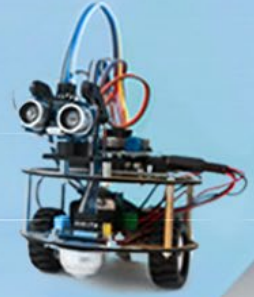




COMPUTER EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS SURVEY 2020



Information Letter ACS Computer Education in Australian Schools Survey 2020

Dear Principal

As required by the [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007](#) Chapter 2.2: General Requirements for Consent; the following information has been provided to assist you in making an informed, voluntary decision to participate in this survey.

The purpose and methods of research

As Australia's peak body for the ICT profession, the mission of the Australian Computer Society (ACS) is to grow the ICT profession so Australia is not constrained by a lack of skilled workers. Developing Australia's future workforce requires schools cultivate digital capabilities however Australian schools are seeing a drop in students' interest in technical subjects and a decline in performance in STEM subjects.

Although there is a range of information available regarding the performance of students in 'Technologies' and 'STEM' subjects, there is little comprehensive, nation-wide data specifically on the current state of Digital Technologies and IT education and teaching.

ACS proposes to survey Australian schools to establish a benchmark for the state of Digital Technologies and IT education and teaching. The survey covers four areas:

- Curriculum
- Access to equipment
- Staff
- Reporting to Parents/Guardians

The chosen platform to conduct the survey is Survey Monkey and the survey will be provided to schools via an online link. It is intended that one survey be completed by each participating school and it is hoped that schools from all States and Territories, school sectors and school levels will participate. A report of the data gathered will be produced however any conclusions or recommendations will, of necessity, be dependent on the participation rate and the amount of data collected.

Voluntary or involuntary participation and any alternatives to participation

Participation in the online survey is completely voluntary.

Any payments or other incentives for participation

Schools choosing to provide contact details at the end of the survey will receive an email containing the results/report.

Duration of research and demands on participants, e.g. if research will be repeated over a number of periods, such as months or years

One survey will be completed by each participating school. It suggested that a key staff member such as a Digital Technologies Coordinator or Head Teacher be responsible for gathering the data to enable the completion of the online survey. Such a staff member is likely to have much of the information and any additional information could be obtained by allocating 15-20 minutes during a staff meeting to encourage input across the entire cohort of teaching staff. A word version of the survey questions will be available to facilitate information gathering. The survey contains approximately 50 questions and will take about 15 minutes to complete online once the information has been gathered.

To allow schools ample time to gather the information, the survey will be open for all of Term 4, 2020.

Risks, (harm, discomfort and inconvenience) implications, and potential benefits to participants

No risks are identified. Completing the survey requires schools to evaluate key aspects of the teaching and learning of Digital Technologies across all school years, and to consider communication regarding Digital Technologies education with parents/guardians. Increasing awareness of the state of education around technology within schools and their communities is key to focusing attention on this critical curriculum area.

Provision of services to participants adversely affected by research and who will pay for those services

No adverse effects are anticipated as this is an online survey completed voluntarily. ACS carries Public Liability Insurance.

Right to withdraw from further participation at any stage and any implications thereof, and the possibility to withdraw data

A school can request their survey submission be withdrawn by contacting the withdraw at any time by contacting the Project Co-ordinator.

What are participants expected or required to do

Key staff member will gather data and complete the online survey.

Any audio-visual recording of research activities and confidentiality of these recordings

Not applicable.

Confidentiality and privacy protection, e.g. will research results identify individual participants: schools, students and teachers

We will not be collecting any information on or from individual students, or identifiable information on teachers. If they choose to, schools/teachers can provide contact details. This is only to be used to contact them once the final report is published and publicly available. We will not be using data that can identify schools or individuals in any public reports.

Any personal or identifiable data will be in line with ACS' privacy policy. ACS's Privacy Policy is available at <https://www.acs.org.au/privacy-policy.html>. The Privacy Policy based on the Australian Privacy Principles contained in Schedule 1 in the Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012 which amends the Privacy Act 1988.

Dissemination or publication of research results

Schools will be invited to provide contact details should they wish to receive a copy of this report. The report will also be provided to other stakeholders (such as Principals' Associations) who assisted in distributing the survey. A modified report focusing on data related to the Australian Digital Technologies Curriculum will be provided to ACARA as part of an ACS submission to the 2021 Technologies Curriculum Review.

A primary focus will be dissemination of information to Australian education authorities that that can assist in identifying areas of success and challenges, helping inform decisions to improve the equity of resources amongst Australian schools, and grow the capacity and quality of teacher skills and student achievement in Digital Technologies and ICT. The survey is not intended to be the only source of information to inform action and policy. Indeed, the data collected may prompt the need to seek further data in specific areas.

Note: The planned reports will be dependent on the data that is collected – at a national level and at a state level. If ACS does not collect sufficient data then ACS will redefine and modify the style and content of the reports provided.

Provision of research results, findings or reports to participants

Summary of the survey results/report will be provided to schools who provide contact details in the survey.

Amounts and sources of funding for research

Not applicable. ACS is undertaking this survey in the interest of supporting the future of the Australian ICT profession.

Financial, commercial or other interests of researchers, sponsors or institutions and declarations thereof

None.

Any expected benefits to the wider community

In addition to increasing awareness of the state of education around technology within schools and their communities, at a broader level, data from this survey will provide insight into the current use of technology and the teaching of Digital Technologies and IT across Australian schools.

With the review of the National Technologies Curriculum in early 2021, gathering data at this time is critical. We hope this survey will contribute to the picture of teaching, resourcing and implementation of the Digital Technologies Curriculum, and to creating rich teaching and learning opportunities for Australian students.

Contact details of the researcher(s)

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Complaints lodgement (dispute resolution) and handling process

Any complaints should be directed to the Project Co-ordinator in the first instance.

Any other relevant information including research-specific information

At a time when Digital Technologies and ICT teaching are going through one of the biggest revolutions in history, ACS would like to assist in providing a sound basis for public policy and government funding to develop the tech talent pipeline from Australian schools.

We understand that demand on teachers' time is always high and that this has been a particularly challenging year for Australian schools, however, this is an opportune time to gather data to inform the development a world class Curriculum and create rich teaching and learning opportunities for Australian students.

We welcome your interest and participation in this survey. Please feel free to contact the researchers if you have any questions or would like to discuss any aspect of the survey.

Yours sincerely



Louise Smith

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