's support for the establishment of a new national body for teachers, the National Forum of Teacher Professional Associations, will give teachers, including arts educators, a strong voice in taking these issues forward. This addresses Recommendations 2 and 3.
- The Department of Communications and the Arts, in cooperation with the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs, will convene a consultative forum to bring together key stakeholders in arts education to consider matters of mutual interest. The Department of Communications and the Arts will prepare an initial issues paper for consideration at the forum. The Departments will consult with the Ministerial Councils on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs and the Cultural Ministers Council to have the forum and its activities recognised. This addresses Recommendation 4.
- The Commonwealth will refer, for consideration, to the Schools Taskforce of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, the Committee's recommendation that the annual National Report on Schooling should report on inputs (enrolments, lesson time, teachers employed) to school education, broken down into learning areas. The Schools Taskforce is responsible for the development of an Agreed Information Framework that determines the coverage of the annual National Report on Schooling. This supports Recommendation 7.
- The Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training will refer the Committee's recommendations about the influence of university entrance arrangements on school curriculum to establish whether they are having any detrimental effect on humanities and arts and matters relating to further curriculum initiatives to the State and Territory Ministers for Education. This addresses Recommendations 1 and 10.
- The Government is providing funds for the national schools forum on profiles and educational outcomes, held in New South Wales in 1996. Through this forum the on-going monitoring of outcomes deriving from the curriculum profiles will be considered. This addresses Recommendation 11.

- The Government will ask the Australian Research Council to investigate whether current research funding arrangements may discriminate against particular disciplines. The Government will also bring concerns of arts education faculties about funding to the attention of the committee which is undertaking the review of higher education financing and policy in 1997. This addresses Recommendation 23.
- The Government will refer to the Working Group, comprising the Australian Vice-Chancellor's Committee, the Australian Research Council, the Higher Education Council and DEETYA the issue of whether the current definition of research for the purpose of determining competitive research funding allocation is appropriate. This addresses Recommendation 24.
- The Government will refer to the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee for its consideration, the Committee's concerns about a possible bias in research funding arrangements against particular disciplines. This addresses Recommendation 25.

An Appendix of Commonwealth Projects

National Professional Development Program Projects

In the 1994 funding round, the following projects were funded:

- The National Affiliation of Arts Educators were funded (\$100,000) to set up an efficient national office and management structure to act on behalf of arts teachers and enable to implementation of coordinated professional development activities for arts educators.
- The University of Melbourne was funded (\$100,000) to provide professional development activities to allow arts teachers to work with the nationally developed arts curriculum statement and profile and the Curriculum and Standards Framework.

In the 1995 funding round, the following projects were funded:

- The National Affiliation of Arts Educators was funded (\$100,000) to prepare a national professional development strategy to support the implementation of the arts curriculum statement and profile and to improve the network of arts education groups.
- The National Affiliation of Arts Educators was funded (\$105,400) to prepare a collection of student work samples for use to enhance teachers understandings of students achievement in arts education.
- The Queensland Art Teachers Association was funded (\$41,500) to pilot a curriculum development project focussing on the key competencies and elements of visual arts practice in the classroom.
- The Queensland Artworkers Alliance, Griffith University was funded (\$41,500) for a pilot project targeting Queensland primary and secondary teachers to develop their knowledge of key competencies and visual arts practice in the classroom.
- Melbourne University was funded (\$162,000) for the 'Cross Arts Professional Development Program', a comprehensive professional development program to assist teachers and others associated with arts education to become active participants in changes which are taking place in approaches to school curricula at all levels;
- ARTS South Australia was funded (\$72,000) for the *ARTS SA Consortium Training and Development Project*, to deliver arts teaching and learning programs which are aligned with the requirements of the Arts statement and profile for Australian Schools;
- The South Australian Visual Arts Association was funded (\$15,125) for the *Visual Arts and Gender Equity Project* to assist teachers to understand and explore issues relating to gender equity and visual arts education;
- The Western Australian Affiliation of Arts Educators was funded (\$95,309) for the *Profiles into Practice - Broadening the Reach* project, to assist teachers in developing an outcomes based pedagogy in the arts, to form the basis for planning and teaching;
- New South Wales Department of Education was funded (\$3,868,000) subject area consortium project, *Improving Teaching and Learning through an Outcomes and Profiles approach*. This project will include professional development for teachers of the arts. The NSW National Professional Development Management Committee will meet in January to determine funding for arts projects in NSW;

- \$16,000 was provided to fund four professional development projects for arts teachers in the Northern Territory: *Dance in Education*, to be conducted by Ausdance, *Children and Drama*, by Northern Territory Drama in Education, *Understanding Music*, by the Australian Society for Music Educators and *Teaching Visual Arts* to be conducted by the Visual Arts Educators;
- \$760,000 to fund the Tasmanian subject area consortium project, *Implementation of Curriculum Statements and Profiles in Tasmanian State, Catholic and Independent Schools and Colleges*. This project will ensure a collaborative approach to the implementation of Curriculum Frameworks and Profiles for Australian Schools and will enhance teachers' understanding of related pedagogical issues. It will include teacher professional development in the arts/technology area;
- \$31,313 to facilitate the implementation of the Arts Framework and National Profiles within the ACT. This professional development activity will provide teachers with a number of models for skill development and discipline renewal.
- The University of Canberra, in conjunction with Canberra Institute of the Arts at the Australian National University and the National Affiliation of Arts Educators was funded (\$120,000) to increase teachers' knowledge and skills in teaching in the arts. The project will provide practitioner-based professional development for arts teachers in the three areas of visual arts, music and media. The project will target secondary arts teachers within the Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales regional and country areas.'

In the 1996 funding round, funding for the following projects has been approved:

- The National Affiliation of Arts Educators, will be funded (\$100,000) for the final stage of professional development activities for primary and secondary teachers of the arts. The funding will provide support for the development and dissemination of an Arts Education Principles and Practice Package.
- Deakin University, in partnership with the National Affiliation of Arts Educators, will be funded (\$180,000) for a pilot project to prepare a professional development course to teachers responsible for visual arts and music, about teaching with converging technologies.

Gender Equity in Curriculum Reform Project

- This project, funded (\$111,750) through the Gender Equity in Curriculum Reform Project in 1991-92, researched the needs of girls in arts education and employment, through qualitative and quantitative data on their participation, including girls who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and from non-English speaking backgrounds. It produced a set of gender inclusive teaching materials in arts.
- In addition to providing funding for the development of the arts statement and profile, the Commonwealth funded the engagement of a gender equity consultant to work with the arts curriculum writing team to provide advice on making the arts curriculum framework gender inclusive.

Projects of National Significance Program

- In 1994, one of the seven priority areas for funding under the Project of National Significance Program was "developing interest in the fine and performing arts".
- Under the program funding of \$15,000 was provided for the *Australia Remembers - National Playwriting Competition* for the writing of a performance play suitable to be used as a teaching tool in schools and universities.

- From 1991 to 1995, the School of Acrobatics and Performing Skills, an annexe of the Wodonga Government High School was granted funding of \$490,000 to support circus training.

National Priority (Reserve) Fund

In addition to the block operating grant provided to higher education institutions, a number of arts education initiatives have been funded through the National Priority (Reserve) Fund. These include:

1993

- Funding of \$100,000 to Griffith University for assistance with amalgamation involving the Queensland college of the Arts.
- Funding of \$99,300 to the Australian National University to support the project, Experimental Design in Industrial Quality Control.

1994

- Funding of \$35,000 to the University of Western Sydney to provide a Silpakorn University Exchange Program for Visual Arts Undergraduate Students.
- Funding of \$80,230 to the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Ltd for a Resource and reference System of Textile Design and Designers in Australia during the Twentieth Century.
- Funding of \$43,000 to the Swinburne University of Technology for the cultural development initiative, Ellmatta: Networking of Cultural Heritage Materials.
- Funding of \$97,000 to Curtin University of Technology for assistance with the provision of 'Advanced Electronic Design Training for Industry'.
- Funding of \$70,000 to the University of Western Australia for a cultural development initiative, Multi-media Database of National Trust Heritage Buildings and Sites in Western Australia.
- Funding of \$70,000 to Flinders University of South Australia for a cultural development initiative, Nuyt's Archipelago: a video documentary and potential television pilot.
- Funding of \$72,000 to the Australian National University for a cultural development initiative, The Anthology of Australian Music on Disc.
- Funding of \$15,000 to the Australian National University for a project on Experimental Design in Industrial Process Quality Control.

1995

- Funding of \$48,450 to Monash University for assistance in the development of a Graduate Diploma of Arts (Australian Folklife Studies) course.
- Funding of \$80,000 to Griffith University for the 'Shaping Lives: Nationalism and Design in Australia' project.
- Funding of \$90,355 to Griffith University for the development of 'Interactive Multimedia for Indonesian: Designing and Developing' and 'Interactive Laserdisc Materials for Advanced Indonesian Language Learning'.
- Funding of \$58,000 to Edith Cowan University to support work on the Aboriginal Interpretation of Histories of National Trust Sites.
- Funding of \$75,000 to the University of Adelaide for the Mawson Project, involving the development of a database and multimedia presentations.

- Funding of \$77,562 to the Northern Territory University for the project, 'Interfaces: Aboriginal Visual Arts in a cross-cultural Context'.

Department of Communications and the Arts

In addition to funding for national training institutions and cultural agencies, the Communications and the Arts portfolio has provided funding for the following initiatives:

- Training and Employment in Arts, Media and Entertainment Industries (TEAME) was funded for the development of a number of traineeships in the arts industry. The Project also undertook a survey of likely industry take-up of traineeships. The overall response was positive, particularly in the areas of arts marketing and multimedia. Cost was identified as the major obstacle to employers offering traineeships.
- Additional funding of \$2 million through the Australia Council to Musica Viva has been approved to extend the current Musica Viva in Schools Program to Queensland, South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory.
- In a joint venture with the Victorian Government, the Commonwealth Government is providing assistance to the National Academy of Music in Melbourne, a centre of training excellence for musicians of outstanding talent.
- The Government will provide \$600,000 over four years to assist the Flying Fruit Fly Circus to guarantee its continuing viability and expansion.
- Funding has been allocated to support an Internship Program, managed through the National Centre for Cultural Heritage Science at the University of Canberra. The Program aims to address the specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-English speaking peoples in relation to conservation skills development focussing on their significant collections. Part of the funding will also be used to promote entry into the National Centre's course utilising its Foundation Program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.