

Development of a Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Early childhood, school education,
training, tertiary education and
employment action plan
2013–2016

Discussion paper

Message from the Minister



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians have the oldest continuing cultures in the world. They are rich and diverse cultures which benefit all Queenslanders. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders have overcome great hardships and continue to flourish, becoming leaders of society, making invaluable contributions to public life, growing businesses, raising families, creating community, all the while celebrating their cultures.

Despite these positives, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders generally continue to be less likely to enjoy school outcomes and employment opportunities similar to those of non-Indigenous Queenslanders.

We are committed to overcoming this situation.

Achieving improved outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is of the highest priority for Queensland. This is built on the knowledge that improved outcomes in education and employment are cornerstones to increased health, social and economic wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders and their communities.

The Government knows this cannot be done alone. It will take effort from all of us, working together. That's why we're proposing a partnership approach involving Indigenous communities, government at all levels, service providers, industry and community organisations.

This discussion paper will lead to a new four-year plan of action for Queensland to 2016, to be owned by all Queenslanders.

We also know that improving outcomes doesn't happen at a point in time. That's why we're proposing a broad approach, an approach that builds a continuous pathway for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders from 'crayon to career'.

This discussion paper proposes a number of priority areas for action, identified in part through a successful forum held in December last year involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak organisations, industry organisations, service delivery agencies and government departments.

A new plan will be only as successful as the diversity of views and the enthusiasm of discussion that informs it. I now look forward to receiving your ideas and feedback on these areas for action and any other new ideas you consider important.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Paul Langbroek". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line underneath.

Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

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1. Introduction

National Closing the Gap targets

1. Close the life expectancy gap within a generation
2. Ensure all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander four year olds in remote communities have access to early childhood education within five years (by 2013)
3. Halve the gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade (by 2018)
4. At least halve the gap in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Year 12 attainment or equivalent attainment rates (by 2020)
5. Halve the gap in employment outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and other Australians within a decade (by 2018)
6. Halve the gap in mortality rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children under five within a decade (by 2018).

The Queensland Government is committed to providing quality education, training and employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Queensland, along with other states and territories, is expected to show progress toward meeting the six national targets to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. Targets 2, 3, 4 and 5 relate to early childhood, school education, training and employment. These targets have also been built into a range of national agreements between the Australian Government and State and Territory Governments.

Our strategies and actions for closing the gap have served us well and are outlined in the *Closing the Gap Education Strategy*. Launched in 2008 and designed as a four-year program, the strategy is now due to be revisited. To start this process, the Minister for Education, Training and Employment, The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek, met with a cross-section of community members, external stakeholders and departmental staff at a consultation forum in December 2012. The objective of the forum was to discuss key issues and challenges; identify priorities; and begin discussions to develop a new four-year Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander action plan.

The new action plan will run for a further four years from 2013 to 2016, and followed by another from 2017 to 2020, to coincide with the timeframes set for national closing the gap targets. Previous strategies have been strongly, and appropriately, geared towards improving the educational outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students. The new action plan will look at building a continuous pathway for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders from 'crayon to career'. This means ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders are supported and engaged in learning from early childhood education and care, through to schooling, training, tertiary education and employment.

1.1 Purpose of discussion paper

As signatory to the national closing the gap agenda, the Queensland Government is responsible for leading Queensland's actions to meet the targets in partnership with key stakeholders. As such, the Queensland Government is keen to consult with a range of key stakeholders, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, on the development of the new four-year action plan. This discussion paper has been written to support discussion about the development of the new action plan. It is made up of four sections:

1. **Introduction** – provides context, purpose of discussion paper and an overview of the service sector.
2. **New partnership approach** – provides an overview of the new action plan, its priority areas and key drivers.
3. **Proposed future directions** – summarises the key themes raised at the Minister's consultation forum, provides responses to these, and presents proposed future directions.
4. **What next?** – provides information on the consultation process; how to give feedback and contact details for further information.
5. **Summary of ideas for action** – brings together the ideas for action in table form, identifies the relationships between the priorities and highlights key partnerships.

1.2 Overview of the sectors

Learning is a life-long activity, beginning in the home through to formal settings including child care, pre-school, school, training and higher education institutions and the workplace.

Early childhood education and care

Quality early childhood education and care programs play an important role in developing children's learning experiences by building the foundations for learning and preparing children for school. In Queensland, early childhood education and care services deliver educational programs and child care for children from birth to 12 years old. Services can be grouped into the following categories: long day care; kindergarten; pre-preparatory; occasional care; limited hours care; school-age care; family day care and playgroup services.

School education

School education in Queensland aims to ensure that every young Queenslander is prepared with the educational foundations to support successful transitions to further education, training and work. It covers education from the Preparatory Year to Year 12 delivered mainly through primary schools, secondary schools, combined primary/secondary schools and special schools.

Post-school education and training

Post-school education and training allows individuals to gain the knowledge and skills to productively contribute to the Queensland economy. Queensland's post-school education and training sector comprises of public and private providers of accredited qualifications (from certificate through to postgraduate levels) and non-accredited education and training.

Workplace

Stable employment is critical to the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their communities. The majority of employed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders work in the private sector. The private sector plays an important role in creating employment opportunities for Indigenous people, both directly and indirectly through its investment decisions. The workplace is also a site of learning, and often a preferred one. In some cases the workplace is often the only viable site of learning for some knowledge and skills. Some qualifications, are only awarded after a period of compulsory industry training is completed (e.g. apprenticeships). Work experience, and part-time work, for secondary school students are a valuable contribution to post-school transitions. Employers value work experience, which has led to a growth in industry-based learning, or work-integrated learning, in both the Vocational Education and Training (VET) and higher education sectors.

Snapshot of sectors

Early childhood education and care

- 45 000 children enrolled in kindergarten in Queensland
- 2 700 Early Childhood Education and Care providers
- 1 000 services providing kindergarten
- 56 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were enrolled in a quality kindergarten program, compared with 68 per cent for all Queensland children

School education

- Over 750 000 students enrolled in school education in Queensland.
- 478 non-state schools and 1 239 state schools
- Almost 49 000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were enrolled in Queensland schools

Post-school education and training

- Over 288 000 students enrolled in Vocational Education and Training (VET) through TAFE Institutes and other Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)
- 1 561 RTOs including: 1 169 private and community-based providers; 376 schools; three universities; and 13 TAFE institutes (two statutory institutes)
- Nine universities and 31 other approved higher education providers
- 17 903 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were enrolled in the publicly funded VET system
- 2 804 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are enrolled in universities and other approved providers.

2. A new partnership approach

The early childhood, school education, training, tertiary education and employment sector, its workforce and clientele is large and diverse. There are many service providers, key stakeholders and partners involved including:

- children, students, young people
- parents and community
- ECEC service providers
- kindergartens
- state and non-state schooling sectors
- private and public training providers
- universities and broader higher education sector
- statutory authorities and entities
- not-for-profit community organisations
- Australian Government
- Queensland Government
- related government organisations
- business and industry
- peak bodies and interest groups

The new action plan will be Queensland's blueprint for improving early childhood, education, training and employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. It will be a plan for all of Queensland, to be owned by all Queenslanders. Its aim is to provide a framework and overall directions to assist and guide all service providers, key stakeholders and partners, both government and non-government, across all levels, to improve early childhood, school education, training, tertiary education and employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. It is recognition that significant improvements will be made with all key stakeholders working together to achieve the same goals.

Through its implementation, the Queensland Government will actively seek to partner with a range of key stakeholders on collaborative actions to improve outcomes. It is acknowledged that the non-government sector operates autonomously and will therefore require flexibility.

2.1 Priority areas

The new action plan will identify actions in four priority areas that evidence and consultation indicates will contribute to improved outcomes. These priority areas will guide our actions and effort over the next four years across early childhood, school education, training and employment. These, and the proposed ideas for action outlined in this Section 3, are not intended to encompass all the components required to accelerate outcomes. They focus on key leverage points to enable change.

Engagement, connections and partnerships

Genuine engagement and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at all levels must be fundamental in any new approach. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must be involved in the development, design and driving of solutions to improve outcomes. Partnerships with key stakeholders such as other government

agencies, the early childhood sector, business and industry, and universities, are essential to developing and strengthening services to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Provision of high quality, responsive services

The provision of services that are responsive to the cultural, social, linguistic and economic needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders is crucial to achieving improved outcomes. Recognising and building on the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, languages and histories is critical in service delivery.

Supporting successful transitions

Whether it is supporting early literacy and numeracy development, setting strong educational foundations, or providing individuals with skills for the economy, preparing and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to successfully make transitions is critical to improving outcomes.

Building workforce and leadership capacity

Ensuring the workforce are prepared and appropriately skilled to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, students, parents and community is essential to improving outcomes. The need for inspiring, committed, proactive and informed leadership is crucial to establishing and maintaining a culture that is inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and facilitates their engagement and successful participation.

2.2 Key drivers

Significant gaps still exist

There has been a considerable amount of goodwill, effort and investment to close the gap across Queensland to date; however significant gaps still exist between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Queenslanders. Queensland's progress has been slow. Though there have been some small gains in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander results, there have been similar or even greater improvements in the non-Indigenous outcomes. As a consequence the data shows a continuation, and in some cases, a widening of the gap. While there have also been some pockets of achievement across Queensland, these affect a small proportion of the population and their impact on overall outcomes is limited.

In 2011, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (47.4 per cent) enrolled in a preschool program in Queensland was lower compared to all children (62.2 per cent). School literacy and numeracy achievement data shows that over the last four years (2009–2012) the gap in student outcomes has not substantially reduced. The gap in school attendance between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Indigenous students in Queensland state schools has remained the same since 2008, while the gap in apparent retention from Year 10 to Year 12 across all Queensland schools is widening.

Participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in VET has declined in the period since February 2012¹. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in training has been promising, with Queensland above the national average². Efforts to halve the gap in employment outcomes are also lagging. The gap in labour force participation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Queenslanders has widened. Half of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders aged 15 to 64 years is

employed, compared with three quarters of non-Indigenous Queenslanders. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders continue to experience higher rates of unemployment which are over three times the rate of non-Indigenous Queenslanders.

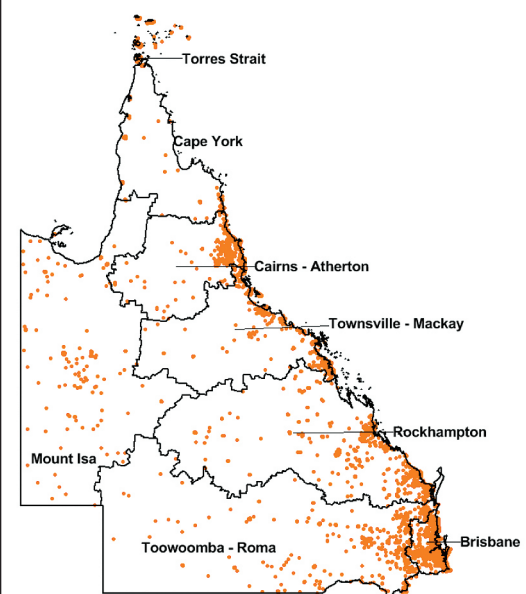
Rapidly growing, young population

At the time of the 2011 census, nearly two-thirds of Australia's Torres Strait Islander population and about a quarter of Australia's Aboriginal population lived in Queensland. In Queensland there were 155 824 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, representing 3.6 per cent of the total population. The vast majority lived in the Brisbane, Cairns, Townsville and Rockhampton regions. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is much younger than the non-Indigenous population with more than one-third less than 15 years and one-quarter aged less than 25 years. The average age is 20 years compared with 37 years for the non-Indigenous population.

The Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is projected to be the fastest growing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in all of the states and territories, with an average growth rate around 2.7 per cent each year. By 2016, Queensland is expected to have the highest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australian population. By 2021, Queensland will have 29 per cent of the Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, with approximately 120 000 in the 0–24 year age group³. The rapidly growing, young population will mean increasing numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accessing kindergartens, early childhood education, and schools, TAFEs, universities and available for employment in the labour market. Additionally, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will comprise a significant and increasing proportion of the workforce. Therefore Queensland will need to invest in its future productive capacity.

The growing young population combined with the continuing gap in outcomes demands a new approach that intensifies our efforts to accelerate progress.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by Indigenous Region (a), Queensland, 2011



1 dot = 5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons (a) Australian Statistical Geography Standard, 2011 edition

Source: ABS 2011 Census of Population and Housing (B01)

¹State Training Agency Clearinghouse (February 2013, unpublished)

²Productivity Commission Report on Government Services, 2013

³ABS 3238.0 – Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2021

3. Proposed future directions

3.1 Engagement, connections and partnerships

Key themes from the consultation forum

Recurring themes from the consultation forum were the need for:

- partnerships with key stakeholders such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, government and non-government organisations, industry, job service providers, TAFEs, universities, corporate and philanthropic sectors in the provision of an integrated service delivery model
- strong, meaningful and genuine partnerships with parents, family and community, particularly the need to put in place appropriate structures to support involvement in educational decision-making and building aspirations including identifying appropriate pathways, and the inclusion of mentoring and career development programs
- supporting, recognising and valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, identities and languages, particularly fostering learning environments that are culturally safe and supportive.

Response

- Connection to culture is important for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders and is a key factor in their well-being. Efforts to improve outcomes must build on the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, languages and identities to facilitate the engagement and successful participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, families, parents and individuals have key roles and responsibilities in contributing to outcomes, particularly in demanding services that are responsive to the needs and aspirations of the communities they serve.
- There is a range of ways through which engagement can be undertaken and partnerships developed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Committee (QIECC) is the peak advisory body to governments on Queensland education, training and employment. They play a crucial role in gathering information from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Queensland and providing independent advice to government. The Torres Strait Islanders' Regional Education Council (TSIREC) is another key community partner that provides advice on issues affecting the Torres Strait and plays a pivotal role working in partnership with government and other stakeholders.
- A strong partnership between state and commonwealth governments, and their agencies, is essential to the success of strategies to improve outcomes. So are partnerships with the non-government, not-for-profit, philanthropic, corporate, business and industry sectors, who also deliver services and have a key stake in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander outcomes.

Ideas for action

1. Schools and kindergartens will work with their local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to identify practical ways to bring Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander cultures, identities and languages into the school and kindergarten environments.

2. Schools will engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and community in school learning partnerships, community collaborations and decision-making.
3. The Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Committee will meet with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, educators and key stakeholders to gather information on issues impacting on learners and report these to the Queensland Minister for Education, Training and Employment.
4. The Torres Strait Islanders' Regional Education Council will represent the community and advocate on matters to do with education, vocational education and training and employment in the Torres Strait.
5. A community-based education advisory body will be established to advocate and provide advice on issues affecting Cape York region.
6. Provide online information about services available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in early childhood, school education, training, and tertiary education.

3.2 Provision of high quality and responsive services

Key themes from the consultation forum

Recurring themes from the consultation forum were the need for:

- community-based early year programs with integrated services connecting early childhood, health, family support, welfare and community services; particularly targeted programs
- a quality, culturally competent workforce providing quality, culturally responsive services including linguistic understanding and competence across the early years to tertiary
- schools having the flexibility to tailor their operations to meet the needs of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community
- investigating alternative, more cost effective and accessible modes of delivery of tertiary education and training, particularly in remote areas
- opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to develop community-based training programs driven by the community
- recurrent funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander registered training organisations.

Response

- Services and programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must be aware of, and address, cultural competence/ cultural safety in their service delivery. Cultural competence is the ability to understand, communicate with and effectively engage with people across cultures. Cultural competency of a service is considered a key factor on how or whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people decide to use it.
- Services and programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must be based on the strengths and needs of the community in which they are delivered. In doing so, they are more likely to be effective and appropriate to the local context.
- Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly in remote communities speak English as an additional language or dialect. This must be considered when providing services.
- As the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live in urban setting,

they are likely to access mainstream services. Improving mainstream programs and services and making them more responsive and accessible for urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is critical.

- The development of coordinated service delivery that takes into account the range of issues impacting on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is a feature of successful service delivery.
- It is essential to undertake and use research, evaluation and data to understand outcomes and inform future actions.

Ideas for action

7. Improve coordination and alignment of state and commonwealth programs and resources, and develop joint approaches to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners.
8. Build an evidence base to establish best practice and inform future directions through working closely with universities.
9. Implement an agreed set of principles and strategies to respond to the needs of urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, students, and young people.
10. Schools in Youth Detention Centres will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people by implementing strategies targeting the:
 - learning needs of students who speak English as an additional language or dialect; and
 - transition from the detention centre to school, further education, training and employment.
11. Develop an integrated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early childhood education strategy (0 to 8 years) that covers: access to quality culturally and linguistically appropriate programs; key transition points; workforce capacity; and parent and community engagement.
12. DETE will coordinate and align early childhood, schooling, VET and tertiary services that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at the regional level through regional operational plans.
13. All schools will implement the Australian Curriculum's cross-curriculum priority on 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures' across all key learning areas.
14. In the first years of formal schooling, all schools will identify strengths and learning needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and implement strategies that are responsive to their individual learning and language need.
15. The Queensland and Australian Governments will work together to ensure that job search services are adequate, appropriate and effective for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
16. Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students gain skills and qualifications that maximise their employment prospects by
 - providing easy to access, culturally appropriate career and training information
 - targeting training funding towards VET in Schools options that deliver a clear pathway to employment
 - supporting training delivery in regional and remote locations through innovative purchasing arrangements
 - exploring the opportunity for increased apprenticeship and traineeship participation through group training arrangements.

3.3 Supporting successful transitions

Key themes from the consultation forum

Recurring themes from the consultation forum were the need for:

- transition from home to early childhood education and care and formal schooling, with ongoing parent, family and community engagement, including supporting children in the early years to become ‘two-way strong’ as they move between their home and early learning program and school
- a focus on specific transition junctures, including: Year 10 to Year 12; Year 12 to further education, training or employment; and the early to middle phase of schooling. Strategies to support these transitions, particularly to minimise impact of Year 7 moving into secondary school in 2015 (especially in remote locations)
- support services for students moving between different schools
- School-based apprenticeships and traineeships (SATs) to assist with supporting successful transition of students through school and into employment
- transition from VET to employment and university, particularly articulation of students from VET to university
- creation and development of clear, well-defined pathways including career information and development to build aspirations for both VET and higher education
- case management and mentoring as effective strategies.

Response

- Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the early years of their learning and development is particularly important. Early years plays an important role in setting place the foundations for later learning.
- The transition rates from primary school to secondary school (Year 7 to 8) and from junior to senior secondary (Years 10 to 11) are notably lower for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from remote communities. From 2015, Year 7 in Queensland will be moving into high school. This will have further implications for remote students, parents, families and communities. This is because many students from remote areas need to leave their community to access high school.
- The completion of Year 12 (or its equivalent) is critical and students who do not complete Year 12 are less likely to have the same opportunities as those who do. Australian Bureau of Statistics census data for 2011 reported that only 1 in every 3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person attained a Year 12 education compared to 1 in every 2 non-Indigenous Queenslanders. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who do complete Year 12, data suggests that they are less likely to enrol in a university degree and more likely to be seeking work, compared to non-Indigenous Year 12 completers.
- Poor school achievement and lower levels of career, education and training aspirations are two significant barriers preventing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from completing high school and undertaking further study or training. Mentoring and intensive case management are effective student-focussed strategies to support successful transitions.
- The private, corporate, business, industry and not-for-profit sectors play an important role in creating employment opportunities and pathways from school to work for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. They can also play an important role in mentoring students in school or undertaking further education or training and develop a skill base that is relevant to industry and employment.

Ideas for action

17. Build the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students by implementing:
 - targeted activities in schools, training providers and universities to raise aspirations to pursue further study
 - individualised case management in state schools to monitor, support and encourage high achieving students.
18. Establish clear pathways to real post-school and post-tertiary options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by:
 - supporting each Year 12 student throughout their final year of schooling and six months post-school to transition to further education, training and/or meaningful employment
 - providing opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people who leave school before Year 12 to gain an equivalent VET qualification
 - forging partnerships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities, schooling sectors, training and tertiary providers, corporate, business, and industry sectors.
19. Improve preparation and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students making the transition from primary to secondary school by:
 - continuing to support students who leave their home communities in the Cape York, Northern Peninsula Area and Torres Strait Islands to go to secondary school
 - actively prepare students and their parents to make a smooth transition to Year 7 in secondary school.
20. Maximise employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by:
 - creating flexible pathways and providing targeted support for participation in government funded training courses
 - expanding existing flexible trade training arrangements to benefit adults, existing mature age workers and those without formal skills recognition
 - continuing to require that 20 per cent of total labour hours on relevant Queensland Government building and civil construction projects be undertaken by an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce recruited from the local community.

3.4 Building workforce and leadership capacity

Key themes from the consultation forum

Recurring themes from the consultation forum were the need for:

- more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in early childhood education and care, schools, training and tertiary education settings particularly in leadership positions
- building cultural understanding and competence of all staff, particularly teachers and staff working in remote settings
- training and development opportunities that develop cultural and linguistic understanding and competence of staff, particularly teachers
- building capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, staff and communities through leadership development

- creating opportunities and improving support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to take on leadership positions in tertiary education and training institutions
- involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, families and organisations in governance structures and decision-making that affect their communities
- increasing and supporting community control of child care and kindergarten services.

Response

- Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities requires cultural competence. A key component in making services more culturally competent often rests with employing more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and building on the strengths of the existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.
- It is important to build the cultural competence of non-Indigenous employees. Ensuring the teaching workforce have the knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages is critical to enable them to effectively engage and teach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
- Non-government, government and community leaders have a responsibility for being responsive to community views and needs, which may mean: sharing performance information transparently; being flexible and creative about how services are delivered, and being willing to learn and work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities about what might work best for their children and young people.

Ideas for action

21. Build the capacity of pre-service teachers to meet the education needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by developing specific pre-service modules/ resources that will assist graduate teachers with:
 - developing strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
 - understanding and respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and cultures.
22. Implement an English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) framework across early childhood, schooling and training services to support the learning needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander EALD learners.
23. Build the cultural competence of the DETE workforce to ensure services and the workplace environment and culture are responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. DETE will also put in place measures to build the capacity of its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.
24. Increase access to resources for early year services, pre-service and in-service teachers by creating a network of key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resource centres linked to the DETE Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander library.

4. What next?

We encourage discussions between students, parents, community members, government and non-government service providers, business and industry sectors about the ideas outlined in this discussion paper, to provide us with advice on:

- do the ideas for action address the priorities?
- what other ideas for action could also address these priorities?
- what are the strengths of the ideas for action?
- do you have any further advice that you feel might strengthen the final action plan?

The Department of Education, Training and Employment will be convening a series of roundtable meetings with key stakeholder groups in Brisbane to seek feedback on the discussion paper, the new action plan and proposals for future directions. The Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Committee (QIECC) will also be seeking feedback from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community including the network of Parent and Community Engagement (PaCE) providers.

Written submissions are also invited from key stakeholders to respond to the issues and ideas for action outlined in this paper. Information on how to provide written feedback is available at www.dete.qld.gov.au/indigenous.

Written feedback should be submitted by COB Friday 3 May, 2013. They can be submitted to the Department of Education, Training and Employment by:

- email to iepolicy@dete.qld.gov.au (preferred)
- fax to (07) 3235 4099
- or posted to:
New action plan consultation
Indigenous Policy and Partnerships
Department of Education, Training and Employment
PO Box 15033
CITY EAST QLD 4002

For further information about this discussion paper and new action plan visit the Department of Education, Training and Employment website: www.dete.qld.gov.au/indigenous or phone (07) 3237 0808.

Your views on this discussion paper, the consultation questions and any other feedback, will help to shape the development of the new action plan and so your responses are most welcome.

Following this consultation, the new action plan will be completed by June 2013.

5. Summary of key actions and partners

Ideas for action	Priority areas				Partners								
	Engagement, connections and partnerships	Provision of high quality, responsive services	Supporting successful transitions	Building workforce and leadership capacity	ECEC sector	Schooling sector	VET sector	Tertiary/high education sector	Government sector	Non-government sector	Corporate, business, industry	Community sector	Australian Government
1. Schools and kindergartens will work with their local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to identify practical ways to bring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, identity and language into the school and kindergarten environments.	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			
2. Schools will engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and community in school learning partnerships, community collaborations and decision-making.	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓		✓	
3. The Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Committee will meet with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, educators and key stakeholders to gather information on issues impacting on learners and report these to the Minister for Education, Training and Employment.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. The Torres Strait Islanders' Regional Education Council will represent the community and advocate on matters to do with education, vocational education and training and employment in the Torres Strait.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5. A community-based education advisory body will be established to advocate and provide advice on issues affecting the Cape York region.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6. Provide online information about services available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in early childhood, school education, training, and tertiary education.	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓		
7. Improve coordination and alignment of state and commonwealth programs and resources, and develop joint approaches to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners.	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
8. Build an evidence base to establish best practice and inform future directions through working closely with universities.		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
9. Implement an agreed set of principles and strategies to respond to the needs of urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, students, and young people.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

Key: ✓ Main priority ✓ Related priorities

Ideas for action

	Priority areas				Partners								
	Engagement, connections and partnerships	Provision of high quality, responsive services	Supporting successful transitions	Building workforce and leadership capacity	ECEC sector	Schooling sector	VET sector	Tertiary/high education sector	Government sector	Non-government sector	Corporate, business, industry	Community sector	Australian Government
10. Schools in youth detention centres will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people by implementing strategies targeting the:													
• learning needs of students who speak English as an additional language or dialect	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓				
• transition from the detention centre to school, further education, training and employment.	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓				
11. Develop an integrated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early childhood education strategy (0 to 8 years) that covers: access to quality culturally and linguistically appropriate programs; key transition points; workforce capacity; and parent and community engagement.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓
12. DETE will coordinate and align early childhood, schooling and tertiary services that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at the regional level through regional operational plans.		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
13. All schools will implement the Australian Curriculum's cross-curriculum priority on 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures' across all key learning areas.		✓		✓		✓			✓	✓			
14. In the first years of formal schooling, all schools will identify strengths and learning needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and implement strategies that are responsive to their individual learning and language need.		✓				✓			✓				
15. The Queensland and Australian Governments will work together to ensure that job search services are adequate, appropriate and effective for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.		✓					✓		✓	✓			✓
16. Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students gain skills and qualifications that maximise their employment prospects by:													
• providing easy to access, culturally appropriate career and training information		✓					✓		✓	✓			
• targeting training funding towards VET in Schools options that deliver a clear pathway to employment		✓				✓	✓		✓				
• supporting training delivery in regional and remote locations through innovative purchasing arrangements		✓					✓		✓				
• exploring the opportunity for increased apprenticeship and traineeship participation through Group Training arrangements.		✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓		

Key: ✓ Main priority ✓ Related priorities

Ideas for action

	Priority areas				Partners								
	Engagement, connections and partnerships	Provision of high quality, responsive services	Supporting successful transitions	Building workforce and leadership capacity	ECEC sector	Schooling sector	VET sector	Tertiary/high education sector	Government sector	Non-government sector	Corporate, business, industry	Community sector	Australian Government
17. Build the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students by implementing:													
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> targeted activities in schools, training providers and universities to raise aspirations to pursue further study 	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> individualised case management in state schools to monitor, support and encourage high achieving students. 	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓				
18. Establish clear pathways to real post-school and post-tertiary options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by:													
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> supporting each Year 12 student throughout their final year of schooling and six months post-school to transition to further education, training and/or meaningful employment 	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> providing opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people who leave school before Year 12 to gain an equivalent VET qualification 	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> forging partnerships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities schooling sectors, training and tertiary providers, corporate, business, and industry sectors. 	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
19. Improve preparation and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students making the transition from primary to secondary school by:													
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continuing to support students who leave their home communities in the Cape York, Northern Peninsula Area and Torres Strait Islands to go to secondary school 	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓			✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> actively prepare students and their parents to make a smooth transition to Year 7 in secondary school. 	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓			

Key: ✓ Main priority ✓ Related priorities

Ideas for action	Priority areas				Partners								
	Engagement, connections and partnerships	Provision of high quality, responsive services	Supporting successful transitions	Building workforce and leadership capacity	ECEC sector	Schooling sector	VET sector	Tertiary/high education sector	Government sector	Non-government sector	Corporate, business, industry	Community sector	Australian Government
20. Maximise employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by:													
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> creating flexible pathways and providing targeted support for participation in government funded training courses 			✓				✓		✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> expanding existing flexible trade training arrangements to benefit adults, existing mature age workers and those without formal skills recognition 			✓				✓						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continuing to require that 20 per cent of total labour hours on relevant Queensland Government building and civil construction projects be undertaken by an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce recruited from the local community. 			✓				✓		✓		✓		
21. Build the capacity of pre-service teachers to meet the education needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by developing specific pre-service modules / resources that will assist graduate teachers with:													
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students 	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understanding and respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and cultures. 	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			
22. Implement an English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) framework across early childhood, schooling and training services to support the learning needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners who speak EALD.		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
23. Build the cultural competence of the DETE workforce to ensure services and the workplace environment and culture are responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. DETE will also put in place measures to build the capacity of its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				
24. Increase access to resources for early year services, pre-service and in-service teachers by creating a network of key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resource centres linked to the DETE Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander library.	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			

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