Table of Contents

## Policy context

### Introduction

Introductory text

### Purpose: intended business outcomes

At an individual level, at school level: To track the extent to which students are meeting their obligation to attend school, and to signal the need for intervention where this is not the case.

At an aggregate level, at school system and national level: To flag to education providers and government the schools and areas where attendance expectations are not being met, and to signal the need for larger scale intervention in those areas.

### Context: business motivation

At the student and school level: Schools are required to meet their duty of care obligation to students, by ensuring that they are attending school unless there are compelling reasons for them not to.

Tracking Attendance is used for a variety of operational, accountability and strategic purposes, and for educational research.

At an aggregate level, at school system and national level: Failure of students to attend school without justification is a major indicator of students being at risk of not completing their education. Government departments have a responsibility to detect such risk and intervene as appropriate, both at an individual level, and at an aggregate level (targeting schools or socioeconomic groups).

### Authorising environment-Legislation, agreement etc

Education providers in each state and jurisdiction are required by law to determine the whereabouts of each student on each school day. There is also a legal obligation on guardians to ensure that students under their care attend school.

The National Education Agreement of COAG identifies student attendance rates as a key measure of engagement, and as a performance indicator in the National Education Reform Agreement (NERA), the National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA), the Report on Government Services (ROGS) and the Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia.

Compliance with federal reporting requirements is a precondition for ongoing funding support to schools from the government.

### Governance, oversight: business accountability

National standards for attendance are prepared by the Student Attendance Data subgroup of ACARA, with representation from all jurisdictions and sectors.

### Data exchange summary

 Image of data exchange

 ### Business rules summary

Attendance for national reporting is calculated as the ratio of full-time equivalent of student-days to the total number of possible student days. There are 19 categories of absence defined nationally, with decisions for each as to how they are to be considered in the absence calculation.

There is variation between school authorities as to :

* the granularity of absence (0.5 vs two decimal places)
* the categories of absence recognised
* whether attendance is tracked for students enrolled in multiple schools in the same sector
* whether time fractions for attendance are calculated at the school or centrally (based on detailed in-and-out times)
* whether attendance is reported by exception, or including both attendances and absences.

### Privacy considerations summary

Attendance data gathered at the school level, and passed on to school systems, is extremely sensitive (reasons for absence); data storage and transfer needs to be handled appropriately.

The aggregated attendance data passed on to government agencies is of low sensitivity; no special safeguards are called for.