

<b>POLICY TITLE:</b>	<b>ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE</b>
<b>PUBLISHED:</b>	2002
<b>IDENTIFIER:</b>	ESL2002
<b>CONTACT:</b>	Literacy and Numeracy Team
<b>RELATED DOCUMENTS:</b>	<i>International Fee Paying Students</i> <i>Guidelines for Identification of Non English Speaking Background Students for English as a Second Language Provision</i> <i>Enrolment in Colleges</i> <i>Enrolment in Primary and High Schools</i> <i>Combating Racism Handbook</i> <i>Racial Discrimination Act (1975)</i> <i>Racial Hatred Act (1995)</i>

## 1. PURPOSE

This policy reflects national and local policies related to English as a Second Language (ESL) education. It specifies the responsibilities of the ACT Department of Education and Training and of its schools and teachers in providing for ESL learners.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 *Culturally inclusive curriculum* – resources, assessment and teaching practices which value and include the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of learners.
- 2.2 *English* - means Australian Standard English.
- 2.3 *ESL learner* - a person learning English in Australia who uses a language other than English at home (including recent arrivals and those born in Australia).
- 2.4 *ESL specialist* – a teacher with ESL qualifications from a recognised tertiary institution.
- 2.5 *Minimum ESL qualifications* - means the completion of a one semester unit of studies in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) or its equivalent.
- 2.6 *Creole* is a common language adapted from two or more language groups and learnt as a first language.
- 2.7 *Indigenous English* means a dialect of English used by Indigenous speakers.
- 5.3 *LUAC* means Language for Understanding across the Curriculum.

## 3. POLICY STATEMENTS

- 3.1 ESL learners have the right to access curricula, organisation structures, ESL specialist teachers and teaching practices, which meet their English, language and literacy needs.

- 3.2. Enhanced access to education resources and to learning for ESL learners achieves desirable outcomes in education, in the workforce and in the community.
- 3.3 The International Education Program provides resources for ESL teaching for international students.
- 3.4 The department consults with relevant community organisations in the provision of ESL services.
- 3.5 The department recognises that all Australians should have the opportunity to acquire and develop proficiency in the English language.
- 3.6 The department applies the principles of access and equity through facilitating communication and promoting understanding, with specific reference to students with a language background other than English and the department's English as a Second Language Program.
- 3.7 The department supports National and Territory initiatives in countering racism in schools.

#### **4. CONTEXT**

- 4.1 English is the principal language enabling power and access in Australian society.
- 4.2 This policy recognises and supports national and territory policy and curriculum initiatives in the field of English language and literacy.
- 4.3 ESL learners in the ACT come from diverse national, cultural, language and socio-economic backgrounds and have a wide variety of needs. These learners include:
  - Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students whose first language is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language or a Creole, or Indigenous English
  - students born overseas with language backgrounds other than English who are residents of Australia
  - students born in Australia into a home where a language other than English is used
  - students with a language background other than English who are international private students
  - students who are dependants of diplomats (Note: all employees of diplomatic missions do not necessarily have diplomatic status.)
  - students who are dependants of Australian Government (eg AusAid) scholarship holders
  - students who are dependants of Australian university (eg ANU, UC, Australian Defence College) scholarship holders, and
  - exchange students.
- 4.4 Students who have language backgrounds other than English have the same range of abilities as the general student population. Some ESL students, therefore, may have learning difficulties and/or gifts and talents. Some ESL students may be

disadvantaged by factors such as trauma and/or poverty. It should be recognised that learning English as a second language is an additional skill to be valued.

- 4.5 ESL learners continue to develop their language and literacy skills when mainstream teachers use language focused teaching strategies. This is further enhanced when teachers display an awareness and appreciation of cultural and linguistic pluralism which is incorporated into all school practices.

## **5 POLICY RESPONSIBILITIES**

The department, schools and ESL specialist teachers have complementary roles in implementing this policy.

### **5.1 The Department**

- 5.1.1 The department employs ESL teachers who have at least minimum qualifications in ESL.
- 5.1.2 The department provides ESL teachers for schools on the basis of assessed student need as identified by an annual process, as defined in the department's guidelines. Final allocation is completed through the February ESL student enrolment census.
- 5.1.3 The department allocates ESL staffing resources to Introductory English Centres (IECs), area preschools and mainstream schools from both department and Commonwealth Program provision.
- 5.1.4 The department provides ESL programs for each identified student for up to seven years through:
- primary and secondary Introductory IECs which provide full time intensive English language instruction
  - early entry preschool placement and preschool support from itinerant ESL teachers
  - ESL support in primary and secondary schools, and
  - tertiary, accredited and registered ESL courses at secondary colleges.
- 5.1.5 The department provides professional support for ESL teachers and other teachers with ESL learners in their classes through:
- office-based ESL specialists in the areas of administration, policy, curriculum and assessment and
  - LUAC programs promoting language focused teaching in schools.

### **5.2 Schools**

- 5.2.1 Schools make referrals to IECs for newly enrolling students with minimal English skills.
- 5.2.2 Schools develop appropriate administrative and curriculum structures which ensure viable ESL programs. Such programs may include parallel ESL classes, withdrawal programs, team teaching in classrooms and consultation with class teachers on programming and bilingual approaches.

- 5.2.3 Schools develop an inclusive whole school approach to the provision of ESL programs that are a part of school curricula.
- 5.2.4 Schools ensure that all staff accept responsibility for ESL learners in conjunction with ESL specialists.
- 5.2.5 Schools recognise and value the specialist skills of ESL teachers to maximise support to ESL students.
- 5.2.6 Schools ensure that language performance ratings (LPR) are carried out for ESL provision according to guidelines for the identification of students from linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- 5.2.7 Schools encourage teachers to develop and use LUAC based classroom strategies to support ESL students.

### **5.3 ESL Specialist Teachers**

- 5.3.1 ESL specialist teachers implement effective programs for ESL learners to develop their English language competency for learning across the curriculum and full participation in the wider community.
- 5.3.2 ESL specialist teachers, where possible, work collaboratively with mainstream teachers on programs and issues that affect ESL students.
- 5.3.3 ESL specialist teachers ensure that ESL learners, on enrolment, are assessed for appropriate placement within the most effective educational programs.
- 5.3.4 ESL specialist teachers arrange for ESL learners who have minimal English to enrol at an IEC.
- 5.3.5 ESL specialist teachers identify eligible ESL students in the February and July census.
- 5.3.6 During the July census, in pre-schools and primary schools, language ratings are provided by the ESL teacher and the class teacher; in high schools and colleges language ratings are provided by the ESL teacher and two subject area teachers. The ESL teacher keys in data for the ESL computer system.