

# DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION

## Research Agenda



Government of South Australia  
Department for Education

# Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge this land where we play and work is the traditional lands of the Kurna people, and we respect their spiritual relationship with their country; the land, the creatures, the plants and waterways.

We also acknowledge the Kurna people as the custodians of the Adelaide region and that their cultural and heritage beliefs are still as important to the living Kurna people today.

We respect their Elders past and present.



# Our Research Agenda



The Department for Education is committed to ensuring South Australia's public education system can unlock every child's potential, now and in the future.

Research plays an important role in fulfilling our evidence requirements, generating new knowledge and insights to strengthen our learning system and in turn, outcomes for children and young people. By utilising the latest evidence, we can adopt innovative practices, driving world-leading education to support the evolving needs of learners and educators.

This agenda represents a new strategic approach to forecasting, commissioning and delivering on our research needs as a system. It will guide our research efforts over the coming years, ensuring that our investment is directed towards high-quality outputs that are relevant to and beneficial for our evidence needs.

Our research agenda outlines the priority research necessary to inform our Strategy for Public Education (strategy). Our focus areas encompass enhancing teaching and learning methods, prioritising health and wellbeing, integrating diversity and inclusion, utilising technology effectively, and strengthening our workforce. We value locally relevant and high-quality research that contributes to our evidence base, helping to inform decision making by our policy makers and educators.



## Vision

*To deliver forward looking, innovative, and locally relevant research to inform world-leading practices that empower all learners to thrive.*

## Topics



The research agenda was developed collaboratively with researchers, policy makers and educators. The topics and investigation areas they crafted offer a platform to explore more specific questions focussed on underlying challenges and opportunities.

### Teaching and learning

#### Rationale

Effective teaching and engaged students are critical factors influencing positive learning outcomes. Our strategy underlines our commitment to the participation, engagement, and achievement of all students, recognising that each learner has unique needs, interests, and talents that should be nurtured.

Supporting sites and educators to make evidence-informed decisions about context-specific practices is essential to fostering learner engagement, growth and achievement.

We are seeking evidence to tackle challenges associated with student engagement and maximising the learning potential for children and young people across all ability levels. Additionally, we seek evidence to enhance our understanding of effective teaching and site-based practices for the South Australian context specifically. This will help us to determine effective approaches that support outcomes and pathways that cater to the varied needs of our learners.



#### Investigation areas

How to prepare learners and support their engagement through key developmental transition points, including commencing a new stage of education or at times when engagement and/or academic performance may decline.

Differentiated teaching practices that are driven by and responsive to the needs of learners in South Australian education settings.

Learner dispositions and capabilities that can positively impact learning and engagement outcomes.

How schools can support learners' career decisions throughout their education and successful transitions into education and career pathways after school.

Values that drive young people generally and how these impact learning and career decisions.



## Diversity and inclusion

### Rationale

South Australian public education is inclusive of all children and young people, regardless of learning needs, background or identity. Our strategy acknowledges that preschools and schools need to be a place where every child and young person is encouraged to participate and where their needs, interests, languages and cultures are recognised and supported.

We seek evidence on how to enhance existing inclusive methods by understanding new or existing approaches that are most effective for South Australian educational settings. This should reflect the unique needs and diversity of our learners, as well as local contexts, to support all children and young people to learn and thrive.



### Investigation areas

Effective teaching and learning approaches that respond to a range of learner abilities and backgrounds in South Australian education settings.

Culturally responsive pedagogy relevant to South Australian communities as it applies to different subject areas, year levels, and whole-of-school approaches.

Approaches that accelerate learner growth to reduce the impact of intergenerational disadvantage.

Pedagogies that support learner outcomes for South Australian Aboriginal children and young people in different education settings.



## Learner health and wellbeing

### Rationale

The department prioritises learner wellbeing and learning environments where children and young people feel safe, included, and valued. Our strategy includes student wellbeing as an area of impact, and specifies belonging and safety, resilience and persistence and cognitive engagement as areas of focus.

There is a critical need for further research to understand the factors influencing children and young people's health and wellbeing, alongside effective models to support children and young people within educational settings.



### Investigation areas

Models of educator and health professional collaboration that provide holistic child and student health and learning interventions.

Models for preschools, schools and systems to enhance the wellbeing of children and young people in an education context.

Factors that contribute to the health and wellbeing of children and young people and how these could be addressed within an education setting.



## Workforce

### Rationale

Our strategy acknowledges that our teaching workforce is vital to influencing learning outcomes to shape the future of children and young people. Educators are key to nurturing, developing, and empowering all South Australian children and young people with the knowledge, skills, and capabilities they need to become fulfilled individuals and lifelong learners. Their role is essential in creating safe, inclusive, and collaborative learning environments where every child is encouraged to thrive.

We need evidence to inform workforce approaches that address the evolving needs of learners and educators in South Australia. This includes how to effectively influence changes in educational practice and keeping abreast of emerging and innovative ways to ensure our education sites have the workforce required to support our learners.



### Investigation areas

Evidence based models for South Australian educators and leaders to support changes in practice.

Innovative workforce models to support the learning and wellbeing of children and young people amidst evolving learner needs and social changes.

The evolving factors including educator wellbeing, that shape the supply, attraction, and retention of educators in South Australia, and how to prepare for future workforce needs.

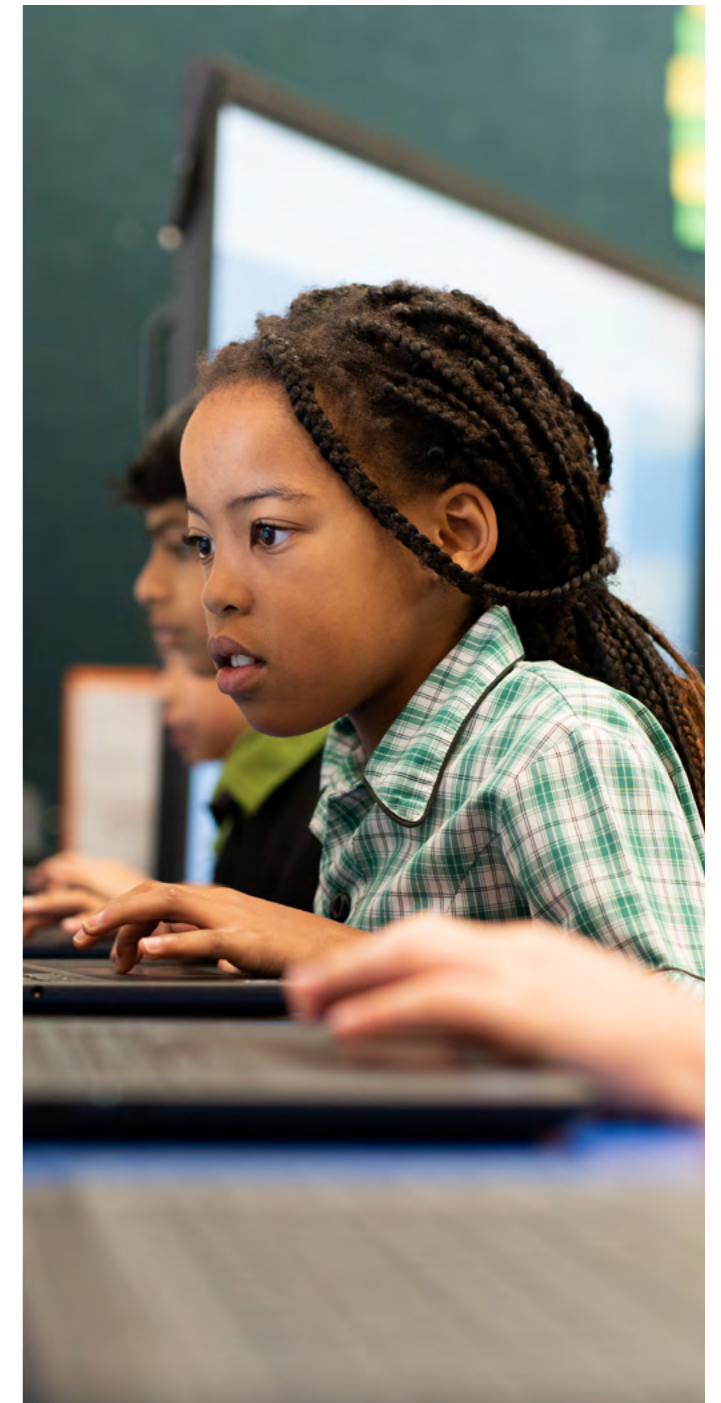


## Technology

### Rationale

The department recognises the importance of harnessing digital technology to transform learning and work, enabling schools and preschools to deliver world-leading education and support children and students in a digital age. The rapid pace of technological advancement presents opportunities to support our strategy.

Establishing a robust evidence base is essential to effectively integrating these technologies into educational practices, ensuring that every child can benefit from technology while safeguarding against potential pitfalls.



### Investigation areas

Opportunities and risks associated with generative artificial intelligence in education, including administration, teaching and learning.

The impact of artificial intelligence on equity and how it could be used to improve learning outcomes and teaching practices



## High-quality research

For research to have a meaningful impact, it must be of high-quality. Through collaboration we have developed quality indicators that represent the attributes we seek in research for our system.

### We encourage research that:

1. offers a practical benefit to education systems and settings
2. generates new knowledge or investigates how existing evidence works in different contexts, with alignment to our research agenda topics and investigation areas
3. investigates implications of future education issues and developments relating to research agenda topics and investigation areas
4. considers equity in South Australia
5. is rigorously designed to respond to the research question
6. includes collaboration with diverse research disciplines
7. includes collaboration with educators, students and parents/carers as co-partners
8. is ethical for all people and recognises the unique requirements of diverse communities
9. has a clear communication and knowledge translation strategy.



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