

TRANSITIONS IMPLEMENTATION AND FUTURE DIRECTION ADVICE



Prepared by The University of Melbourne for the Queensland Department of Education



The University of Melbourne was commissioned by the Queensland Department of Education to prepare a *Transitions Literature review* and *Transitions Position Statement*, outlining the contemporary research for effective transitions across birth to Year 12 in 2025.

The following implementation and future direction advice has been prepared by The Faculty of Education, The University of Melbourne from the research and consultation, to continue to guide quality transition practices in Queensland.

This document provides implementation and future direction advice to the Queensland Government, Department of Education (the department) regarding ongoing support of transitions across the diverse settings, contexts and systems that Queensland learners, along with their families and communities, navigate through their learning journeys.

It draws on the research undertaken as part of the *Transitions Position Statement — Department of Education Project* ('the project'), including a literature review, and online and face-to-face consultations. The data gathered through the literature and the lived experiences of Queensland teaching teams, leaders, and learners has highlighted the opportunities, challenges and unique demands of transitions across Queensland. Accordingly, this guidance seeks to assist the department in identifying innovations, supports and mechanisms that will enable transitions to be prioritised and effectively embedded across Queensland education contexts. We provide recommendations for the department at a system level, noting that this should be used together with the more targeted initiatives at local levels.

Embedding, monitoring and sustaining transitions

Supporting complex transitions across Queensland requires consideration of governance, structural, and leadership supports to address the ways in which education is envisioned, led and administered at system, regional, local and institutional levels. Throughout the project, teams across the department shared specialised knowledge and experiences of transitions, enabling the gathering of rich, nuanced perspectives on transitions for diverse Queensland learners. Additionally teaching teams and leaders responsible for or knowledgeable about transitions, were specifically convened for focus groups. They collectively identified how the key findings from the literature review aligned with the department's existing policies and priorities. Department leaders could continue to work with these teams to drive all aspects of the implementation regarding transitions across

Queensland. The department may consider further dedicated transition roles or responsibilities within existing roles at a regional level. We recommend that the department consider dedicated roles responsible for embedding, monitoring, and sustaining transitions from birth to Year 12 and beyond, across Queensland services and education contexts.

In order to embed and sustain positive transitions, it is important that leaders commit to practices that support confident, continuous, and cohesive educational journeys, beyond their immediate setting. We recommend that the department consider the ways that government, early childhood and school governance, and organisational structures and practices currently enable professional collaboration to nurture continuity of learning and foster and maintain learners' sense of belonging and wellbeing.

Assuring quality transitions

Assuring quality transitions requires careful implementation of reporting and accountability mechanisms and processes. Focus groups underscored the need for consistent practices for sharing learner data within and across educational settings and the stages of schooling. To support transitions, consideration and priority should be given to building rich student data over time, including formative and summative assessments, and the voices of families and learners. Further, it is important to prioritise the development of systems that enable learner profiles to be accessible across settings and contexts. With this in mind, we recommend that the department consider the ways in which a learner's journey is documented and shared so that their unique strengths and contexts are honoured, and settings and schools are ready and resourced to support collaborative, inclusive and culturally responsive transitions. Project focus groups also highlighted the importance of differentiating priorities and processes to respond flexibly to learners and families across diverse contexts.

Ensuring that transitions are part of annual strategic planning, continuous improvement cycles, and early childhood and school review processes will also support the systematic and comprehensive implementation, tracking and monitoring of transition processes. Further, the successful implementation of transitions that occur throughout the day and across classrooms and settings will also be determined by the extent to which individual leaders, teachers and educators understand their own work, and readiness for and contribution to leading transitions. Teachers' awareness of their role in positive transitions should be evident in their planning and goal-setting processes, reflections, and ongoing assessment of learning and wellbeing. The publication of the *Transitions Literature Review* and *Transitions Position Statement* will support teaching teams and leaders in appreciating that transitions are a collective commitment and a shared responsibility. With this understanding, evidence-informed principles and commitments can be enacted in partnership with learners, families and community.

Resourcing transitions

Resourcing transitions at both service and school levels, through professional learning and leader knowledge-building, is central to the effective implementation of transitions. We recommend that all services and schools have access to transition resources and professional learning opportunities that align with and support the implementation of the *Transitions Position Statement*. Project focus groups highlighted the value of shared learning when teachers and leaders across the system exchanged knowledge and expertise. Professional learning and knowledge-building communities can be mobilised to build understanding of how transitions are experienced, share evidence related to effective strategies across communities and audit their understanding and enactment of the *Transitions Position Statement*. It is recommended that the department consider further resources



such as audit tools, implementation and action plans to support teams to audit and embed their transition processes and practices. This will address the possible disconnect between some teachers, learners, and their communities that surfaced in consultation regarding transitions.

Building evidence of transitions across Queensland

A review of the research literature has drawn attention to the lack of evidence of transitions across the stages of education in Queensland and Australia, as well as the gaps in knowledge regarding transitions for diverse learners in and across specific stages of education and contexts (see *Transitions Literature Review*). It is recommended that the department consider building Queensland-specific evidence on how transitions are understood and enacted across diverse Queensland contexts and what is required to support Queensland learners and families, teaching teams and leaders to enact meaningful transitions over time. Building evidence of transitions across Queensland will enable the department to continue to design evidence-informed and targeted initiatives that support communities with the challenges they face in enacting horizontal, as well as vertical transitions. This, in turn, will ensure that future investment and policy directives for transitions build the capacity of the Queensland education workforce to offer high-quality transitions.