

# Queensland's Implementation Plan

## NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT ON UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

### PART 1: PRELIMINARIES

1. This Implementation Plan is a schedule to the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education (NP UAECE or National Partnership) and should be read in conjunction with that Agreement.
2. The objectives of the NP UAECE are:
  - to maintain Universal Access to quality early childhood education program(s), with a focus on improved participation of vulnerable and disadvantaged children, and in a manner that meets the needs of children, parents and communities and ensures that cost is not a barrier to participation
  - for children living in remote Indigenous communities to remain a focus for Universal Access with an ongoing commitment to ensure that every Indigenous four year old in a remote community has access to a quality early childhood education program.

### PART 2: TERMS OF THIS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

3. This Implementation Plan will commence as soon as it is agreed between the Commonwealth of Australia, represented by the Assistant Minister for Education, and the State of Queensland, represented by the Minister for Education, Training and Employment.
4. As a schedule to the NP UAECE, the purpose of this Implementation Plan is to provide the public with an indication of how the NP's outputs will be delivered in Queensland.
5. This Implementation Plan supports the national approach to the regulation and quality assessment and education and care services consistent with the National Quality Framework.
6. This Implementation Plan covers service delivery to 31 December 2014 and will cease on completion or termination of the NP UAECE, including the acceptance of final performance reporting and processing of final payments against performance benchmarks.

## SCHEDULE D

7. This Implementation Plan may be varied by written agreement between the Commonwealth and Queensland Minister with responsibility for Early Childhood Education under the overarching NP UAECE.
8. The Parties to this Implementation Plan do not intend any of the provisions to be legally enforceable. However, that does not lessen the Parties' commitment to the plan and its full implementation.

### PART 3: STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

#### Project information

9. The NP UAECE supports Universal Access to and improved participation by children in quality early childhood education in the year before full-time school, with a focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
10. Commonwealth, State and Territory governments will collaborate to develop a nationally agreed definition of vulnerable and disadvantaged children over time. This will be progressed through the Early Childhood Development Working Group.
11. In Queensland, vulnerable and disadvantaged children are defined as the groups listed at Section 47 (k) of the NP UAECE for the purposes of program implementation. For the purposes of reporting, Queensland will continue to use the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) measure (in particular the bottom quintile of statistical local areas) as a proxy measure of vulnerable and disadvantaged children. This may be supplemented by program level information, for example, provision of subsidies to low income families in more socio-economically advantaged areas (to be defined in supplementary data reports).
12. Queensland's strategy under the NP UAECE is to continue delivering a range of initiatives commenced under the previous National Partnership Agreement for Early Childhood Education (NP ECE) that aim to provide access to a quality kindergarten program for Queensland's kindy-age children, regardless of where they live or their circumstances.
13. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, targeted strategies will continue to be implemented to support increased enrolment and inclusion in kindergarten programs.
14. Queensland has commenced a number of initiatives, both state-wide and location-specific, to address kindergarten participation challenges for vulnerable and disadvantaged children and families. These complement existing Queensland Government programs and where possible, include integrated and collaborative approaches across target groups. They are designed to progressively grow culturally competent and inclusive early childhood practice and support early childhood educators.
15. The project elements planned from 1 July 2013 to 31 December 2014 include:
  - i. Creating additional kindergarten places and supporting quality kindergarten infrastructure;
  - ii. Funding kindergarten program delivery;
  - iii. Supporting access for vulnerable and disadvantaged children;
  - iv. Supporting access for children living in rural and remote areas;
  - v. Enhancing quality standards of kindergarten programs;

## SCHEDULE D

- vi. Maintaining community and sector awareness and engagement; and
- vii. Supporting and improving data collection.

Table 1: Project elements

No.	Short description	Planned start date	Planned end date	Dependent on projects
1	Creating additional kindergarten places and supporting quality kindergarten infrastructure	1 July 2013	31 Dec 2014	
2	Funding kindergarten program delivery	1 July 2013	31 Dec 2014	
3	Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged children	1 July 2013	31 Dec 2014	
4	Supporting rural and remote access	1 July 2013	31 Dec 2014	1,2,3,7
5	Enhancing quality standards of kindergarten programs	1 July 2013	31 Dec 2014	1,2,3,7
6	Maintaining community and sector awareness and engagement	1 July 2013	31 Dec 2014	3
7	Supporting and improving data collection	1 July 2013	31 Dec 2014	

### Estimated costs

- 16. The maximum financial contribution to be provided by the Commonwealth for the project to Queensland is \$137.2 million, payable in accordance with performance milestones and benchmarks set out in the National Partnership. All payments are exclusive of GST.
- 17. The estimated overall budget (exclusive of GST) is set out in Table 2. The budget is indicative only and Queensland retains the flexibility to move funds between components and/or years. The Commonwealth contribution can only be moved between years with the agreement of the Commonwealth.

Table 2: Estimated financial contributions

(\$)	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15*	Total
Non-Commonwealth contributions**	-	-	-	-
Total Commonwealth contribution***	\$3,076,975	\$84,983,129	\$49,168,810	\$137,228,915

\* Funding for the sixth month period to 31 December 2014

\*\* States are responsible for the provision of early childhood education services and allocate their own source funding and provide in-kind contributions accordingly. Funding contributions by each jurisdiction will be considered as part of the review of the National Partnership, consistent with clause 37(a) of the National Partnership.

\*\*\* Commonwealth is also separately contributing \$3 million in 2013-14 and \$1.5 million in 2014-15 nationally for early childhood data development, review and research activities.

**Note:** This table does not include direct child care assistance to parents, by the Commonwealth, to help improve the affordability of Child Care Benefit approved child care services that provide a preschool or kindergarten program.

## SCHEDULE D

### Program logic

18. The project elements detailed in this Implementation Plan will achieve the outcomes and objectives stated in the National Partnership including for vulnerable and disadvantaged children as defined in Clause 9, by Queensland.
19. The way in which these project elements will achieve the outcomes and objectives set out in the National Partnership is detailed in Table 3 below.

### Outcomes and objectives of the National Partnership

Reference	Outcomes
i	Vulnerable and disadvantaged children have access to and participate in an affordable, quality early childhood education program.
ii	Indigenous children have access to, and participate in an affordable, quality early childhood education program.
iii	The achievement of the Closing the Gap target is maintained, to ensure access to early childhood education for all Indigenous four year olds in remote communities.
Reference	Outputs
(a)	Implementing accessible, quality early childhood education programs which meet the needs of parents and communities at a cost which does not present a barrier to participation, particularly for vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
(b)	Delivering strategies and actions targeting the participation of vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
(c)	Delivering strategies and actions targeting the participation of Indigenous children, including in remote areas.

SCHEDULE D

Table 3: Program Logic

Project elements	Outputs (services delivered)	Outcomes	Timeframes	NP UA Outcomes	NP UA Outputs
Creating additional kindergarten places in areas of need and supporting quality kindergarten infrastructure	Extra kindergarten places in areas of need Renovation and refurbishment to support availability of kindergarten places Essential upgrades to support support availability of kindergarten places	Establish extra kindergarten infrastructure/capacity to provide extra places Capital grant funding for renovation and refurbishment of kindergarten services	By 31/12/2014 By 31/12/2014	i, ii, iii i, ii, iii	a), b), c) a), b), c)
Funding kindergarten program delivery	Funding subsidies for long day care and kindergarten services Support for the sector - includes supporting participation and program support	Capital grant funding for renovation and refurbishment of not-for-profit ECEC services in low SES and rural/remote locations Funding for eligible kindergarten programs with additional subsidies for disadvantaged areas, remoteness, Health Care Card holders and multiple births (3 or more children) Support for the administration of funding of kindergarten programs; and to improve participation and attendance	By 31/12/2014 By 31/12/2014	i, ii, iii i, ii, iii	a), b), c) a), b), c)
Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged children	Funding subsidies for vulnerable and disadvantaged children Pre-Kindergarten Grants Transition to kindergarten Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in Early Childhood (EATSIEC) Disability Support Funding Transport Solutions	Subsidies respond to degree of disadvantage - service location by relative economic disadvantage and individual child/family by Health Care Card Work alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to increase access and participation in kindergarten in priority locations across Queensland Embed transition to kindergarten strategies in playgroups targeting vulnerable children/communities Strengthen the capacity of kindergarten providers to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and deliver inclusive early childhood education programs to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children Support for eligible children with a diagnosed or suspected disability in a kindergarten service Increase participation of children from priority groups in	By 31/12/2014 By 31/12/13 By 31/12/14 By 31/12/14	i, ii, iii i, ii, iii i, ii, iii i, ii, iii	a), b), c) a), b), c) a), b), c) a), b), c)

**SCHEDULED**

Project elements	Outputs (services delivered)	Outcomes	Timeframes	NP UA Outcomes	NP UA Outputs
	Children in care	Kindergarten programs where transport is a barrier to access Work with child protection agencies to develop strategies to support children in the child protection system.	By 31/12/14	i, ii, iii	a), b), c)
	Specialised Equipment and Resources	Provide eligible kindergarten services with access to specialised equipment and professional resources to support children with disabilities to access the kindergarten program	By 31/12/14	i, ii, iii	a), b), c)
Supporting access for children living in rural and remote areas	Location-based funding subsidies	Subsidies that respond to degree of remoteness – service location by ARIA. Real funding guarantee for legacy kindergarten services in rural and remote areas	By 31/12/14	i, ii, iii	a), b), c)
	e-kindy	A distance kindergarten program delivered by the School of Distance Education to children that cannot access a centre-based service due to isolation, illness or itinerant lifestyles	By 31/12/14	i, ii, iii	a), b), c)
	Innovative, place-based solutions	Place based planning to assess and respond to areas of need/undersupply in rural/remote areas	By 31/12/14	i, ii, iii	a), b), c)
Enhancing quality standards of kindergarten programs	Professional development program	A professional development program, delivered by the Queensland Studies Authority, to assist teachers to implement the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline	By 31/12/14	i, ii, iii	a), b), c)
	Accreditation of programs	Accreditation of kindergarten program guidelines by the Queensland Studies Authority to ensure alignment with the Early Years Learning Framework and the Australian Curriculum	As required throughout the life of the NP UA	i, ii, iii	a), b), c)
	Workforce initiatives – scholarships and incentives	Incentives to ensure early childhood education and care staff upgrade their qualifications to enable them to deliver approved kindergarten programs; and/or to attract and retain qualified teachers in hard-to-staff locations	By 31/12/14	i, ii, iii	a), b), c)
	Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline (OKLG)	Professional development on the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline to ensure consistent and comparable programs delivered in all early childhood settings	By 31/12/14	i, ii, iii	a), b), c)
Maintaining community and sector awareness and engagement	Statewide media strategy	Promote the value of kindergarten programs, careers in teaching kindergarten and drive demand for kindergarten participation. Enable approved kindergarten providers to be easily identified in the community by the Kindy Tick.	As required throughout the life of the NP UA	i, ii, iii	a), b), c)

**SCHEDULED**

Project elements	Outputs (services delivered)	Outcomes	Timeframes	NP UA Outcomes	NP UA Outputs
	<p>Departmental communications with the sector and the community</p> <p>Governance – regular meetings with stakeholders</p>	<p>Information and advice regarding kindergarten programs to families, educators and the early childhood education and care sector</p> <p>Informed early childhood education and care sector that works collaboratively with government to support continued implementation of the universal access to kindergarten strategy</p>	<p>As required throughout the life of the NP UA</p> <p>As required throughout the life of the NP UA</p>	<p>i, ii, iii</p> <p>i, ii, iii</p>	<p>a), b), c)</p> <p>a), b), c)</p>
Supporting and improving data collection	<p>Early Childhood Education and Care Services Census</p> <p>Supplementary data collections (e.g. HCC count in areas not captured in the disadvantage measure, how many more services have agreements to deliver an approved kindy program since the census period)</p>	<p>Annual collection of information from the sector to inform planning and reporting</p> <p>Collection and/or analysis of additional data to inform planning and reporting for performance measures including data available through administrative systems</p>	<p>Collection occurs annually in August</p> <p>By 31/12/2014</p>	<p>All</p> <p>(f)</p>	<p>All</p> <p>(b)</p>
	<p>Participate in national work to refine data definitions, including for vulnerable and disadvantaged children</p>	<p>Participation in national work through the Early Childhood Data Sub-Group and Early Childhood Working Group to refine data definitions for performance measures</p>	<p>Timeframes to be determined by the ECDSG</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>All</p>

## SCHEDULE D

### Risk management

20. The Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment has a risk management plan in place. Risks have been actively identified, entered into a risk log and categorised in terms of impact and likelihood.

### Queensland Context

21. In developing this Implementation Plan consideration has been given to relevant context. Queensland has made substantial progress towards universal access to kindergarten, improving from the lowest baseline nationally of 29% in 2008 to 77% in 2012.
22. Queensland is a large, geographically and demographically diverse state which presents a range of service delivery challenges. Queensland also has a large population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in both remote and urban locations.
23. Kindergarten participation is voluntary and while kindergarten programs are available at low or no cost for low income families, it is acknowledged that any cost may be a barrier to access for some families. Additionally, the impact of profound natural disasters such as floods and cyclones, have created additional challenges.
24. Despite the challenges, Queensland's implementation approach has delivered significant increases in kindergarten participation. In 2012, almost 4 out of 5 kindy-age children in Queensland were enrolled in a kindergarten program. The success of the approach to date supports continued implementation of current strategies and service delivery elements.
25. Queensland's approach to achieving universal access has been developed in the context of other Queensland Government services and existing reforms detailed in Table 4.

**Table 4: Links with existing reforms or projects (excluding projects implemented under the former NP ECE)**

Existing reforms or projects	Complementary nature of activities
Pre-Prep in Schools	Pre-Prep in schools is a Queensland Government initiative in 35 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, generally in very remote locations, providing access to an early childhood education program in the year before school.
E4 Kids research program	E4Kids is a 5-year longitudinal study that follows a large group of three and four year olds as they participate in childcare, kindergarten and preschool programs.



## SCHEDULE D

<p><i>Solid partners. Solid futures.</i> A partnership approach for excellence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early childhood, education, training, and employment from 2013-2016.</p>	<p><i>Solid partners. Solid futures</i> aims to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people have the support they need to enjoy and achieve success throughout their educational journey from early childhood through to employment.</p>
<p>Australian Early Development Index (AEDI)</p>	<p>The AEDI is a national collection of information on young children's development in Australia. Data is collected every three years on children in their first year of full time schooling. The results provide a snapshot at a community level of how children are developing by the time they reach school. The information gathered in the AEDI is used by the Queensland Government to assist in planning for social and community services in the early years.</p>
<p>Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership Agreement – Children and Family Centres (CFCs)</p>	<p>As part of the Closing the Gap agenda state, territory and Australian Governments made a joint commitment to establish at least 35 children and family centres (CFCs) across Australia, 10 of which are in Queensland.</p> <p>The CFCs are operated by non-government organisations through an integrated service delivery model that provides early childhood education and care, family and parenting support, and child and maternal health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families with children aged from birth to eight years.</p>
<p>Early Years Centres (EYCs)</p>	<p>Operated by non-government organisations with funding from the Queensland Government. The EYCs provide a range of integrated universal early childhood education and care, health and family support services to families who are expecting a child or have children up to and including eight years of age. Some targeted services are also delivered and/or brokered for vulnerable children and families, and referrals are made to specialist or intensive support services when required.</p>
<p>Step up into education</p>	<p>Under the Step up into education initiative, 24 Queensland schools from areas of disadvantage are receiving funding to deliver school readiness and transition initiatives to suit the needs of their local community. Resources have been developed to assist schools, families, educators and teachers (school, kindergarten, child care and Prep) to support children to make successful transitions into Queensland schools.</p>

## PART 4: PERFORMANCE AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

### Performance indicators, benchmarks and targets

26. Key indicators, data sources and benchmarks for assessing and monitoring performance are set out in Part 4 and Schedule A of the NP UAECE.

## SCHEDULE D

27. With regard to reporting on hours of attendance, Queensland has agreed targets for 2013 and 2014 with the Commonwealth, as set out in Table 5 below, and will report on progress towards these targets as part of the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection and via progress reports.

**Table 5: Bilaterally agreed attendance target/s**

Baseline data	2013 Target	2014 Target	Nationally Agreed Target
97% <sup>1</sup>	90%	90%	90 per cent of enrolled children attending an early childhood education program to be achieved over time

<sup>1</sup> 2012 National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection. Calculation of target is attendance divided by enrolment. Attendance is the number of children aged 4 and 5 years old as at 1 July of the collection year who are attending a preschool program in the year before full-time schooling. Enrolment is the number of children aged 4 and 5 years old as at 1 July of the collection year who are enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full-time schooling.

### Monitoring and reporting

28. Commonwealth and State based collections or data sources and methodologies, agreed by both the Parties to this Plan, to measure progress against performance milestones and benchmarks and targets in the NP UAECE are set out in Schedule A of the NP UAECE.
29. These data and performance specifications will be used to report Queensland's performance, except for the supplementary data to be agreed by the Parties to this Plan in supplementary data reports.
30. Reports in the manner stated at (i) and (ii) of Queensland's progress in achieving the performance milestones and benchmarks, targets and any supplementary data.
- i. Progress Reports must contain:
    - Progress in implementing the project elements undertaken to achieve the performance milestones and benchmarks and the bilaterally agreed annual attendance targets in the reporting period, including challenges and mitigating strategies, where relevant
    - If agreed as required, supplementary data reports for the performance milestones, benchmarks and targets listed in the NP UAECE or otherwise agreed in this Plan, and set out in Schedule A of the NP UAECE.
  - ii. Supplementary data reports which contain details as agreed between the parties.

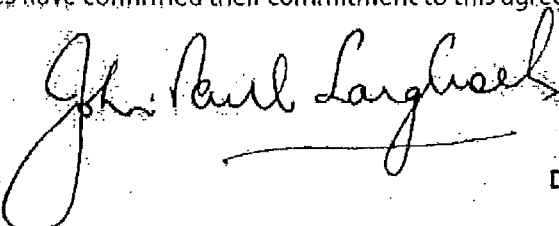
### Review

31. Both parties will jointly review the Implementation Plan, prior to June 2014, with regard to progress made by the Parties in respect of achieving the agreed outcomes that are supported by the Implementation Plan.
32. If required, an updated revised Implementation Plan will need to be submitted to the Commonwealth before June 2014. Where a state is not on track to meet its performance benchmarks, the Implementation Plan may require amendment before July 2014 to ensure that its strategies are adequate to achieve its performance benchmarks.

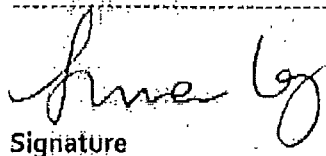
**SCHEDULE D**

**Sign off**

The Parties have confirmed their commitment to this agreement as follows:

Signature  Date 19.11.13

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

Signature  Date 31/10/13

The Hon Sussan Ley MP  
Assistant Minister for Education

