



Cultural Diversity Plan 2008–2010

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Cultural Diversity Plan 2008–2010

A message from the Ministers

Victoria is widely acknowledged and celebrated as a culturally diverse and tolerant society. The 2006 census revealed that Victorians come from over 200 nations, speak 180 languages, practice more than 110 faiths and one in four of us were born overseas.

This reminds us that Victorians need to continue to demonstrate fairness and respect – characteristics that have long been applied within Victoria's democratic and egalitarian way of life.

In the context of a global environment there has never been a more important time for us to understand and embrace our cultural and linguistic diversity.

In response the Victorian Government has developed a Whole of Government policy initiative, *A Fairer Victoria*, which commits all government departments to develop their own cultural diversity plan. These plans ensure services delivered by departments are sensitive to a wide range of cultures.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, through its schools and early childhood services celebrates and nurtures our diverse and inclusive community.

By continuing to ensure our schools and early childhood services are accessible to children – regardless of country of birth, language and culture – our community will maintain its success as a prosperous, multicultural society.

This *Cultural Diversity Plan 2008–2010* demonstrates the commitment by the Department and its statutory agencies to ensuring our services continue to be accessible and inclusive to all Victorians.

We commend the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's *Cultural Diversity Plan 2008–2010* as a reflection of the Government's commitment to Victorians of all backgrounds.



Bronwyn Pike MP
Minister for Education



Maxine Morand MP
Minister for Children and
Early Childhood Development

A message from the Secretary

Victoria has for decades embraced people from many different countries, religions and cultures – creating one of the most tolerant, multicultural societies in the world.

This cultural diversity is recognised and will be further encouraged through the government's social policy action plan *A Fairer Victoria*. Under the plan, all government departments are required to develop a Cultural Diversity Plan which sets out initiatives that will result in such diversity being valued and encouraged.

The plans will put in place programs that will reduce inequalities, improve access to services and encourage participation in the wider community. In addition, initiatives will be developed that promote the social and economic benefits of a culturally diverse society.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's Cultural Diversity Plan will strengthen the inclusive philosophy that underpins *A Fairer Victoria*.

Specifically, as a result of this plan, the Department will initiate culturally appropriate training for children's services staff and government school teachers delivering services to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities.


We will also ensure such communities receive accessible information about children's services and school programs, as well as assess the effectiveness of service delivery to CALD communities as an integral part of program evaluation.

This Plan will build on an inclusive culture already in place within the Department, and the early childhood and education sector. For example, the *Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development (2008)* has inclusiveness and diversity as part of its resolutions for a better and more responsive early childhood and education sector for Victoria's young people.

And of course, Victoria's rich multicultural society is reflected in many of our child-care centres and our schools. It is in the schoolyard and classroom, child-care centre and kindergarten that children have, over time, learnt important lessons of respect and understanding.

This new Cultural Diversity Plan builds on the foundations of the Department's underlying values of equality, respect and inclusion that have informed our education and early childhood sectors for many years.

I look forward to the implementation of this vital report.



Prof. Peter Dawkins
Secretary

The Department's Cultural Diversity Plan supports existing work and strengthens activities to improve access by culturally and linguistically diverse communities to education and early childhood services

The Victorian population is culturally diverse. Indigenous people of Victoria are recognised by the Victorian Government as 'descendants of Australia's first people, with their diverse spiritual, social, cultural and economic relationship with their traditional lands and waters'.¹ Victorians also come from more than 230 nations; we speak over 180 languages and dialects; we follow more than 116 religions. One in four Victorians were born overseas.² This rich diversity is reflected in the children and young people in our schools and early childhood services, and in the parent community and education and early childhood work force.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (the Department) is proud of supporting and valuing Victoria's culturally and linguistically diverse communities (CALD) by providing accessible and quality education and early childhood development services.

The Department is one of Victoria's largest organisations and employs over 60,000 people in education and early childhood development. This includes teachers, administrators, schools services officers, professional and allied health workers. Staff are located in more than 1800 workplaces including schools, early childhood services, central and regional offices across Victoria.

Social Inclusion and Cultural Diversity

At state and federal levels there is heightened awareness of the importance of ensuring social inclusion. Social inclusion requires the accomplishment of social participation and social integration. Education is seen as key to the progress of social inclusion. Education offers the means of redressing social exclusion. Education provides pathways to enhancing levels of social inclusion through attention to overcoming communication and language barriers, to providing access to skills and knowledge, to building confidence and trust in institutions, to enhancing engagement and to effectively disseminating information.

The Government's expectations for early childhood and school education, over the next five years, include:

- improved educational, health and wellbeing outcomes for all young Victorians
- an accessible, high quality and coherent universal service system for early childhood education, with targeted support for those who need it
- enhanced public confidence in a world class school education system and high quality early childhood services and programs for all
- reduced effects of disadvantage on children and young people's learning and development.

The Department recognises the vast social, cultural and economic benefits for our state provided by the diversity of our population.

We recognise that education and early childhood services are critical to the success of our multicultural communities. A prosperous and harmonious Victorian society is fundamental to ensuring the State's economic sustainability by making the best use of human capital and by addressing disadvantage.

The Department's *Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development (2008)* outlines a five year reform agenda with the vision 'that every young Victorian thrives, learns and grows to enjoy a productive, rewarding and fulfilling life, while contributing to their local and global communities.' One of the main priorities of the Blueprint is to improve outcomes for disadvantaged young Victorians.

The vision of the Department is to promote full and active participation by all members of the school and early childhood community regardless of ethnic, religious, racial or linguistic background by:

- building on the values of respect and inclusion
- ensuring equitable access to services and programs
- recognising cultural diversity as an asset to the State
- promoting community capacity building.

The Department is committed to contributing to a society empowered to access the benefits education can provide. It has a vision of realising the benefits of a socially inclusive community.

Why a Cultural Diversity Plan?

The Government's social policy action plan *A Fairer Victoria* requires all departments to develop a Cultural Diversity Plan. The Plans set out initiatives taken to value diversity, reduce inequality, improve access, encourage participation, and promote the social and economic benefits of cultural diversity.

The fostering of cultural and linguistic inclusiveness requires capacity building by all Department stakeholders. A Cultural Diversity Plan provides the Department with a vehicle for an integrated and structured approach to ensuring progress in the Department's engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse individuals and communities.

The Department's commitments in the Cultural Diversity Plan will help progress the reform agenda contained in the Blueprint, as well as support the key government social policy documents: *Growing Victoria Together*, *A Fairer Victoria* and *Valuing Cultural Diversity*. The Plan is underpinned by government legislation including the *Multicultural Victoria Act 2004*, the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)*, the *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001* and the *Equal Opportunity Act 1995*. As part of the *Multicultural Victoria Act 2004*, the Department is required to report annually on initiatives taken to value diversity, reduce inequality, improve access, encourage participation, and promote the social and economic benefits of cultural diversity to all Victorians. The Cultural Diversity Plan will provide a framework for the Department's reporting requirements in this area over the next three years.

Objectives of the Plan

This Cultural Diversity Plan sets out the key commitments for strengthening social inclusion, services and outcomes for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

The Plan outlines priorities, strategies and actions that the Department will undertake to meet the three key outcome areas identified by government in *A Fairer Victoria*, namely to:

- incorporate culturally appropriate training for staff into the delivery of services to our CALD communities
- ensure that information on services is readily accessible to CALD communities
- include assessment of the effectiveness of service delivery to CALD communities as an integral part of program evaluation.

These outcome areas recognise that while our cultural and linguistic diversity directly contribute to the richness and vibrancy of life in Victoria, people from CALD backgrounds can face high levels of disadvantage and barriers to equal opportunity. These may include:

- varying levels of English language fluency
- experiences of trauma and war
- disrupted education for some children
- the pressures of resettlement
- racism and discrimination.

Government investment in community organisations, social networks, improved participation and local leadership can reduce the effects of disadvantage and result in more active, confident and resilient individuals and communities⁴. In particular, the Victorian Government recognises that language skills and education are critical to successful settlement. The Department plays a vital and important role for many migrant communities in this regard. Developing positive attitudes towards linguistic diversity through promotion, ensuring effective communication and engagement with the CALD community, and acknowledging the benefits of linguistic competence and multi-lingualism in the Victorian community are all part of our vision for cultural diversity.

Underpinning Principles

The Department's Cultural Diversity Plan builds on the values of equality, respect and inclusion. Through a range of actions it aspires to:

- equip staff with the knowledge and tools they need to provide inclusive practice and deliver culturally sensitive services
- work collaboratively across the organisation, and with stakeholders, to build stronger partnerships with CALD parents and communities
- integrate CALD considerations into business planning, program evaluation and communication.

The Plan will be a positive initiative in meeting Government expectations and community needs. It is an inclusive plan that supports all children and young people to be the best they can.

Bringing it Together – A Consultative Approach

The development of this plan has emphasised the importance of consultation and collaboration, and of building on the many initiatives undertaken within the Department to date.

A whole-of-department committee was established representing the diversity of its many roles and functions. This committee was able to draw on the leadership and wisdom of a range of people within the Department as well as on external expertise. Appropriate information, data and strategies were sought from a variety of sources from within and external to the Department. A key feature has been the integration of the Plan into the Department's annual business planning processes. This whole-of-department approach has ensured that the Plan contains initiatives from a wide spectrum of the organisation.

The Victorian Multicultural Commission has been engaged as key contributor and partner in the process. The Commission plays a vital role in consulting with communities on government services, and then feeding back results of these consultations to departments. The Department (DEECD) engaged in discussions with officers of the Victorian Multicultural Commission and made a key presentation to the Cultural Diversity Committee. The Cultural Diversity Plan 2008–2010 is viewed as a robust and dynamic document. The Department will continue to consult with internal and external stakeholders, and build on existing actions and initiatives. This dynamic and consultative course of action is seen as critical to ensuring the long-term success of the Plan and its effective implementation across the Department.

Building on Our Strengths

The Department's Office for Children and Early Childhood Development provides accessible information and services for families including CALD families about early childhood services, kindergartens and schools. Access to interpreter services is also provided. The Department as a whole provides the structures and standards that support families and the community to help and encourage children and young people to thrive, learn, grow and develop. This includes providing extra support for those children and families who most need it.

The Department's Multicultural Education Policy and the Guidelines for Managing Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Schools are key documents that outline the benefits of diversity for our schools:

Diversity brings significant educational benefits to all students, teachers and administrators and the wider community. It enables the creation of learning environments enriched by different life experiences, varied perspectives, dynamic interchange, flexibility and creativity. The skills and attitudes acquired by students in this environment are the same as those needed for the new worlds of work and community life. Schools can be, and generally are, model communities of mutual respect, harmony and tolerance.⁵

The Guidelines for Managing Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Schools reflect the Department's commitment to:

- assisting all students and staff to become informed, productive, adaptable, motivated and creative citizens who take full advantage of their economic, social and individual opportunities
- building an accepting environment where all staff and students are treated with dignity and respect and where diversity is valued
- facilitating intercultural contact through broadening knowledge of the world and promoting the skills needed for cross-cultural cooperation and understanding
- creating a learning environment where stereotypes are questioned and bias, bigotry, ethnocentrism, prejudice or racism are wholeheartedly rejected.

The Department's Office for Government School Education provides targeted programs, services and advice to schools, which support educators in their provision of services to CALD communities. Programs are extensive. They include the English as a Second Language program, strategies for refugees and new arrivals such as Strengthening Outcomes – Refugee Students in Government Schools, the Languages and Multicultural Education Resource Centre (LMERC), the Community Languages Schools, building safe schools and anti-bullying strategies.

In-depth attention to language in education policies such as the teaching of languages other than English (LOTE) and community languages, English as a second language (ESL), and support for interpreting and translation services are critical communication and engagement strategies, and represent a major way of moving our school and early childhood communities towards social inclusion and preparation for a globalised era.

Fifty-one languages other than English are accessible through government and community language schools, with the majority offered to VCE level. The most popular languages are Italian, Indonesian, Japanese, French, German and Chinese. Twenty-two languages are taught in Victorian government primary schools, 18 in secondary schools and 43 through the Victorian School of Languages in out-of-school hours. The Victorian School of Languages also provides language tuition through Distance Education.

Bilingual schools also operate in a number of Victorian primary and secondary schools. Languages taught in these schools include Auslan, Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Japanese, Macedonian, Modern Greek and Vietnamese. A recent evaluation of these programs demonstrated high levels of achievement in both the target language taught and the curriculum areas taught in the target language.

Community Languages Schools (CLS) are community-based not-for-profit bodies established by community groups and individuals to provide language classes to school-age students, out of normal school hours. In 2008, a total of 166 accredited Community Language Schools offered LOTE tuition in 41 different languages.

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) has an ongoing commitment to the principles set out in the Victorian Government's *Valuing Cultural Diversity* policy statement. The delivery of culturally responsive, equitable programs is a core goal of the VCAA and ensures that respect and appreciation for cultural and linguistic diversity are a normal part of all curriculum and assessment policies, programs and procedures. The VCAA aims to reflect the Government's multicultural policy for Victorian schools, both in its interaction with schools, and within its own administrative structures and procedures. Cultural diversity is also acknowledged by the VCAA in the development of the Victorian Early Learning and Development Framework 0–8 for young children and families in early childhood education and care settings, and in the early years of school.

The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority provides education and training regulatory functions including approval of providers of courses for overseas students, accreditation of courses and registration of qualifications. The international education industry is an important contributor to Victoria's economic and cultural life, with one-third of the nations international students educated here.

Central to excellence in delivery of education and early childhood services is the development of a high quality work force. The attraction and retention of a diverse work force plays an important role in the Department's human-resource and work-force reform agenda. Promoting diversity and inclusive employment practices contribute to a high-quality work force through broadening the skills and talent pool available to the organisation and ensuring it is reflective of the broader Victorian community. Professional development also enables the work force to deliver culturally sensitive and appropriate services. To ensure all its workplaces are harmonious, respectful and safe work and learning environments free of discrimination, harassment and bullying; the Department implements equal opportunity and a culture of human rights.

Conclusion

The five year reform agenda outlined in the Department's *Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development* (2008) is to:

- increase access to high quality early childhood health, education and care services
- strengthen public confidence in a world class school education system, with a strong and vibrant government school sector at its core
- integrate services for children and families
- improve outcomes for disadvantaged young Victorians.

The goals of diversity and inclusiveness are a significant part of these resolutions. Within the framework of the Blueprint is a vision for Victoria that promotes participation and opportunity in the school and early childhood community, leading to social and economic benefits across the State. This *Cultural Diversity Plan 2008–2010* seeks to realise that vision through ensuring high levels of engagement, implementation capacity and accountability across the Department to deliver accessible services and information to our CALD community.

Cultural Diversity Plan

Outcome Area I

Integrate culturally appropriate training for staff in the delivery of services to our CALD communities⁶

Strategy I: Complement existing DEECD leadership and staff development initiatives with professional learning that builds workforce cultural competency

Actions	Office/Division Responsible	Completion Date
I.1.1 Map current DEECD professional learning programs and activities that improve cultural competency. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review professional learning programs for staff to determine how/if cultural competency/literacy is included. Locate opportunities to integrate a cultural competency/literacy component into existing programs. Extend professional learning programs and opportunities for Multicultural Education Aides. 	ORI – HR (Strategy Planning and Development) OGSE – Group Coordination (Regional Offices) OGSE – School Workforce Reform and School Improvement OGSE – Student Learning Programs OCECD – Early Childhood Programs	2008–2009
I.1.2 Promote professional learning that integrates cultural competency. Aim to have cultural competency included in all appropriate DEECD professional learning.	ORI – HR (Strategy Planning and Development) OGSE – Student Learning Programs OGSE – School Workforce Reform and School Improvement OCECD – Early Childhood Programs	2009
I.1.3 Support business units from each office of the Department (central and regional) to undertake professional learning that will build cultural competency.	ORI – HR (Strategy Planning and Development)	Ongoing
I.1.4 Build a register of cross-cultural training providers for access by managers, early childhood professionals and principals.	ORI – HR (Policy & Employee Relations) ORI – HR (Strategy Planning and Development) OGSE – Student Learning Programs	2008
I.1.5 Provide quality advice regarding appropriate training in developing cultural competence. ⁷	ORI – HR (Policy and Employee Relations) ORI – HR (Strategy Planning and Development) OGSE – Student Learning Programs	Ongoing
I.1.6 Assist Merit Protection Boards' staff-selection training to incorporate and increase awareness of human rights and equal opportunity legislation regarding discrimination in employment on the grounds of race or religious belief.	ORI HR (Policy & Employee Relations) Merit Protection Boards	Ongoing

1.1.7 Identify and promote best practice.	ORI – HR (Policy and Employee Relations) ORI – HR (Strategy Planning and Development) OGSE – Student Learning Programs OCECD – Early Childhood Programs	Ongoing
1.1.8 Support schools to implement a 'whole of workplace' approach to cultural competency. ⁸	OGSE Group Coordination (Regional Directors)	2010
1.1.9 Include CALD expectations in service agreements with the principal organisations. The AEU, VASSP and VPA provide forums, conferences and other professional learning programs for principal-class officers.	OGSE – School Workforce Reform and School Improvement Division (School Workforce Reform) OCECD – Regional Operations	2009

Strategy 2: Implement creative and innovative solutions to increase cultural competency across the workforce and enhance service delivery to CALD communities

Actions	Office/Division Responsible	Completion Date
1.2.1 Develop initiatives to encourage DEECD leadership engagement in cultural competency. ⁹	ORI – HR (Strategy Planning and Development)	2009–2010
1.2.2 Research and develop an assessment tool to determine cultural competency of the workplace.	ORI – HR (Policy and Employee Relations – Diversity)	2008–2009
1.2.3 Build evaluation into the delivery of professional learning that addresses cultural competency to ensure effective outcomes and continuous improvement in service delivery to CALD communities.	All offices	Ongoing

Outcome Area 2

Ensure that information is readily accessible to CALD communities

Strategy 1: Improve accessibility of information to CALD communities¹⁰

Actions	Office/Division Responsible	Completion Date
2.1.1 Provide accessible information for families of CALD children and young people about schools and early childhood programs, including in community languages.	All offices	Ongoing
2.1.2 Conduct research investigating young people's views on access to career advice and pathway options for culturally and linguistically diverse communities. This research should be conducted by a cross section of young people trained in research techniques. The research locations should include Shepparton, Frankston and Braybrook.	OPRI – Youth Transitions Division	2008–2009
2.1.3 Develop career information materials, information on structured workplace learning and work experience in a range of community languages targeted at parents.	OPRI – Youth Transitions Division	2008–2009
2.1.4 Conduct a research project to determine how effectively DEECD is communicating with CALD communities and to suggest areas of improvement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and assess the effectiveness of the Department's current methods of information provision to CALD communities via an audit and review. This includes early years services (maternal health care, childcare, parenting services, kindergartens, school nurses) and government schools (primary, secondary, special). As part of this work it will be expected that the research company identifies examples of best practice. Prepare a report with a clear explanation of current processes and recommended improvements. 	OPSC – Communications Division ORI – HR (Policy and Employee Relations) in consultation with other areas of the Department and the Research Branch	2008
2.1.5 Develop a training package that can be used as a guide for DEECD staff to refer to when developing communications for audiences that include or are made up of CALD communities. Produce a series of Best Practice case notes, which could also be used as part of the training package kit.	OPSC – Communications Division ORI – HR (Policy and Employee Relations) In consultation with other areas of the Department	2008
2.1.6 In developing priority research areas of interest, ensure CALD is included when addressing disadvantage and social inclusion.	OPRI – Education Policy and Research Division	2008–2010
2.1.7 Ensure Research in Schools guidelines provide for participation for culturally and linguistically diverse communities. External researchers who apply to do research in schools must provide for participation through translated plain-language statements and for access to interpreters as required.	OPRI – Education Policy and Research Division	2008–2009
2.1.8 Adhere to DPC Policy: Multicultural Communications Policy requirement: 'Departments and agencies are required to commit a minimum of five percent of their campaign advertising budget to ethnic media'.	All offices	Ongoing

Strategy 2: Develop an internal communications process around the Guide

Actions	Office/Division Responsible	Completion Date
2.2.1 Create an internal DEECD communications strategy to support the implementation of the CALD Communications Guide across the Department.	OPSC – Communications Division	2008
2.2.2 Ensure the communications strategy is applied across the Department.	All offices	Ongoing

Strategy 3: Develop a communications strategy for the Cultural Diversity Plan

Actions	Office/Division Responsible	Completion Date
2.3.1 Provide a DEECD Cultural Diversity Best Practice resource to be published on the web as a complementary document to the Cultural Diversity Plan.	ORI – HR (Policy and Employee Relations – Diversity)	2008–2009
2.3.2 Develop an overall communications strategy for the DEECD Cultural Diversity Plan.	OPSC – Communications Division	2008

Outcome Area 3

Include assessment of the effectiveness of service delivery to CALD communities as an integral part of program evaluation

Strategy 1: Enhance performance measurement and reporting systems

Actions	Office/Division Responsible	Completion Date
3.1.1 Incorporate CALD children and young people in need as part of the Department's Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.	OPSC – Data and Evaluation in consultation with other areas of the Department	2009
3.1.2 Enhance the Human Resource Management System to enable CALD work -force analysis to be included as part of work-force reporting.	OPSC – Data and Evaluation ORI – Human Resources	2009

Strategy 2: Improve the access to data on CALD children and young people¹¹

Actions	Office/Division Responsible	Completion Date
3.2.1 Improve accessibility of data on CALD children and young people so that it is more accessible to Department staff for planning and evaluation.	OPSC – Data and Evaluation in consultation with other areas of the Department	2009
3.2.2 Ensure that the annual On Track early leaver post-school destination survey collects information on the cultural and linguistic diversity of students, with data analysis to be available as part of the Department's Cultural Diversity Plan.	OPSC – Data and Evaluation in consultation with other areas of the Department	2009

Strategy 3: Embed the Cultural Diversity Plan in DEECD business processes

Actions	Office/Division Responsible	Completion Date
3.3.1 Ensure DEECD Business planning process and guidelines are cognisant of the Cultural Diversity Plan by adapting the business planning template and by providing consultancy to business planners.	OPSC – Corporate Planning, Strategy & Audit ORI – HR (Policy and Employee Relations – Diversity)	2008
3.3.2 Enhance Project Management tools to be cognisant of the Cultural Diversity Plan and impact for CALD communities.	ORI – Resources & Infrastructure Strategy	2008
3.3.3 Under the direction of the Ministerial Advisory Committee for Languages Other than English and Multicultural Education (MACLEM), develop a new Multicultural Education Policy for Victorian government schools including implementation, communication and evaluation.	OGSE – Student Learning Programs in consultation with other divisions and offices	2008
3.3.4 Support schools and early childhood programs to plan for inclusive practice through the use of existing tools/frameworks and the development of new resources.	OGSE – Student Learning Programs OCECD – Early Childhood Programs	Ongoing
3.3.5 Develop and maintain partnerships with stakeholders such as the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, the various providers of the International Humanitarian Settlement Scheme and the Refugee Resettlement Advisory Council that provide access to new arrival data, allowing enrolment planning.	OGSE – Student Learning Programs OCECD – Early Childhood Programs	Ongoing

Strategy 4: Develop a strategy for engagement with CALD communities

Actions	Office/Division Responsible	Completion Date
3.4.1 Identify barriers to participation and engagement by CALD children and families in schools and early childhood services and programs.	OCECD – Early Childhood Programs Early Childhood Strategic Policy & Projects OGSE – Student Learning Programs and Group Coordination Division	Ongoing
3.4.2 Develop and implement an ESL Action Plan to further improve educational services for ESL students. The Plan will be published on the DEECD ESL website.	OGSE – Student Learning Programs	2010
3.4.3 Provide additional support to refugee students with disrupted schooling to improve educational outcomes and build the capacity of schools to meet the extra needs of these students.	OGSE – Student Learning Programs	Ongoing
3.4.4 Ensure the Partnership Policy Guide responds to cultural diversity by including relevant case studies.	OGSE – Education Regeneration & Community Partnerships and Group Coordination Division	2009
3.4.5 Include case study material within the Parents Resource Guide (to be developed) to reflect cultural diversity.	OGSE – Education Regeneration & Community Partnerships	2009
3.4.6 Ensure consultation processes related to regeneration are inclusive of cultural diversity.	OGSE – Education Regeneration & Community Partnerships	Ongoing
3.4.7 Include key performance indicators during contractual negotiations of the funding and service agreements with Youth Affairs Victoria. This will include actions to increase engagement of parents and students from CALD communities and will provide good-practice case studies to the Department.	OGSE – Group Coordination Division	2009
3.4.8 Undertake consultations with the Victorian Council of School Organisations (VICCSO), the Association of School Councils in Victoria (ASCIV) and Kindergarten Parents Victoria (KPV) to determine ways to increase CALD community parental engagement.	OGSE – Group Coordination Division and OCECD – Early Childhood Programs	2008
3.4.9 Strengthen consultation with established CALD community groups to promote parental participation in schools and early childhood programs.	OGSE – Group Coordination Division OCECD – Early Childhood Programs	Ongoing
3.4.10 Investigate the viability of further developing the school council website to contain relevant information, such as presentations in community languages, that may be used by schools to promote the benefits of parents being involved in the school community.	OGSE – Group Coordination Division	2008
3.4.11 Recognise the work done by CALD communities as part of the Outstanding Parent Award during the Education Excellence Awards 2009.	OGSE – Group Coordination Division OPSC – Communications Division	2009
3.4.12 Recognise the work undertaken by CALD communities as part of the Cultural Diversity Quest School/Community Partnership Award, 17–23 March annually.	OGSE – Student Learning Programs	Ongoing

Strategy 5: Recognise the significance of an increasingly culturally diverse and globalised world for 21st century learners and strengthen linkages at the local, national and international levels to further develop cross cultural relationships

Actions	Office/Division Responsible	Completion Date
3.5.1 Build linkages with key stakeholders at the local, national and international levels to further develop cross cultural relationships that can influence the Department's service delivery and meet Government education and early childhood policy commitments.	All offices	2008–2010
3.5.2 Use research to further develop and build cultural relationships, networks and cultural relationships, networks and linkages at the Victorian school, national and international levels.	OPRI – International Education Division OPRI – Education Policy and Research	2008–2010
3.5.3 Ensure linkages are made in policy projects with a very direct relationship to increasing cultural competence.	OPRI – Education Policy and Research	2008–2009
3.5.4 Build cultural competency and engagement with CALD communities into key policy initiatives, such as Earned Autonomy and Workforce Reform, which flow from the Blueprint.	OPRI – Education Policy and Research	2009–2010



Cultural Diversity Plan 2008–2010

APPENDIX I:

Victoria's Diversity – a snapshot of current Department data and the 2006 Census

According to the Department's August School Census (2007), there were 79,801 students who spoke 190 different languages other than English at home, while a further 33,423 students spoke mainly English at home. The most common languages other than English spoken at home included Vietnamese, Arabic, Cantonese and Turkish. See Table 1 for the number of students from language backgrounds other than English in government schools by region.

In 2007, a total of 51 Languages other than English (LOTE) were accessible through government schools, including the Victorian School of Languages (VSL). Over 40 of these languages were offered to VCE level. Twenty-two languages were taught in government primary schools, 18 languages in government secondary schools and 43 through the VSL outside school hours. The VSL also provided language tuition through Distance Education for 11 languages. The languages with the highest student enrolments in the government sector were: Italian, Indonesian, Japanese, French, German and Chinese with over 225,000 students studying a LOTE in primary schools and around 100,000 students studying a LOTE in secondary schools.

In 2008, Bilingual programs are offered at one special school, eleven primary schools and one secondary college. These programs are characterised by the use of three or more discipline-based domains including Languages Other Than English (LOTE) as a vehicle in which the target language is taught. Languages taught include Auslan, Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Japanese, Macedonian, Modern Greek and Vietnamese. Recent evaluation of the programs demonstrates a high level of achievement in the target language and the curriculum areas taught in the target language.

Community languages schools (CLS) are community-based not-for-profit bodies established by community groups and individuals to provide language classes to school-age students, out of normal school hours. In 2008, a total of 166 DEECD accredited Community Language schools offered LOTE tuition to approximately 34,000 students in 41 different languages.

The Department's International Education Database indicated that in 2007, there were 2,589 international students enrolled in government schools.

The latest census information indicates that on 8 August 2006, there were 4,257,742 Victorians of whom 1,173,201 (23.8%) were born overseas. Of those overseas-born living in Victoria, 4.1% came from the United Kingdom, 1.7% from Italy, 1.3% from New Zealand, 1.2% from Vietnam and 1.1% from China; followed by Greece, India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Germany. The latest Census provides a relatively different picture from 2001 when the top ten countries of overseas born included UK, Italy, Greece, Vietnam, followed by those born in New Zealand, China, India, Germany, Sri Lanka and Malaysia.

At a national level, census data indicates that between 1996 and 2006, the size of the European-born population in Australia decreased. Since 1996, the biggest decreases in the number of Australian residents born in a particular country were for Italy (by around 39,000), Greece (17,000) and England (15,000). Since 1996, the groups which had increased the most in number were those born in New Zealand (by around 98,000), China (96,000), and India (70,000). Furthermore, some of Australia's recent arrivals were born in countries recently affected by war and political unrest. Over 73% (or around 14,000) of Australian residents born in Sudan arrived in 2001 or later. Similarly, a high proportion of the population born in Zimbabwe (48% or 10,000 people), Afghanistan (45% or 7000) and Iraq (34% or 11,000) had arrived in 2001 or later.

The top six languages spoken at home in Victoria include English (74.4%), Italian (2.7%), Greek (2.4%), Vietnamese (1.5%), Cantonese (1.35%) and Mandarin (1.3%). Other prominent languages include Arabic, Macedonian, Turkish, Spanish and Croatian.

In the 2006 Census, the most common responses for religious affiliation in Victoria were Catholic 27.5%, No Religion 20.4%, Anglican 13.6%, Uniting Church 5.6% and Eastern Orthodox 4.5%. The major religions apart from Christianity (2,985,802) were Buddhism (132,633), Islam (109,371), Hinduism (42,311) and Judaism (41,105). Since the 1996 Census, the fastest growing religions in Victoria were Hinduism with a 60.4% rise over ten years, Buddhism with a 52.5% rise and Islam with a 38.6% rise.

TABLE I**NUMBER OF STUDENTS FROM LANGUAGE BACKGROUNDS OTHER THAN ENGLISH IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS BY REGION, MID-YEAR 2008**

Region	Number of Students
Western Metropolitan	27,627
Northern Metropolitan	26,721
Eastern Metropolitan	26,128
Southern Metropolitan	31,436
Barwon–South Western	1,886
Grampians	617
Loddon Mallee	1,353
Gippsland	712
Hume	1,859
TOTAL	118,339

In 2008 there were about 206 languages spoken by the above students.

The definition for a student's inclusion in the above figures reads:
 'a student is from a language background other than English if, either the student or one parent/guardian speaks a language other than English at home.'

GLOSSARY

Office for Government School Education (OGSE)

Office for Children and Early Childhood Development (OCECD)

Office for Planning, Strategy and Coordination (OPSC)

Office for Resources and Infrastructure (ORI)

Office for Policy, Research and Innovation (OPRI)

Australian Education Union (AEU)

Victorian Association of State Secondary Principals (VASSP)

Victorian Principals Association (VPA)

Ministerial Advisory Committee for Languages Other than English and Multicultural Education (MACLEM)

The Minister for Education established an advisory body in the areas of LOTE, ESL and Multicultural Education. The Council, entitled Ministerial Advisory Council on LOTE, ESL and Multicultural Education (MACLEM) provides an important opportunity to develop and maintain links between DEECD and the Multicultural Affairs Portfolio. The Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs chairs MACLEM.

MACLEM plays an important role in guiding and supporting the implementation of LOTE, ESL and multicultural education policies and directions in schools, by ensuring that key interest groups are fully consulted and involved in addressing any issues arising from the implementation of these policies.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) defines cultural and linguistic diversity (CALD) by three variables:

1. Country of birth (COB)
2. Language other than English (LOTE) spoken at home
3. English language proficiency.

Because CALD is a combination of factors, it is acknowledged that there is no one definition of CALD and the following description is used:

'In the Australian context, individuals from a CALD background are those who identify as having a specific cultural or linguistic affiliation by virtue of their place of birth, ancestry, ethnic origin, religion, preferred language, language(s) spoken at home, or because of their parents' identification on a similar basis.' (*Department of Human Services Multicultural Strategy Unit, 2002*)

Cultural Competence

- Cultural competence aims to foster constructive interactions between members of different cultures. Other terms for cultural competence that have slightly different meanings include 'cultural responsiveness', 'cultural awareness' and 'cultural sensitivity'. The language of 'cultural competence' is used so as to be consistent with trends within Australian and international contexts. (*Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria – Cultural Competence – Guidelines and Protocols, 2006*).

- Cultural competence is much more than an awareness of cultural differences as it focuses on the capacity of a system to improve performance by integrating culture into the delivery of services (*NHMRC Cultural Competency in Health – a guide for policy, partnerships and participation, 2005*).
- Common elements in definitions of cultural competence include: valuing diversity, having the capacity for cultural self-assessment, being conscious of the dynamics inherent in cross-cultural interactions, institutionalising the importance of cultural knowledge and making adaptations to service delivery that reflect cultural understanding (*Goode 1995*).
- Cultural competence is a set of congruent behaviours, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals and enable that system, agency or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations (*Cross et al. 1989*).

The National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC) has identified five key components of cultural competence:

1. A valuing of cultural diversity

This stage involves integrating respect for diversity into programs, policies and services and also recognising that members of certain cultural groups may have cultural as well as individual needs.

2. Conducting a cultural self-assessment

Organisations develop an awareness of their own cultures and communities, assumptions, and biases and identify actions to reduce such barriers.

3. Managing the dynamics of difference

At this stage the dynamics of cultural difference are proactively managed, improving the interactions between different cultures.

4. Acquiring and institutionalising cultural knowledge

As all organisations inevitably encounter cultural diversity, a need exists to integrate an understanding of different cultures into service delivery and practices.

5. Adapting to diversity and cultural contexts

At this stage cultural knowledge is embedded throughout the hierarchy of the organisation and policy, practices, service delivery and behaviours are adapted to fit the cultural diversity of the community engaged. (*Source: National Centre for Cultural Competence 2006*)

- The term 'cultural competence' refers to the awareness, knowledge, skills, practices and processes needed by individuals, professions, organisations and systems to function effectively and appropriately in culturally diverse situations in general and in particular interactions with people from different cultures. (*Source: The Effectiveness of Cross-Cultural Training in the Australian Context. Bean 2006*)

Cross-Cultural Training (CCT)

- The term cross-cultural training refers to all modes of training and education aimed at developing cultural competence including workshops, seminars, training courses, coaching, diplomas and degrees. (*Source: The Effectiveness of Cross-Cultural Training in the Australian Context. Bean 2006*)

Professional learning programs

These are initiatives to support teaching and public sector staff excellence. Professional learning can include training, mentoring, and formal and informal education.

Interfaith/Interreligious

Refers to or involves persons of two or more religious faiths or religions. Both terms are commonly used interchangeably. However, some theologians and sociologists may use them differently.

Multifaith/Multireligious

Refers to or involves persons of different faiths, religions or religious backgrounds.

Multifaith developments in Victoria include:

- Premier's Multifaith Advisory Council (provides advice to government on related matters)
- *MultifaithNetVic* (a multifaith online directory of Victoria)
- Local Multifaith and Interfaith Committees/Structures (established in 17 local government areas).

Social Inclusion

Inclusion embraces the principles of diversity and participation for all. It is not about an approach that looks at fitting people into a culture that already exists but about maximising opportunity for inclusion for anyone who wants to participate. This requires in-depth critical reflection on organizational culture.

Increasingly, inclusion is being used as a framework to describe the process of engaging diverse communities. In 2007, the Ministerial Advisory Committee for Victorian Communities produced the Social Inclusion: The next step for a fairer Victoria report which identifies the eight pillars for social-inclusion reform.

Refugees

A refugee is an asylum seeker who has been accepted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) or a friendly country as a refugee. Refugees cannot go home because they fear persecution. Some countries provide refuge for them until it is safe to return home. Others countries allow refugees to stay permanently if they wish to.

Linguistic Diversity

Linguistic diversity is increasingly becoming a feature of government policy given the rising rate of new language groups settling in Victoria. (Victoria University report, The number of speakers of African languages emerging in Victoria, 2006).



Cultural Diversity Plan 2008–2010

LINKS

Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001

www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/rarta2001265/

Multicultural Victoria Act 2004

<http://www.multicultural.vic.gov.au/web24/vmc.nsf/allDocs/RWPF2D61IA5E6710709CA2572F1001D0564>

Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

[www.dms.dpc.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubStatbook.nsf/51dea49770555ea6ca256da4001b90cd/54D73763EF9DCA36CA2571B6002428B0/\\$FILE/06-043a.pdf](http://www.dms.dpc.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubStatbook.nsf/51dea49770555ea6ca256da4001b90cd/54D73763EF9DCA36CA2571B6002428B0/$FILE/06-043a.pdf)

A Fairer Victoria

www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/Web14/dvc/dvcmain.nsf/allDocs/RWPBA66A032F874AC59CA2572D00026A891?

DEECD Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development (2008)

www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/blueprint2008/default.htm

Census data

www.censusdata.abs.gov.au

Growing Victoria Together

www.dpc.vic.gov.au/CA256D8000265E1A/page/Growing+Victoria+Together!OpenDocument&I=30-Growing+Victoria+Together~&2=~&3=~

Valuing Cultural Diversity

[www.multicultural.vic.gov.au/Web24/rwpgslib.nsf/GraphicFiles/Valuing+Cultural+Diversity+2002/\\$file/Valuing+Cultural+Diversity.pdf](http://www.multicultural.vic.gov.au/Web24/rwpgslib.nsf/GraphicFiles/Valuing+Cultural+Diversity+2002/$file/Valuing+Cultural+Diversity.pdf)

DEECD Multicultural Education Policy and Guidelines for Managing Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Schools

<http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/teachlearn/student/lem/GuidelinesforSchools.pdf>

DEECD August School Census (2007)

www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/publ/research/publ/Brochure2008March-brc-vl_0-20080331.pdf

DEECD August LOTE Survey (2007)

www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/lotte/research.htm

Youth Affairs Victoria/VicSRC

www.yacvic.org.au/

Parents Victoria

www.parentsvictoria.asn.au

Victorian Council of School Organisations (VICCSO)

www.viccsso.org.au/

Association of School Councils in Victoria (ASCIV)

www.asciv.org.au/ASCIV/Welcome.html

School Council Website

www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/schoolcouncils/default.htm

Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria Cultural Competence, Guidelines and Protocols (2006)

<http://eccv.org.au/doc/CulturalCompetenceGuidelinesandProtocols.pdf>

NHMRC Cultural Competency in Health, 'A guide for policy, partnerships and participation (2005)

http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/_files/hp19.pdf

National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC)

<http://www11.georgetown.edu/research/gucchd/nccc/>

Harnessing Diversity: Addressing racial and religious discrimination in employment (2008)

<http://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/pdf/Harnessing%20Diversity%20report.pdf>

NOTES

- ¹ The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities makes explicit reference to Indigenous culture in two parts – in the preamble, and then in the context of the right to culture (Section 19).
- ² 2006 Census data
- ³ Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, *Blueprint for Early Childhood Development and School Reform*, 2008, p. 3
- ⁴ Ibid
- ⁵ Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, *Guidelines for Managing Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Schools*, 2001, p. 2
- ⁶ Improved quality of service is the outcome measure that indicates whether implementing training programs, policies, and culturally or linguistically appropriate standards makes a difference. A new trend in the literature suggests that using cultural competency in a focused or strategic way can be a helpful adjunct to the quality improvement process. Training will be effective when used in a complementary manner with a range of other cultural-change strategies.
- ⁷ Cultural competence is a developmental process that evolves over time. Both individuals and organisations are at various levels of awareness, knowledge, and skills in the cultural competence continuum. Cross cultural competency indicates the context within which that development takes place, rather than a competency as such.
- ⁸ The ‘whole of workplace’ approach illustrates that issues of race, ethnicity and culture arise at every point in the continuum of workforce development. Paying attention to these issues improves the likelihood that efforts in work-force development will be successful in relation to the implementation of the Cultural Diversity Plan.
- ⁹ From this basic framework tools such as empowerment, training, and mentoring are presented for leaders to consider when dealing with diversity in their respective business units within the Department. These tools are related to continuous improvement in leadership engagement with diversity as a business issue.
- ¹⁰ It is important that ‘information provision’ is seen within a continuum from oral communication to literacy. Literature generally acknowledges that information can be transmitted effectively through oral as well as by literate means – for many recent communities in Victoria, such as the Bari South Sudanese, there is no formal written language. The growing range of oral levels of linguistic diversity is increasingly impacting on communication methodologies. For example, 61 new languages have emerged in Victoria within the last six years and will add a level of complexity to future communication strategies of various government departments.
- ¹¹ It is important to appreciate that the ABS uses two distinct categories of data collection in relation to ‘young people’ in an effort to capture the complexities of the first- and second-generation experiences. This will be an important framework for recording issues related to ‘identity’ and ‘ethnicity’.





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