

## **ACEL Response to Proposed Merger AITSL, ACARA, AERO and ESA**

### **Introduction**

The Australian Council for Education Leaders (ACEL) is Australia's premier cross-sector professional association. With a focus on leading and leadership at our core, our uniqueness is our connectedness with all in the education community, who represent the breadth, depth and diversity of the sector. Guided by a deep sense of belonging, advocacy, and professional contribution, we respectfully share our response to the Federal Government's proposed establishment of a Teaching and Learning Commission, through the merger of AITSL, ACARA, AERO and ESA.

We welcome a cogent and considered approach that strengthens coherence across the system and deeply supports our profession. As part of this national conversation, we commend the [ACEL Statement of Commitment to the Profession of Teaching](#) - a widely endorsed, non-political, and unifying declaration of values and purpose for the teaching profession. We believe it can provide a foundational reference point for shaping the mission, culture, and guiding principles of the new Commission.

### **Context**

Australia's Federal Education Minister, Jason Clare, has announced plans to merge four current national education agencies into a single body called the Teaching and Learning Commission. Mr Clare has stated that the aim is to streamline curriculum, assessment, research and innovation, leading to improved learning and achievement by Australian students.

The four organisations are:

- ACARA – Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority: Oversees the national curriculum and assessment including like NAPLAN.
- AITSL – Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership: Establishes professional standards for teachers and educational leaders.
- AERO – Australian Education Research Organisation: Offers research relevant to improved student learning and achievement.
- ESA – Education Services Australia: Offers digital education services and resources.

This merger presents a rare opportunity to establish a coherent, integrated framework for national education leadership—one that honours the complexity of teaching and learning, and is grounded in a shared understanding of the profession's purpose, values, and aspirations.

### **ACEL's Perspective**

As these four organisations come together, ACEL suggests the success of the Teaching and Learning Commission will depend on a clearly articulated and widely embraced professional framework - one that is non-controversial, non-political, and unites all stakeholders in a shared sense of purpose.

We propose that this framework could be informed by the [\*ACEL Statement of Commitment to the Profession of Teaching\*](#). Developed over several years through broad consultation across sectors, systems, tertiary institutions, and professional organisations, the Statement is already widely adopted - particularly in Queensland, where it has been embedded in school and system practice as a touchstone of professional identity and ethical purpose.

The Statement speaks to the head, heart, and hands of the profession, capturing what teachers do, how they do it, and most importantly, why they do it. It affirms the moral purpose and intrinsic motivation that underpins great teaching and leadership. For early career teachers especially, it provides inspiration and a powerful sense of belonging within a values-based profession. ACEL believes that adopting such a statement could serve as the “glue” that binds the work of the new Commission, ensuring its policies, research, and initiatives emanate from a shared, ethical foundation that uplifts the teaching profession and strengthens public trust.

## Conclusion

At its heart, the proposed Teaching and Learning Commission must make a tangible difference where it matters most—in schools, in classrooms, and for every learner. ACEL stands ready to engage, contribute, and collaborate in shaping a shared framework that honours the profession and elevates its purpose. We offer the *Statement of Commitment to the Profession of Teaching* as a unifying touchstone - one that speaks to the head, heart, and hands of teaching, and has already inspired educators and leaders across the nation. We welcome the opportunity to partner in this significant reform, ensuring that the new Commission’s work is grounded in shared values, professional trust, and a collective aspiration to empower all learners.



Elizabeth Foster  
President, ACEL



Dr Barbara Watterston  
CEO, ACEL