

2. ACTIONS REQUIRED

2.1 Key steps for existing users

For schools and school systems that have already collected information in accordance with the question formats contained in the 2005–06 manual, the only change that needs to be addressed is the update to the ABS's Australian Standard Classification of Languages coding index.

Schools and school systems need to ensure that information on languages spoken at home that is collected for the first time for a student in 2007 is coded in accordance with the updated coding index as set out in Attachment 6.

Some existing users may be collecting information from secondary students for the first time.

Attachment 1A provides a checklist for those schools or school systems which have already implemented the necessary changes but need to take account of ABS's updated listing of language classifications and related indexes.

2.2 Key steps for new users

The key steps for schools or school systems implementing the data collection for the first time are as follows:

- Revise enrolment forms to ensure the forms incorporate the agreed questions and use the exact wording of the agreed questions.
- Alternatively, using the exact wording of the agreed questions, develop special data collection forms to collect the background information on students participating in the literacy, numeracy or national sample testing.
- Ensure information has been obtained from testing agents on the agreed process for providing student background information to the testing agents to enable them to link this with the test data.
- Revise the data storage system for student records to include fields for the new enrolment data on students' background characteristics.
- Collect and store the necessary student background data.

Further details are provided below. A checklist of tasks associated with these key steps is shown in Attachment 1B.

2.2.1 Changes to enrolment forms

Enrolment forms to include the agreed question modules set out in Section 3 of this manual (*Technical Specifications*). **To ensure consistency in national reporting, the question modules must be used as specified.**

In order for the testing agent to link students' test results to their background characteristics, an identifier for each student may need to be attached to both the background information and the test forms (see Section 2.3).

Attachment 3 provides two samples of how the question modules might appear on enrolment forms.

2.2.2 Use of special data collection forms

Until the necessary student background information is available via enrolment forms, it will need to be collected using special data collection forms for those students taking part in literacy, numeracy or national sample assessments.

To ensure consistency in national reporting, the special data collection forms must use the question modules as specified.

Attachment 3 provides two sample special data collection forms using the agreed question modules.

2.2.3 Information for testing agents

After each assessment is conducted, the testing agent(s) will need to link students' test results to their respective background characteristics. This will require schools or school systems to provide the background information to the testing agent in an agreed format.

In the case of the National Assessment Program (NAP) – civics and citizenship education 2007, the background information will be collected electronically, prior to the testing date, through a secure online student registration system (OSRS) developed specifically for this purpose. The consultant employed to undertake the assessment will advise school systems and schools how to provide the background information on the Year 6 students participating in the assessment.

2.2.4 Revising the data storage system for student records

Along with the required question modules, Section 3 provides guidance on how the responses should be coded and stored. The following details need to be checked:

- student data records include fields for all of the information specified in Section 3;
- the fields in electronic records meet the information system requirements specified in Section 3; and
- student background information is able to be retrieved in such a way that it can be linked to their test data by the testing agent, for example, by means of a suitable student identifier.

2.2.5 Collecting and storing the background information

It is important for national reporting to have data that is as accurate as possible and from as many parents as possible. Schools need to ensure that procedures for ensuring completion of enrolment forms or special data collection forms are carefully considered. For example, schools could provide information accompanying enrolment or special data collection forms. They will need to work with parents and have arrangements in place to follow up where forms are incomplete. In some cases, parents may need assistance in interpreting and answering some of the questions.

Processes need to be in place for entry and coding of data to computer files from enrolment or special forms so that they can be readily provided to or accessed by testing agents.