



CANBERRA ACADEMY OF LANGUAGES

CAL Business Case for ACT 2022-2023 Budget

May 2022

Draft v6

Executive summary

What is proposed

This submission puts the business case for a centrally delivered, government-funded languages education strategy to supplement the ACT Education Directorate's language pathways plan. The proposal is that:

1. The ACT Government takes over the functions of Canberra Academy of Languages (CAL) in 2023 for the delivery of languages education programs to supplement those in schools, as set out in the section below on implementation.
2. The government reimburses to the convener, Frank Keighley, the amount remaining, at the time of transition (currently \$40,000 at the time of writing), of the convener's loan that he has provided as seed-funding for the establishment of CAL.

The ACT Government should assume responsibility for the operation of the CAL, to ensure equity in access to languages programs for students in all areas of the ACT. Planning and consultation should be undertaken for implementation of CAL programs by ACT Government from the start of the 2023 school year. This will provide clarity for the enrolment process with ongoing senior secondary intakes. Consultation should take place in Semester 2 of 2022, to ensure a seamless handover of CAL programs for commencement of CAL as a government-run entity in 2023.

The current problem

The ACT's provisions in languages education for the years of schooling are currently inadequate and are not delivering the results that should be expected in an educational jurisdiction with all the advantages and good reasons for languages education that exist here. Availability and retention of teachers of languages are ongoing problems. There is insufficient uptake in languages learning and proficiency outcomes are inadequate. This is implicitly recognised in the Second Action Plan for the ACT Multicultural Framework.¹

Our jurisdiction is not alone in facing this problem. The [2019] NSW Curriculum Review Interim Report² states (page 93): "The Review is persuaded that a long-term objective should be to increase significantly language learning in NSW schools. Currently, Australia lags many other countries ... in the number of students studying a second language. In an increasingly globalised world, intercultural and language skills will be essential to international engagement and are likely to deliver social, political and economic benefits ... There is strong evidence that language learning also increases students' understandings of their first language, improves literacy levels, and promotes a range of other cognitive skills." A study by Stephanie Clayton, University of Tasmania, found that low enrolments in languages are not caused by lack of interest, and that there are significant systemic barriers to participation in languages education in schools.³

Advantages of the proposal

The ACT is arguably best placed of all jurisdictions to take a positive step in addressing the problem identified above. This initiative will supplement the locality-based languages pathways planning and will address the substantial need for provision alongside those pathways to cater for families with special reasons to pursue the learning of languages not offered in the pathways – for example, because of family or friendship connections, or because the families have moved from a different district and have committed to the learning of a language where they came from. This solution is used in many other Australian jurisdictions.

Students who enrol with CAL are typically bilingual/multilingual or aspire to be so. Research published by Cambridge University in November 2021 shows the benefits for students who self-identify as multilingual. According to an article on the university's website⁴, students who self-identify as multilingual perform better at GCSE. A study of more than 800 school students concluded that young people who consider themselves 'multilingual' tend to perform better across a wide range of subjects at school, regardless of whether they are actually fluent in another language. This is a recent instance of research that shows a wide range of benefits from well-implemented language education programs.

CAL is a proven, demand driven institution, that is highly regarded in the education community in the ACT and beyond. The rationale for strong languages education provision in the ACT is further discussed below in the section on the importance of languages education.

¹ <https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/multicultural/act-multicultural-framework-2015-2020>

² NSW Curriculum Review Interim Report, Professor Geoff Masters, ACER, 2019, <https://www.nswcurriculumreview.nesa.nsw.edu.au/pdfs/interimreport/chapters/NSW-Curriculum-Review-Interim-Report.pdf>

³ <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/flan.12605> and <https://theconversation.com/3-barriers-that-stop-students-choosing-to-learn-a-language-in-high-school-178033> - the article in The Conversation also includes links to other articles relevant to this.

⁴ <https://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/students-who-self-identify-as-multilingual-perform-better-at-gcse>

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Importance of languages education

Languages in the ACT context

Language education in the ACT is important for two reasons:

1. Canberra's Position as the National Capital

Of all Australian jurisdictions, the ACT should be a leader in languages learning. As the seat of national government, Canberra has a global focus. It is home to agencies that regularly deal with international matters and international representations, including the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Department of Immigration and Border Protection; Department of Defence; Attorney-General's Department and the Australian Taxation Office. Embassies and other organisations such as the Delegation of the European Union are also located here. Canberra also has a [diverse multicultural demographic](#)⁵ with more than one in five households where a non-English language is spoken⁶ and, as the centre for national aboriginal policy, also has the potential to exemplify best practices in Indigenous language revival. These are important natural advantages that ought to be a central consideration in the ACT's Future of Education discussions.

2. Benefits of Languages Education

As stated in the [Australian Curriculum: Languages rationale](#), by learning languages, students gain:

- communication skills in the language being learnt
- an intercultural capability, and an understanding of the role of language and culture in communication
- a capability for reflection on language use and language learning.⁷

Learning languages provides [cognitive, social and functional benefits](#)⁸. Mastering communication skills in another language delivers benefits that include improved thinking skills, ability to interact more effectively with speakers of the target language and broader employment opportunities.⁹

Languages in the Australian context

Australia is not just a sparsely populated English-speaking country in the Asian hemisphere; we are also a small population in a world where speakers of English as a first language comprise a diminishing proportion of the global population. These two facts alone underscore the need to develop and maintain capabilities of our people in languages other than English as a fundamental educational priority. Yet, we do not have a strong record in giving effect to the widely agreed need to do this. Since the 1960s, [completions to Year 12 level in languages study](#) by students have dropped from about 40% to just 12% nationally.¹⁰

As noted by Professor Jo Lo Bianco in his 2009 publication [Second Languages and Australian Schooling](#), *"Australia has an impressive record of policy development and program innovation in second language education, but a relatively poor record for consistency of application and maintenance of effort. A large number of reports, enquiries, official policies and implementation programs is testimony to a lively concern for improvement, unfortunately undermined by lack of consensus about priorities and failure to devise an enduring rationale for what is ultimately needed: high standard, articulated, compulsory language education. While there appears to be public appreciation of the importance of second languages, there is less appreciation of the degree of institutional commitment, levels of funding and provider change required to achieve effective language knowledge through formal education."*¹¹ In simple terms, we have a significant capabilities gap between our policy aspiration outcome and what our current education system achieves. This is to the detriment of, not just students in the ACT, but the Territory and national economies.

⁵ http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/CED801#cultural

⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics [note – key data from the 2021 census is planned for release in June 2022], http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/CED801#cultural

⁷ Australian Curriculum: Languages, <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/languages/rationale/>

⁸ <http://cal.act.edu.au/index.htm#whylearn>

⁹ Why learn languages, Canberra Academy of Languages, <http://cal.act.edu.au/index.htm#whylearn>

¹⁰ Rebecca Vukovic, Foreign concept: Why learning a second language is vital to our global future, Education HQ, 2016, <https://au.educationhq.com/news/33846/foreign-concept-why-learning-a-second-language-is-vital-to-our-global-future/>

¹¹ Professor Joseph Lo Bianco, Second Languages and Australian Schooling, ACER, 2009, available for download at <https://research.acer.edu.au/aer/8/>; also interviewed on Radio National Breakfast, 25 October 2019 (mp3 available)

Comparison to established models in other Australian jurisdictions

ACT Government should undertake responsibility for senior secondary languages programs currently run by CAL, in a way that is similar to the practice in other jurisdictions (NSW¹², Victoria¹³, South Australia¹⁴, Northern Territory¹⁵ and Queensland¹⁶) with schools of languages, languages centres and centres for distance education. The main differences in the ACT, at least initially, would be the ongoing focus on senior secondary languages education, retaining essentially the current scope of program delivery; and a transition without any capital costs in the ACT budget. Program delivery arrangements, and the venue for program delivery, would remain essentially as they are now. Outlined below are implementation plans for the proposal in the first year. For the longer term, see the next section about possible future directions.

Recommended changes to address challenge in languages education

The broader setting of the Canberra region offers both the scale and scope to form viable groups that cannot be sustained in a single locality. The Canberra Academy of Languages was established to do this. It complements provisions for language learning available through schools and through other providers such as ANU's Extension program and the Australian School of Contemporary Chinese.

Ensuring succession planning and continuity of CAL programs will:

- ensure greater equity of access to languages programs in the long term for ACT students in Years 11-12
- offer economies of scale, leading to enrolment numbers that improve retention in languages education and reduce the prevalence of composite classes and enhance the quality of program delivery
- help meet ACT Government commitments, such as Priority Action 22 in the ACT Multicultural Framework Second Action Plan, in a highly cost-effective way, building on current initiatives
- address the aspirations of a significant constituency in the Canberra community
- improve teacher recruitment and retention in languages
- provide an additional avenue for University of Canberra language student teacher placements
- promote excellence in education and benefit from the unique resources of the national capital.

Provision of a central government run facility with good access for all, complementing existing programs in schools and colleges, is important in addressing the need to build capacity in our community for global connections and multicultural inclusion.

Driving increased uptake in senior secondary languages education

By providing a central delivery option alongside existing school-based languages education programs, CAL ensures that there is an avenue for language learning that complements the work by schools. This enables students to access programs without restrictions related to where they live within the ACT. It supplements established programs that include sequences of study programs that have been set up in school districts under the language pathways concept. These school-based provisions are valuable, but it is not possible, within constraints of staffing budgets, for every school to offer a wide range of language learning choices. It is also not always viable for a program to exist in a continuing pathway beyond the high school years in some school districts, because there is generally some attrition in enrolments by the time students are transitioning to secondary college, and the numbers are no longer viable to justify the staffing cost of running a program for Years 11 and 12. CAL's programs enable a solution to these issues for families and schools, without replacing existing viable programs in schools. For the same reasons, similar models exist in Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, Darwin, Alice Springs, Cairns and Rockhampton.

Another vital strategy to foster uptake in languages education is recruitment and retention of skilled teachers of languages. CAL offers an additional employment avenue for teachers, which can contribute to the viability and attractiveness of language teaching as a professional pathway. It can also potentially enhance opportunities for student teacher placements by the University of Canberra, which is the main local centre for preparation of teachers in language teaching method¹⁷ (as distinct from acquisition of communicative competence in languages, which is a focus of the Australian National University).

¹² <https://nswschoollang.schools.nsw.gov.au/> and <https://sclanguages.schools.nsw.gov.au/>

¹³ <https://www.vsl.vic.edu.au/>

¹⁴ <https://schooloflanguages.sa.edu.au/> and <https://www.openaccess.edu.au/>

¹⁵ <https://ntschooldedlcl.libguides.com/dlc> and <https://www.alicespringslanguagecentre.com/>

¹⁶ <https://capricorniasde.eq.edu.au/> and <https://cairnssde.eq.edu.au/>

¹⁷ <https://www.canberra.edu.au/campaign/tesol> and <https://www.canberra.edu.au/course/EDG301/1/2022>

Current context

Establishment and purpose of CAL

Established in 2016, CAL expands opportunities for language learning in the Canberra region. Year 11-12 students and early access students (high school students commencing selected senior secondary subjects early) can study their chosen languages where these courses are not available through their schools or other providers. CAL's purpose is to complement, not replace, existing viable language learning programs in schools, and to enable students to consolidate and improve their proficiency in a language other than English. CAL courses lead to unit credits for the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate. Scores can contribute to students' Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) if the scores are among their best four course scores.

Evolution of CAL programs

With CAL now in its sixth year of operation, our student enrolment numbers have increased from two in 2017 to 61 at the start of 2022. The number of languages taught has increased from one in 2017 to six in 2022. Languages currently taught are French, German, Japanese, Korean, Spanish and Tamil.

CAL's students and their families are strongly committed to the study of languages. Commencing the 2022 school year, we had students enrolled from 19 schools – 11 government and 8 non-government schools. There is an increasingly large number of stakeholders in the ACT community with an interest in the long-term continuation of these programs. For some colleges, CAL is now the main provider of languages.

At a glance – students, schools, languages:

2017: 2 students, 2 schools, 1 language

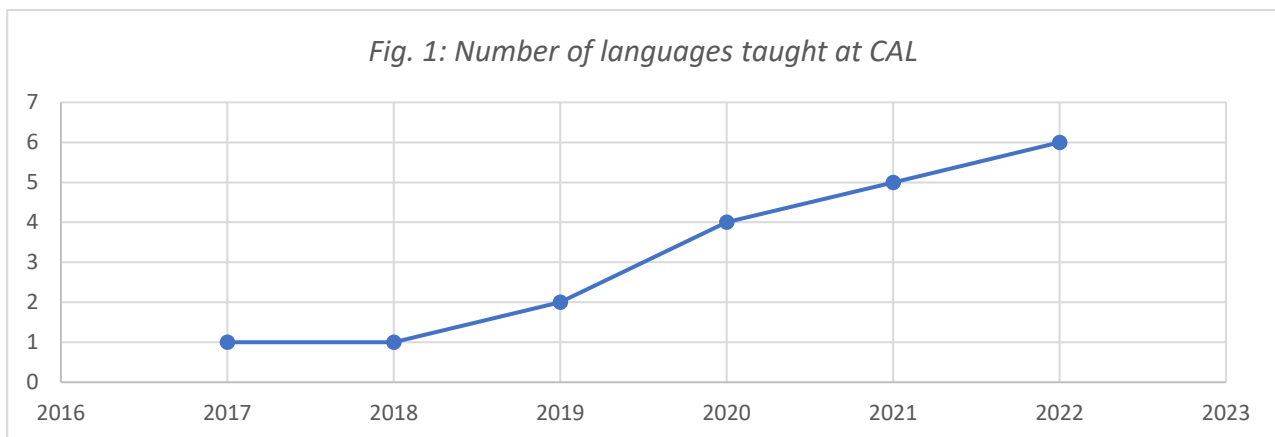
2018: 5 students, 4 schools, 1 language

2019: 9 students, 6 schools (incl. CIT), 2 languages

2020: 21 students, 12 schools, 4 languages

2021: 32 students, 13 schools, 5 languages

2022: 61 students, 19 schools, 6 languages



We are now teaching more than half of the possible ten languages that we may currently offer under the ACT senior secondary curriculum. CAL may run teaching programs in one or more additional languages in 2023. Other languages under consideration are Arabic, Hindi, Indonesian, and Italian. CAL does not offer Chinese, as there is already an established, registered provider for this, and under our charter (Appendix 1), we undertake to complement existing provisions for language learning in the ACT.

Fig 2: Number of ACT schools with students at CAL

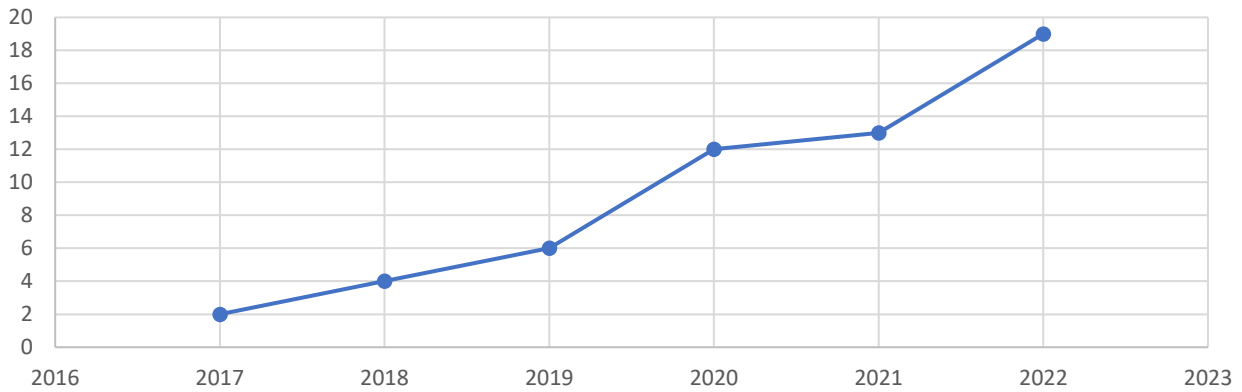
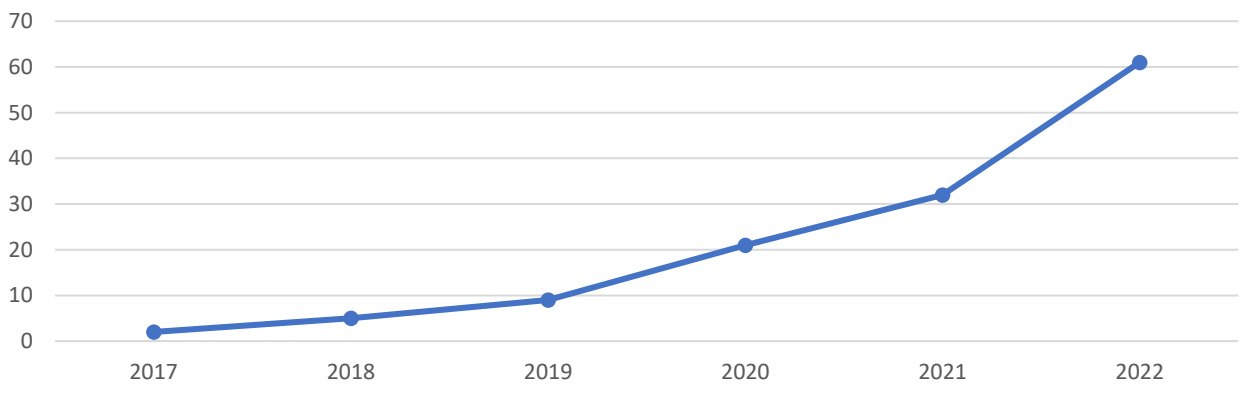


Fig 3: Number of students enrolled



Cost of acquisition

It is proposed that the cost of acquisition would equate to the Convener's loan at the time of the changeover. At the current time, the amount of the Convener's loan stands at \$40,000. Depending on the number of student enrolments, the number of classes and the effect on income and expenditure, the amount of this loan may vary between now and the time of transfer of responsibility.

Basis for transfer of responsibility

A memorandum of understanding would provide the planning foundation for the transfer of responsibility. Points to be addressed in the memorandum would include the following:

- Governance, policies, and program delivery after transition
- Charter (the current version attached at Appendix 1)
- Prioritising purposeful use of the target language in the delivered programs
- Scope of curriculum
- Continuity of provision for families with students currently enrolled
- Reimbursement of the Convener's loan
- Management of arrangements for composite classes
- Online presence during and after transition (administrative and resources websites and social media)
- Award under which teachers would be paid after transition and provisions specific to the context
- Handover arrangements.

Table 1: Timeline for transition

| Time frame | Event/action | Action by |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| April 2022 | Draft budget case prepared | CAL Convener, CAL Advisory Panel, CAL reference group, Ainslie School Principal |
| April-May 2022 | Consultation with stakeholders | CAL Convener, CAL Advisory Panel, CAL staff, selected school principals including Ainslie School Principal, Education Directorate Strategic Finance, CAL community, Canberra Languages Network (CLN) |
| On or before 27 May 2022 | CAL business case submitted | CAL Convener |
| June 2022 | Preview of handover information, in principle agreement on a memorandum of understanding | CAL Convener, CAL Advisory Panel, ACT Education Directorate |
| August 2022 | Budget decision on the proposal | ACT Chief Minister/Treasurer |
| August 2022 | Planning for CAL Information Evening | CAL Convener, Ainslie School Principal, Ainslie School Deputy Principal, CAL Director of Studies, CAL Registrar |
| Thursday 22 September 2022 | CAL Information Evening (Week 10 of Term 3 in the 2022 school year) | CAL Convener, Ainslie School Principal, Ainslie School Deputy Principal, CAL Director of Studies, CAL Registrar |
| October-December 2022 | Enrolment processing – enrolment forms, language eligibility forms | CAL Convener, CAL Registrar, CAL Director of Studies |
| Tuesday 13 December 2022 | CAL End of Year Ceremony (final week of the 2022 school year) | CAL Convener, Ainslie School Principal, CAL Director of Studies, CAL Registrar, invited speaker(s) |
| January 2023 | CAL Summer School | CAL teachers |
| February 2023 | CAL Registration Evening (Week 1 of the 2023 school year) | CAL Convener, Ainslie School Principal, Ainslie School Deputy Principal, CAL Director of Languages, CAL Administration Officer |
| February 2023 | Commencement of CAL classes (Week 2 of the 2023 school year) | CAL Director of Languages, CAL Administration Officer, CAL class teachers |

Implementation plan

Focus of programs in the first year of operation as a government-run entity

The focus of delivery in the first year of operation as a government-run entity would be the senior secondary languages curriculum senior secondary language learning programs to supplement those available in colleges, implementing the model and systems now in place with the Canberra Academy of Languages (CAL). CAL programs would continue to be delivered after school hours, so that students' access to them is not affected by individual school timetables. There would be a transition of responsibility, where CAL becomes the entity through which the ACT Education Directorate provides a supplementary, cross-sectoral, languages education delivery mode, to supplement programs provided by schools.

Languages to be taught in 2023 would include those currently taught by CAL in 2022 (French, German, Japanese, Korean, Spanish and Tamil), as well as any additional senior secondary courses in languages identified through this year's subject selection process for 2023. Possible additional languages for 2023 are Arabic, Hindi, Indonesian, and Italian.

Inclusion of programs for the high school years (Years 7 to 10), and for primary years, could follow in the future. All interstate equivalents of CAL encompass primary and secondary schooling.



Venue/premises: Ainslie School

Our current venue, Ainslie School, should remain the venue for CAL programs. The school's location at 33 Donaldson Street Braddon is ideal logistically for centrally delivered programs within ACT, with its close proximity to light rail and the City Bus Interchange (Fig. 4). There is a well-established partnership with the school's principal and staff team, resulting in benefits on both sides, and well-established procedures and communication processes for CAL's operations within the premises. Continuation of program delivery on two or at most three evenings at a single venue is recommended. This maximises opportunities for collaborative practices and reciprocal support among CAL teachers.

Benefits to CAL:

- Central location
- Proximity to public transport – light rail, bus interchange
- Opportunities for collaborative practice with programs in a range of languages co-located at one site
- Professional connections with staff and leadership team at Ainslie School
- Establishment of systems and facilities in one stable long-term location.

Benefits to Ainslie School:

- Collaboration in relation to languages, particularly for the school in engaging with students' home languages
- Provision of additional systems and facilities such as plasma display, SMART Board, copy printer, CAL wireless broadband
- Enhanced security with occupancy on two to three evenings each week
- Networking in the languages and EAL/D space.

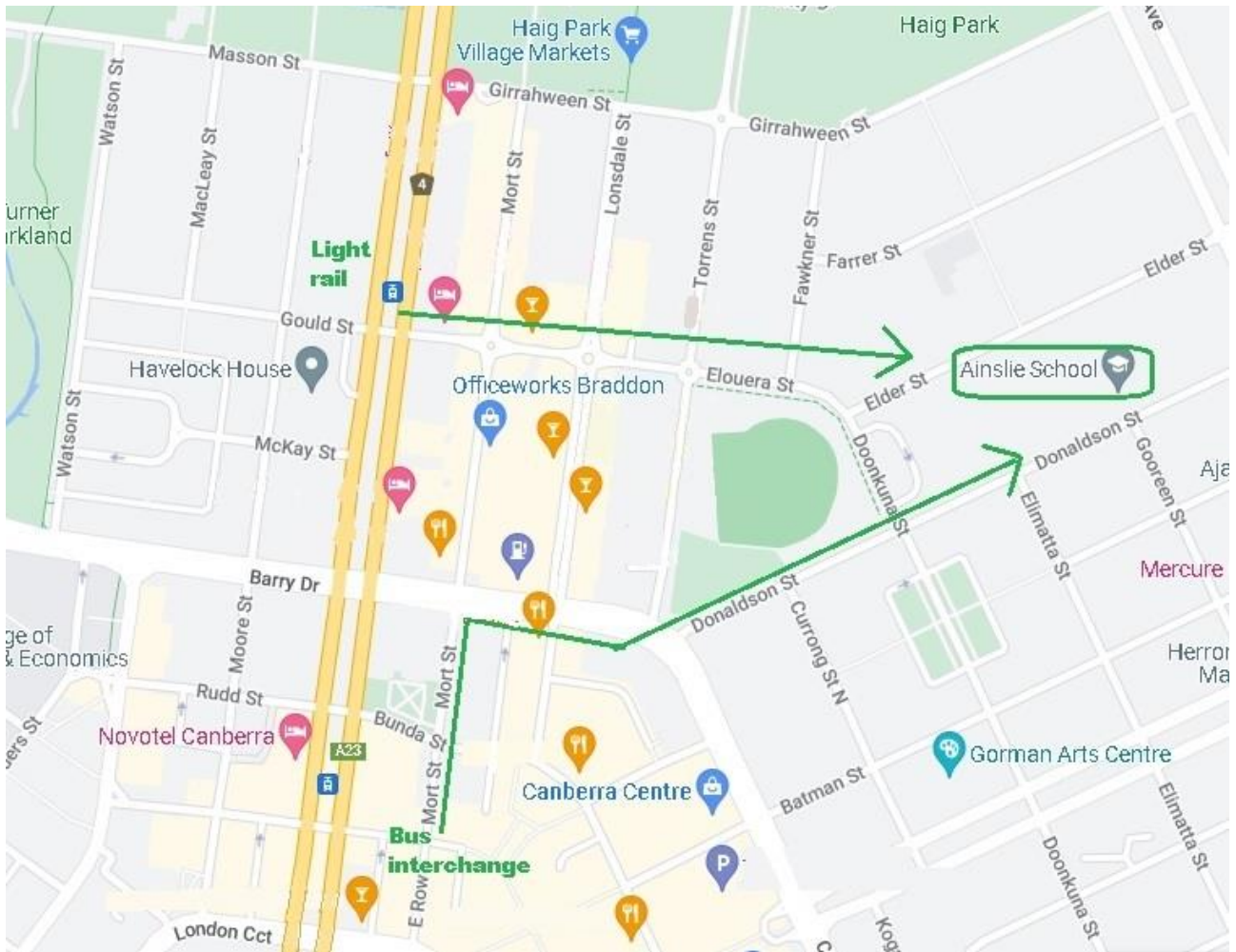


Figure 4: Proximity of Ainslie School to transport services.

Director of Languages

A Director of Languages would coordinate CAL programs. This role, and others listed below, would be funded by government from the range of funding sources selected during the transition phase. This role should at least equate to a deputy principal role. It may encompass languages coordination for P-12, or it may encompass only senior secondary languages studies or secondary languages studies. If the latter, it would include responsibility for Year 9-10 students participating under Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS) Early Access, as well as students in Years 11-12.

It would also encompass:

- curriculum and assessment planning and coordination
- moderation
- scaling of unit scores
- communications with BSSS Certification Team
- communications with CAL class teachers
- liaison with Ainslie School principal
- planning and implementation of CAL events such as information evenings, parent interviews and end of year ceremony
- communication with day schools
- processing of mid-semester and semester reports
- financial planning
- coordination, in consultation with the CAL Advisory Panel and CAL staff, of material for the CAL administrative and resources websites
- maintenance of the CAL Facebook and Twitter presence, supported by web services provider.

Administration

There will need to be an administrative officer, who should be on site from mid-afternoon until after commencement of CAL teaching programs in the evening. This officer would have responsibilities that include:

- processing enquiries and enrolments
- invoicing and receipting
- induction of new CAL students
- creating and maintaining enrolment records
- managing documentation including CAL enrolment forms and BSSS language eligibility forms
- following up incomplete forms, particularly the day school endorsement section of the CAL enrolment forms and the declaration section of the BSSS language eligibility forms
- data entry on the BSSS ACS database.

This officer may have responsibility, as well, for tracking and reporting on CAL financial transactions, including CAL staff pay events, and completing Single Touch Payroll processes, as well as maintaining regular communication with the Director of Languages so that pay hours accurately reflect staff commitments during each pay period.

Information technology

An information technology officer (ITO) will provide IT support to the broader school as well as to CAL. The ITO would be responsible for:

- enabling student and staff access to information technology resources, including CAL students and staff
- wireless networking, including the mobile broadband and associated wi-fi mesh system that CAL will set up during the April 2022 term break
- display systems, including the CAL plasma screen; the CAL Smart Board
- printing, scanning and copying systems, including the CAL Fuji Xerox copy printer.

Because CAL programs will continue to run after school hours, these systems and devices will also be available for Ainslie School staff to use throughout the school day. The wireless networking system is a useful addition to the standard “ONE” wireless network, particularly for CAL students from non-government schools, who cannot access the ONE network.

Employment award for CAL teachers and pay arrangements

While the non-teaching positions could come under existing employment arrangements for administrative staff members in schools, CAL teaching positions should continue to use the Education Services (Teaching) award¹⁸, which is the national award currently used for CAL teachers. Under recent changes to the rules for small employers, CAL is required to notify pay transactions to the Australian Taxation Office through the Single Touch Payroll system (STP). We have implemented this through one of the designated no-cost STP providers for small organisations. During handover, we can provide a briefing on the process that we currently use, if this is of interest.

Recruitment and ongoing staffing arrangements, at least for CAL teaching staff, should be maintained as they are now, using the national award. Teachers who also work in a government school will go through the normal process in applying for approval for a second job (work outside the service as it is called in the current ACT Government application form). The process is also in place for teachers who teach at the ANU Extension program. This ensures that teachers who work full-time in schools can be considered for teaching roles with CAL. Without this flexibility, staffing of CAL programs is at high risk, both in terms of attraction and retention.

Governance

It is proposed that CAL becomes an educational unit attached for administrative purposes to Ainslie School. There are existing arrangements within ACT education that are not dissimilar, including the Erindale Leisure Centre, which is managed by Erindale College, but which also has its own website¹⁹ and Facebook page²⁰, and has operational hours outside the normal school/college day. Introductory English Centres²¹ also are similar in terms of student catchment being outside the Priority Enrolment Areas of the school that administers them, but they differ from CAL because they operate during standard school hours.

¹⁸ <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/employment-conditions/awards/awards-summary/ma000077-summary>

¹⁹ <http://www.activeclc.com.au/>

²⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/ActiveLeisureCentre/>

²¹ https://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/public-schools-in-the-act/introductory_english_centres_act_government

CAL should retain present arrangements as far as possible in the way it currently operates with programs, interacts with students' day schools, and projects to the community. This would include maintaining CAL's administrative and resources websites and ensuring continuing involvement of the CAL Advisory Panel. We recommend that one to two members of CAL Advisory Panel be appointed ex officio to the Ainslie School Board, and that two members of the Ainslie School Board (one being the Principal or Deputy Principal) be appointed ex officio to the CAL Advisory Panel. The current CAL Convener would be available to chair the CAL Advisory Panel for at least one year from the time of handover.

CAL should continue as a member of the Australian Network of Government Language Schools (ANGLS). This network is a valuable source of insights on common areas of interest for its members. The other participants include the Schools of Languages in NSW, Victoria and South Australia; the Language(s) Centres in the Northern Territory; and the Distance Education Centres in Rockhampton and Cairns; as well as the Open Access College in Adelaide (which is essentially a distance education centre). These organisations have student enrolments ranging from several hundred to several thousand each. In 2019, CAL hosted the ANGLS Conference in Canberra. In 2020, the Darwin Languages Centre hosted the conference online, and in 2021, the SA School of Languages hosted the conference online. Ainslie School Principal, Wendy Cave, participated in part of the 2021 conference.

Financial implications

Funding base

Currently, all operational costs for CAL are derived from student enrolment fees, which are sponsored either by their schools or their families. As of 2022, about half are sponsored by their schools and about half are sponsored by their families.

For schools, it can be beneficial to refer students to CAL when there are insufficient students to form a class, or when a teacher cannot be recruited at the school level. The recruitment issue is sometimes about the portion of a full-time teaching role that a school can offer. Even if a school is prepared to cross-subsidise within its staffing arrangements to form a small class for a particular language, there is no certainty that a teacher will accept a 0.2 position, given that it does not provide the teacher with a living wage; and the teacher's other teaching subject areas may not be relevant to the requirement of the school. Even if a teacher initially accepts a part-time teaching role, there is no guarantee of teacher retention, if another employer offers that teacher a full-time job (either inside or outside of education). These kinds of situations continually confront schools when they are making decisions about staffing for languages programs.

One of the insights from the 2021 ANGLS Conference relates to enrolment fees and funding models. Funding models for equivalent organisations in Australia vary considerably. Enrolment in most centres is largely subsidised by state or territory governments, with a contribution being required from participating families or schools. Some centres differentiate based on the stage of schooling (more for senior secondary), and some differentiate according to the student's day school sector (government/non-government). At least one centre has a higher fee for International Baccalaureate (IB) programs (some or most of the others may not offer IB).

An important consideration for ACT Government in determining a schedule of enrolment fees will be access and equity. Without government funding, it is not currently possible to address the affordability of access in a way that would make programs available to everyone who is interested. Looking at what is done interstate, it is evident that most centres have heavily subsidised enrolment fees. The level of subsidy will be a matter for government to decide if it elects to take on responsibility for CAL programs.

Operational costs

CAL receives no government funding, so enrolment fees and loans by the Convener are used to cover the cost of program delivery. These costs include teacher salaries, venue hire, public liability and workers' compensation insurance, teaching resources, and online services such as web hosting. The true cost of some of these is not reflected in the figures shown in the CAL financial statements for the 2021 financial year, not only because of the increased scale of CAL's operations since then, but also because of the extensive volunteering input for some key roles, which are recompensed via honoraria. Honoraria in no way reflect the value of the work, and this will need to change in arriving at a sustainable model for the future. Only the class teachers are currently recompensed through a recognised employment award. Other leadership and administrative roles, such as those listed above, will need to be considered as professional input costs in a sustainable model for a long-term future. Some expenses that would normally be included in operational costs, such as most of the stationery costs, were funded by the convener and will have to be considered as part of an ongoing operational model for CAL. It should also be noted that the figures in the financial statements lodged with Access Canberra for the 2021 financial year are for the interval from July 2020 to June 2021, so they will be superseded by another set of figures in a short time from now.

Estimates for CAL's operational expenses for the 2023 school year are shown below. These are based on conservative predictions about increases in enrolment numbers, well below the overall trend from the first six years of operation (the trend showed exponential growth, with enrolment numbers doubling each year, on average – see the section above on the evolving context of CAL programs). The figures are also based on a split class in Japanese for beginning and continuing levels, as this is predicted to be the largest group again next year. Another assumption used in arriving at the estimates is that the national Education Services (Teaching)²² award is used in calculating teacher salaries, on a casual sessional basis, with allowances for program management and for occasions when there is an increased workload, such as the four assessment tasks each semester. Other salary figures below are based on the ACT Education Teaching Staff Agreement, the Administrative and Related Classifications Enterprise Agreement, and the Technical and Other Professional Enterprise Agreement, accessed via the ACTPS Employment Portal.²³

²² <https://awardviewer.fwo.gov.au/award/show/MA000077>

²³ <https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/employment-framework/for-employees/agreements>

Cost effectiveness

Compared to similar organisations interstate, the proposed implementation model is highly cost effective, requiring no additional funding for capital works. It makes effective use of an established school in a central location, without any impact on the day-time operations of that school. It creates benefits both to the school and to CAL in their ongoing operational contexts, as outlined in the section above relating to venue/premises. It also bears some similarity to an existing model that has been implemented in other ACT schools, where a unit is managed by a principal, as noted in the section above relating to governance. In terms of information technology support, we recommend a shared 2-day ITO 2 position, with responsibility for CAL IT matters and for IT in the wider school (equivalent to two half-days for CAL). Like many primary schools, Ainslie School does not currently have a specialist ITO position. This creates a cost-effective option to have an ITO on the site at half the cost to the school in its day-time operations. For a summary of forecast expenses in the 2023 calendar year, see below. As a city state where a central facility is accessible for students throughout Canberra, supplementing programs already running in our day schools, the ACT should be the leading jurisdiction in Australia for languages education, with this eminently achievable option available to it.

Table 2: Forecast expenses 2023 calendar year

| Item | Quantity | FTE | Rate | Amount |
|--|----------|------|------------|------------------|
| STAFFING COSTS | | | | |
| Class teachers | 9 | | | \$ 85,210 |
| Summer school staffing x weeks | 3 | | 396 | \$ 1,188 |
| Principal increment | 1 | 1.00 | \$ 14,000 | \$ 14,000 |
| Director of Languages | 1 | 0.50 | \$ 154,000 | \$ 77,000 |
| Administration/Reception | 1 | 0.40 | \$ 85,000 | \$ 34,000 |
| Information Technology Officer 2 | 1 | 0.20 | \$ 91,315 | \$ 18,263 |
| Superannuation (10% of total salaries) | 1 | | \$219,005 | \$22,966 |
| Workers Compensation | 1 | | \$ 1,000 | \$ 1,000 |
| Staffing sub-total | | | | \$253,627 |
| OTHER OPERATIONAL COSTS | | | | |
| Curriculum resources | 88 | | \$ 80 | \$ 8000 |
| Financials for Annual Return | | | | \$ 500 |
| IT equipment | 6 | | \$ 2,000 | \$ 12,000 |
| Postal | 20 | | \$ 40 | \$ 800 |
| Printing e.g. fliers, Convener Report | 500 | | \$ 2 | \$ 1,000 |
| Public liability insurance | 1 | | \$ 600 | \$ 600 |
| Stationery | 4 | | \$1,000 | \$ 4,000 |
| Venue hire | 1 | | | 2,697 |
| Web hosting plan renewal | 1 | | \$ 673 | \$ 673 |
| Web service provider at 10 hours/month | 12 | | \$1,000 | \$ 12,000 |
| Other sub-total | | | | \$42,270 |
| Total for calendar year | | | | \$295,897 |

Possible future directions for CAL

CAL Summer Schools

As part of the senior secondary focus, CAL could continue to offer a summer school in selected languages on a cost-recovery basis, similar to the Japanese Summer School²⁴ that CAL conducted in January 2022. These summer school programs would focus on addressing gaps in the Australian Curriculum: Languages achievement standards for students whose documented exposure to language learning in high school means that they are required to enrol at “Continuing” level in their chosen language at college, but whose language proficiency is not optimal for participation at that level. The BSSS languages eligibility guidelines are an important provision to ensure valid decisions about languages course selection, but currently, there are many students whose high school language studies leave them ill-equipped to undertake senior secondary studies in languages, even though they are supposedly qualified, based on the number of years of prior instruction in languages at high school. Currently, the only practical option these students have is not to continue their language studies in Years 11-12, even though they may be interested.

EAL/D support

Another area for consideration in future years would be to offer supplementary English language support programs for students from families for whom English is an additional language or dialect (EAL/D), on a fees basis to be decided in due course by the government. These programs would not replace existing programs for EAL/D students that are currently based on needs assessments. Instead, they would offer the possibility of support for students who would benefit from this, but who do not currently qualify at the thresholds for EAL/D support in their day schools. This could be an opt-in aspect of the partnership approach described in ACT Education’s Progressing Parental Engagement School Fact Sheet.²⁵

International Baccalaureate

In most years of CAL operation so far, one or more families have raised the question of support by CAL for a student undertaking the International Baccalaureate. Until now, we have negotiated with families an arrangement where either the student’s home school or an external tutor with IB experience provides that support. In some cases, a student studies one language in IB mode with their day school and the other language with CAL. Some, but not all, interstate organisations offer IB programs. One of these is the South Australian School of Languages.²⁶ It is recommended that consideration be given to adding an IB stream to CAL programs, but not in the first year or two after handover. A major consideration will be the professional learning cost for any organisation that participates in IB. This means that it is a more practical possibility when CAL reaches a larger scale of operation. Consideration would also have to be given to the stage of schooling envisaged for IB participation – for example, the IB Diploma (senior secondary), the Middle Years Program (MYP – high school) or the Primary Years Program (PYP).

Vocational Education

Vocational Education and Training (VET) is an area in which some of the interstate organisations are active. For example, the Victorian School of Languages (VSL) is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), through the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). VSL is able to deliver the Certificate II in Applied Language (10297NAT) and the Certificate III in Applied Language (10661NAT)²⁷. Given that the Commonwealth Public Service is an employment pathway for many ACT students after completing their senior secondary (and for many of them, their university) studies, VET options may be of interest for future CAL planning.

Japanese for background speakers

At present, there is no school-based bilingual program or program for background speakers of a language other than English in any northside primary school or high school. Consideration could be given to including a bilingual stream or a stream for background speakers of Japanese into the offerings of Ainslie as a northside school, in a language that until now has not had any such provision. Japanese is a long-established program at the school and there is a connection to a sister school in Japan. Trade and tourism continue to thrive between Australia and Japan.

²⁴ <https://cal.act.edu.au/news.htm>

²⁵ <https://www.education.act.gov.au/?a=807433>

²⁶ For example, <https://schooloflanguages.sa.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Newsletter-Term-2-2018-2.pdf>.

²⁷ <https://www.vsl.vic.edu.au/VET/Default.aspx>, <https://www.vsl.vic.edu.au/Overview.aspx>

Conclusion

The solution to the current intractable problem in the ACT, where the lack of options impedes uptake and continuation in their language learning by students in Years 11-12, is not to mandate learning of languages in senior secondary years of schooling. Students who choose to acquire and refine skills in a second language, and who pursue that learning intention with the intention of working towards bilingualism or multilingualism and engaging with another language and culture, deserve our support. There are many more students who would take up the challenge of language learning at this level, if the programs in the languages that interest them were available to them. We believe that provision of a central facility with good access for all, complementing existing programs in schools and colleges, is an important step in addressing the need for us to build capacity in our community for skills relevant to employment in the national capital, for global connections and for multicultural inclusion.

Frank Keighley

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(02) 6152 9140

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Appendices

Appendix 1: CAL Charter

Appendix 2: CAL Certificate of Incorporation

Appendix 3: CAL Certificate of Registration as Specialist Education Provider (BSSS)

APPENDIX 1: CAL Charter

January 2022



Purpose of the Canberra Academy of Languages

The Canberra Academy of Languages is a not-for-profit organisation, established as a specialist facility in 2016 with the purpose of expanding opportunities for language learning in the Canberra region preparing students as local and global citizens.

Rationale

The need for a specialist facility for language learning in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) is clear. Canberra as the national capital should foster engagement with the global community and should build capacity among people of the Canberra region to participate effectively in that global community. As well, as a major regional centre, the city should provide opportunities for language learning reflecting the presence of groups here, both those with connections to Indigenous languages and those with connections to languages and cultures outside Australia.

Values

We value excellence, equity and a civil society. The Canberra Academy of Languages aspires to foster and support these values for the reasons below:

2. Excellence in language learning requires scope for continuity. In the interests of continuity, it is imperative that students should have access to continued learning in their chosen languages as part of their senior secondary education.
3. Equity in language learning requires that the option to continue learning a language as part of a senior secondary education program should be available to students throughout the educational jurisdiction. The Canberra Academy of Languages advocates language learners' rights – the right to aspire to, and to be supported in achieving, proficiency in more than one language.
4. A civil society gives recognition and active support to linguistic and cultural diversity and recognises the importance of language rights, including the right of learners to aspire to, or to maintain and develop, bilingual or multilingual capabilities.

Programs

Languages and levels (such as Beginning/Continuing/Advanced senior secondary courses in languages) to be considered for inclusion in programs will be identified taking account of advice from schools, colleges and the community. Decisions on classes to run each year will be taken on the basis of four criteria:

1. The academy will provide language learning programs in selected languages for which courses have been endorsed by the responsible agency, such as the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies.
2. Courses will run for which there is sufficient demand to generate viable numbers that will enable the academy to meet financial commitments including teacher salaries, public liability insurance and provision of learning resources for access by students.
3. Availability of suitably qualified teachers will be taken into account in deciding programs to run from year to year.
4. Programs will complement existing provisions for language learning in the ACT.

Curriculum development

Where an area of language learning is identified as having significance for the Canberra region and as having no existing provisions, the academy may collaborate with interested stakeholders to lead or participate in the development of relevant courses for accreditation by the responsible agency.



AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Associations Incorporation Act 1991
CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION

Association Number: A05776

This is to certify that pursuant to section 19 of the *Associations Incorporation Act 1991*

CANBERRA ACADEMY OF LANGUAGES INCORPORATED

is on and from 15 SEPTEMBER 2016 incorporated as an association.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Snowden', is written over the printed name and title.

David SNOWDEN
REGISTRAR-GENERAL

15 September 2016

Certificate



APPENDIX 3: CAL Certificate of Registration as Specialist Education Provider (ACT BSSS)



Certificate of Registration

as a

Specialist Education Provider

in accordance with the provisions of the
ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies Act 1997

Approval is granted for the registration
of the

Canberra Academy of Languages

for a period of 5 years from
1 July 2017 to 31 December 2022
ABN 73255637048

Location:

UC Senior Secondary College, Lake Ginninderra
Belconnen ACT 2617

Note: new location: Ainslie School, Donaldson Street, Braddon 2612

Handwritten signature of Rosemary Fallett in black ink.

Ms Rosemary Fallett AO, Chair
ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies

Handwritten signature of John Stenhouse in black ink.

Mr John Stenhouse, Executive Director
ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies

Dated at Canberra this 27 day of September 2017