

# ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS

Newsletter | August 2013

## Message from Chief Investigators

### Literacy Assessment Project (LAP) and Assessment and Learning Partnerships (ALP) Research

A warm welcome back for term 3.

The team has been working hard to complete a book titled 'Assessment for Teaching' which brings together all the knowledge used in the Literacy Assessment Project and Assessment and Learning Partnership courses and research. The book will be published by Cambridge University Press and we hope to have it in print in 2014.

CEOM held a very successful 'Deepening the Learning, Extending the Experience' day earlier in the year for all CEOM schools which have been involved in LAP over the last 9 years. It was a great chance to share the experience and learning of all schools.

Patrick Griffin held a briefing on May 3 for DEECD and Independent schools which have not previously been involved in ALP. The briefing focussed on the latest research showing that the performance of high-ability students is stagnating. The briefing aimed to focus attention on better using assessment for teaching for **all** students.

Patrick Griffin and ALP Academic Coordinator, Danielle Hutchinson, will be holding a briefing and workshop for existing and new ALP schools on October 30 this year to provide feedback to schools on their progress and updates on the research.

Twenty one new schools joined ALP at the beginning of the year and another eleven schools have joined mid-year from DEECD and Independent sectors.

ALP is a large-scale project, based on principles of collaborative use of assessment data to improve student outcomes, which encompasses programs across CEOM, DEECD and Independent sectors.

#### Catholic Education Office, Melbourne (CEOM)

##### Literacy Assessment Project (LAP)

CEOM schools are involved in LAP which was the foundation project for ALP research. CEOM organises cohorts of Literacy Leaders and Principals to take part in face-to-face professional development (PD) over the course of three years. Schools take part in pre and post testing in literacy.

#### Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) and Independent sectors

Professional learning teams (PLTs) from DEECD and Independent schools are involved in the research program and take part in predominantly online PD. Schools carry out pre and post testing in any or all of the following: numeracy, literacy, problem solving.

Work on a related project, '*the influence of teaching practices on student achievement*' which was the result of a partnership arrangement between the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, has recently been completed. This research involved participants from many current ALP schools. A range of validated teaching intervention strategies have been identified for reading and mathematics at each of the developmental levels. These resources are now available to teachers via the '[Teaching Resources](#)' section of the Assessment Research Centre website so that improvement can be monitored across all levels. The Australian Research Council Linkage grant for ALP is concluding at the end of 2013, many important findings have resulted from this work which will inform future research.



Prof Patrick Griffin



Associate Prof Esther Care  
Chief Investigators, Assessment & Learning Partnerships

## A collaborative research project

Catholic Education Office (Melbourne), Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the University of Melbourne

## Current findings, research and articles

The project has recently released a range of articles and publications:

An article featuring the ALP project and Footscray North Primary School was published in *The Australian* on June 25 titled, [Study shows top students flatlining](#).

Policy implications from ALP are discussed in [Focusing on the learner: Charting a way forward for Australian education](#), a green paper released by the Melbourne Graduate School of Education.

In January, ALP featured in an article in *The Age* on flatlining results for top students. Read the article [here](#).

ALP Media release: [Brightest students not fulfilling their potential](#)

Arratia Martinez, A., Griffin, P. & Care, E. (2013). Teachers' metacognition: The influence of changes from a deficit to a developmental approach to assessment. *International Conference on Thinking*, 21-25 January 2013, Wellington, NZ. From page 12.

Griffin, P., Care, E., Francis, M., Hutchinson, D. and Pavlovic, M. (2012). The influence of teaching strategies on student achievement in higher order skills. Conference Paper presented at the *ACER Research Conference 2012*. From pg 77.

Other articles:

['Closing the gap' fails schools' brightest](#)

[Better assessment for teaching needed to lift top students' results](#).

## Teacher Metacognition

Thanks to all the teachers who completed the 'Teacher Metacognition' questionnaire last year. Remember that you can download an individual and confidential report from the PLT member 'Individual Feedback' section of ARCOTS. It is hoped that this report helps you to monitor and plan your own professional learning in the context of the challenges of a differentiated teaching practice.

Based on the responses collected for this questionnaire, six levels in the development of teachers' metacognition have been identified and described. This developmental progression is being used to provide feedback to teachers. The initial findings show that the most

difficult level is related with teachers' capacity to link their own learning process with their ability to influence other teachers' professional learning.

## Student Testing

### CEOM/LAP Schools

CEOM schools involved in LAP now have access to [SWANS](#), an online assessment tool designed to help teachers monitor and plan teaching interventions for students with additional needs.

## Teacher questionnaires

Teacher questionnaires will be open for all registered teachers to complete in the month of **September 2013\***. Questionnaires for teachers to complete are:

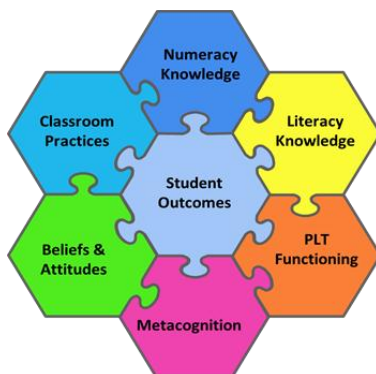
- PLT Functioning Part A
- PLT Functioning Part B
- Teachers' Metacognition
- Teacher Beliefs
- Classroom Practices (applicable only to those working in the classroom)
- Familiarity with Numeracy (applicable only to those teaching numeracy)
- Literacy Test Taking (applicable only to those teaching literacy)

*\*DEECD and Independent sector teachers taking part in the Intake 11 ALP PD course will be completing questionnaires in December 2013.*

Questionnaires take a maximum of ten minutes each to complete.

The different teacher instruments are designed to work together. It is important that the outcomes of our research are applicable to school practice; to achieve this goal we need a large sample size with completed data across the instruments.

To answer the research question we require both student and teacher data. Without both forms of data, the amount of analysis that can be performed is restricted.



## Congratulations!

The following participants were awarded a Kindle for their efforts in the research project:

- Sam Scuito - St Helena Secondary College (Northern, Eastern, Grampians and Hume regions as well as the Independent sector)
- Dianne Summers - Somerville Rise Primary School (Southern region)
- Felicity Lynch - St Thomas the Apostle School (Catholic Education Office Melbourne)

A big thank you and congratulations to **Somerville Primary School** who have won the school prize of a \$500 voucher for their school library.

## Professional Development: Building capacity

### CEOM/LAP

The Literacy Assessment Project (LAP) has two cohorts involved in teaching programs in 2013. The teaching program has now been running for 9 years with participants from 109 CEOM schools.

## DEECD and Independent Schools

### ALP PD Program

2013 has seen the introduction of optional 'second year' professional development modules in addition to the current 10 modules which form the professional development course. So far modules have been introduced focusing on planning for teacher learning and using data to inform teaching. More modules will be introduced over the course of 2013.

We have also offered Second Year ALP PLTs to have ongoing access to a facilitator.

We will also be holding a breakfast briefing and workshop for schools on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> October. The workshop will be targeted for new and existing PLT Leaders and will reinforce the notion of developmental learning in the PLT. Invitations will be sent to schools shortly.

### Mid-Year Intake

A mid-year intake for the Assessment and Learning Partnerships Professional Development Course has been offered. The intake commenced at the beginning of term 3, 2013 (July 15).

## Specialist Certificate in Leadership of Assessment Practice

The Specialist Certificate is available to all teachers who have completed the PD. Upon completion of the two subjects, the 25 points can be classed as credit towards a Masters of Education at the University of Melbourne.

### Short Course for School Leaders

Principals, Assistant Principals and others who do not have direct access to a class or functioning PLT are able to get an introduction to ALP and understand the PD program and associated research project. The short course is freely available [here](#).

## MGSE world rankings

The Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE) has been ranked number three in the world in the discipline of education in the QS World Rankings by Subject 2013, climbing seven places from last year's position.

This ranking places MGSE among the world's best, with Harvard Graduate School of Education coming in at number one, and the University of Cambridge at number two. MGSE has also achieved the highest rank of all disciplines, at all Australian universities. [More...](#)

## Teaching Resources

As mentioned in the introduction, a resource bank of sample teaching strategies for the developmental levels has been released. The materials are available via the Assessment Research Centre website, under '[Teaching Resources](#)'. The site contains a guide, blank templates, research and policy publications, taxonomies, developmental progressions, sample strategies for reading comprehension and numeracy as well as other resources. These resources have been created with teachers and specialists from the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development as well as academics and teaching specialists from the Assessment Research Centre.

The materials place emphasis on the *process* for teachers to articulate the **skill** and then match the **strategy** to the skill targeted.

A [blog and collaborate site](#) for the project has also been created. We aim to have a monthly blog post and welcome posts and other contributions from teachers. We

warmly welcome input and feedback so please email us at [alp-research@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:alp-research@unimelb.edu.au)

## ARCOTS Resources

Schools involved in the research also have ongoing access to the following resources:

- PD modules
- Developmental progressions
- Instructional videos
- Summary findings
- Additional readings
- Data analysis tools

To access these resources please go to the School section of [ARCOTS](#) under 'Download Resources'.



## ARCOTS Dates 2013

### Student testing period 2

CEO: Sept 2 - 20  
DEECD & Independent: Oct 7 to Nov 1

### Teacher questionnaires

Teacher questionnaires for 2013 to be completed in the month of September.

### Assistance

If you require assistance using ARCOTS please contact:

[arcots-help@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:arcots-help@unimelb.edu.au)

## Keep in touch

If you would like to keep in touch with ALP research or [Assessment and Teaching of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills](#) research you can add your name to the mailing list [here](#).

## Further information

[ALP Website](#)

[ALP Professional and Award Programs](#)

If you have any questions about ALP research please contact:

[alp-research@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:alp-research@unimelb.edu.au)

## Professional Development for DEECD and Independent Schools

### ALP Professional Development

#### ALP Professional – Research

(free option for teams participating in the research project)

#### Specialist Certification in Leadership of Assessment Practice

### Further information and enrolment:

[ALP Professional Development](#)

[Brochure](#)

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