

The background of the slide is composed of several overlapping triangles in various shades of blue, ranging from a deep navy blue to a very light, almost white blue. The triangles are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and movement, with some pointing upwards and others downwards. The overall effect is a modern, geometric design.

Melbourne Graduate School of Education 2012

SHAPING MINDS, SHAPING THE WORLD



Welcome

2011 was a year of change and renewal for the Melbourne Graduate School of Education. As we settled into our new home at 234 Queensberry and 100 Leicester Streets, we also welcomed new senior staff, including Professor John Hattie and Professor Stephen Dinham.

The policy landscape

2011 was a year of challenge and change for Australian education.

Public debate was dominated by the Review of Funding for Schooling, chaired by David Gonski AC, ongoing debate about merit pay for teachers, the standardised testing and reporting agenda and the introduction of national teaching standards.

We have been active contributors to all of these debates, and leaders in some of them. Professor Jack Keating's submission to the Gonski review advocated a funding model based on student need, and Professors Richard Teese and Stephen Lamb argued that student achievement, rather than choice, should be the fundamental tenant of any new funding system.

When it comes to merit pay for teachers, Professor Stephen Dinham's inaugural professorial lecture in September made a very clear case for merit pay to be linked to the new national teaching standards. In November, Minister Garrett announced exactly that will happen.

Professor John Hattie's hugely popular inaugural professorial lecture in December looked at assessment from a refreshing angle, considering how teachers can use assessment technology to inform their own practice.

We were also delighted to welcome the Minister for Education, the Hon. Martin Dixon MP in November, to outline his government's vision for education in Victoria. It was another event cementing our leading position in education policy debate.

Our vision is a society in which education enables full and equitable participation.

Our mission Through effective collaborations, we will deliver:

- relevant, high quality, high impact research;
- research-informed, clinical teacher education that develops graduates with the capacity to inspire and improve individual learning outcomes; and
- outstanding quality postgraduate studies for professionals.

Settling into a new home

We are now well and truly settled in to our new facilities. Students are enjoying the purpose built graduate learning and social spaces in 234 Queensberry Street, and staff are enjoying the contemporary teaching spaces.

School Centres for Teaching Excellence

We are delighted to be participating in the *School Centres for Teaching Excellence* initiative with Koonung Secondary College in the Eastern Metropolitan Region, and a cluster of schools in the King Valley, Hume Region. Funded through the federal *Smarter Schools National Partnerships* initiative, this DEECD led program is helping several Victorian universities collaborate on ways to improve pre-service teacher education, increase training and support for mentor teachers, and develop school-based research programs.

High impact research

Our research continues to make an impact on the lives of learners locally and internationally. Major studies based here in the Graduate School include *E4Kids* (assessing the impact of early childhood education in Australia), the *Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills* (see page 7) and the *Young Learners' Project* (see page 8).

2012 promises to bring fresh opportunities and challenges. We are particularly looking forward to hosting the International Alliance of Leading Education Institutes conference in August. We will continue to advocate the importance of clinical teaching, and to work with partners to improve educational opportunities and outcomes locally, nationally and internationally.

Best wishes,

Field Rickards

Dean, Melbourne Graduate School of Education

1 Thailand, Cambodia, Nepal and Laos

Dr Helen Cahill was commissioned by UNICEF, UNESCO and UNFPA to write and deliver capacity development short courses for those working with young people most affected by HIV in the Asia-Pacific region (see page 15).

2 France

Professor Lynn Meek & Associate Professor Leo Goedegebuure from the LH Martin Institute are working on the OECD Programme on Innovation, Higher Education and Research for Development (IHERD). The program aims to increase strategic and coherent investments in innovation, higher education and research for global development. In particular, the Institute is developing a leadership program for researchers in developing countries.

3 Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Hong Kong, Finland, France, Germany, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Norway, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, the Netherlands, UK and the USA

The LH Martin Institute manages Australia's involvement in the *Study of the Changing Academic Profession*. This 20-country comparative study is the largest ever of its kind. It examines the nature and extent of the changes experienced by the academic profession in recent years.

4 The Netherlands

The *Child Care Centre and School as Democratic Practice* project saw staff from the Equity and Childhood Program working with colleagues in the Netherlands to explore democratic citizenship and participation of young children.

5 China, the Czech Republic, Germany, Israel, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Norway, The Philippines, Portugal, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden and the USA

Based in the International Centre for Classroom Research, the *Learner's Perspective Study* has been running for 12 years, documenting 'well-taught' mathematics classes.

6 China & Finland

Led by the International Centre for Classroom Research, the *Alignment Project* is investigating how cultural settings and good practice combine to produce learning outcomes in mathematics and science. Teams in Israel, Sweden, Singapore, the Czech Republic and Japan have expressed interest in joining the project.

7 Iran

Professor Kaye Stacey is working with colleagues at the Shahid Beheshti University and Shahid Bahonar University to compare how textbooks in Iran and Australia encourage mathematical literacy.

8 Norway, Germany and France

International study, *Strategies of academic distinction and social distance: Aversion and acceptance of comprehensive schooling* is investigating why some comprehensive school systems are more equitable and inclusive than others. Led by Professor Richard Teese and Professor Stephen Lamb from the Centre for Research on Education Systems.

9 Saudi Arabia

The Centre for the Study of Higher Education is involved in a major development project at Imam University in Riyadh. Led by Professor Richard James.

10 Japan

Among a number of projects with universities in Japan, the Centre for the Study of Higher Education is providing professional development programs for university academics at Tohoku University in the earthquake and tsunami struck north-east.

11 Thailand & India

Launched in 2010, the elective Master of Teaching subject, *Education Practice & Place*, has candidates completing teaching placements in rural Thailand and the slums of New Delhi, as well as indigenous communities in Australia.

12 UK & the USA

The *Three Dean's Conference*, a partnership with the Institute of Education, London, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, facilitates an intensive module for students from all three institutions, hosted annually in Melbourne, London or Madison. Led by Professor Julie McLeod.

13 Somalia & the USA (Minnesota)

In collaboration with the University of Minnesota, for the development of a National Teacher Preparation College in Puntland, Somalia.

14 Sweden, Germany and UK

Visited by staff and students as part of the International Study subject in the Master of Educational Policy (International). Led by Associate Professor Veronica Volkoff.

15 Indonesia & Sri Lanka

Content and Language Integrated Learning projects, with the Open University of Sri Lanka and Yogyakarta State University, Indonesia. Led by Professor Joseph Lo Bianco and Dr Russell Cross.

16 Cook Islands

The Centre for Program Evaluation is evaluating the *Go Local* project, which encourages the return to local produce and engagement in community activities.

17 New Zealand

Associate Professor Janet Clinton and Professor John Hattie worked with colleagues at the University of Auckland to develop a school based healthy lifestyle assessment tool for classrooms. A unique collaboration between education, health and bio-engineering.

18 Philippines

Curriculum comparison with Thailand and Vietnam, sponsored by AusAID. Led by Associate Professor Esther Care and Professor Patrick Griffin.

19 Costa Rica, South Africa, UK, Singapore, Finland and the Netherlands

Development and implementation of *Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills*, sponsored by Cisco, Intel and Microsoft. Led by Professor Patrick Griffin (see page 7).

20 Bhutan

Dr Helen Stokes from the Youth Research centre helped develop a new *National Youth Policy* for the Bhutan Government. The project included extensive stakeholder consultation, and integration with Bhutan's principles of Gross National Happiness.

21 Timor Leste (East Timor)

Devising an education policy for multilingual education. Led by Professor Joseph Lo Bianco.

22 Malaysia

Professor Stephen Dinham OAM delivered a lecture on global trends in pre-service teacher education as part of the *Tan Sri Jeffrey Cheah Distinguished Speakers Series* at Sunway University, Selangor, in October 2011.

23 Denmark, London and Spain

The Master of Educational Policy (International) subject, Globalisation and Leadership, is also available in the European Union's flagship Master of Lifelong Learning: Policy and Management (MA LLL) Erasmus Mundus program. Students studying this subject experience lectures with academics from the other partner universities in the program: Aarhus University (Copenhagen), the Institute of Education (London) and University of Deusto (Bilbao).

24 United Arab Emirates

MGSE collaborates with the Higher College of Technology to provide quality assurance advice about their Bachelor of Education program in Abu Dhabi (Dr Nick Reynolds and Associate Professor Ray Misson). Professor Fazal Rizvi presented a keynote at their annual faculty conference in Dubai in September 2011.



Master of Teaching (Early Childhood) graduate, Louise Marbina, showing the Queen play therapy facilities at the new Royal Children's Hospital.



Drusilla Chembiah worked as a Learning Mentor at Rowville Primary School, along with fellow Master of Teaching (Primary) candidate, Loretta Johnston.

Early Childhood

Louise Marbina, who has a background in working with children with additional needs, studied the Master of Teaching (Early Childhood) following a move to Melbourne from Scotland.

She now works at the Royal Children's Hospital as Manager, Educational Play Therapy and Music Therapy. She said the Master of Teaching gave her a solid theoretical and practical grounding in the Victorian context.

"I have worked with children and families with complex health care needs for my entire career," she said. "But what I really learned in the Master of Teaching was the link between a child's social and emotional development and their ability to learn to their full potential."

According to Louise, her studies taught her to appreciate individuality.

"The Master of Teaching really showed me how to create environments that cater to the needs of the individual, rather than trying to make the individual fit the system," she said.

Louise secured her current role just before she completed the Master of Teaching, and feels privileged to have such a unique job.

"We use developmental play to support children's understanding of the hospital environment on their level," she explained. "Play therapy enhances children's emotional wellbeing, significantly diminishes complication risks from medication and reduces the necessity of overnight stays."

Primary

The final semester of the Master of Teaching (Primary) is hard work, but teacher candidates Drusilla Chembiah and Loretta Johnston managed to juggle academic demands with part-time roles as Learning Mentors at Rowville Primary School.

They supported students with additional learning needs in the classroom, to help them achieve their potential.

According to Drusilla, the role acts as a bridge between the students and their teacher.

"We help the students learn independently" she said. "It's about enabling them to learn at their own pace."

I found the Social and Professional Context subject in the Master of Teaching (Primary) really helped with this role. In particular, I learned a lot about catering for the individual

Master of Teaching impact

Brad Denny, Casey Langsford and Angela Tan are all graduates of the Master of Teaching (Secondary). They are now members of the leadership team at Presentation College Windsor.



learner and ensuring the school adapts for the child, rather than the child adapting to the school. I've really been able to apply what I learned in this role."

Loretta said their Master of Teaching (Primary) studies meant they could offer students a valuable experience.

"Our background meant we could offer learning support to students in the program," she said. "It has been great to be able to make a difference to their learning experience in school, as well as offer social and emotional support."

Secondary

At Presentation College Windsor, three Master of Teaching (Secondary) graduates have moved into leadership positions. Brad Denny and Casey Langsford (class of 2009) are the new Head of English and Head of Humanities and Angela Tan (class of 2008) is the new Director of Music.

All three teachers said that, while challenging, the Master of Teaching placement structure helped prepare them for the realities of classroom life.

"Being in the same school for a whole semester means you get to see the power of establishing good relationships with the students," said Angela. "You can't do that in a three week block placement. You also learn how to juggle competing priorities, which is really important when you're a teacher."

Presentation College has embraced the use of data to inform its teaching, which resonates with the Master of Teaching clinical approach.

"The school is very data-focused," said Casey. "Having learned at Uni how to use data to inform our teaching, it feels quite natural for us to think in that way."

In his new role, Brad is hoping to incorporate more of the clinical approach he learned at university.

"I'm hoping to incorporate more formative assessment," he said. "This means understanding where the students are at the start of the year, so you can plan the year's learning from there."

All three are loving their chosen profession of teaching, and appreciate the opportunity to join the leadership team at such a well regarded school.

TheatreSpace

is the largest study
of its kind in
Australian history.



Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills

Children entering school today will work and live in a radically different society as adults. Technology is changing how we live and work, and education needs to prepare students for the future.

This groundbreaking project is an international collaboration between world leading universities, other education bodies and corporations CISCO, Intel and Microsoft. Executive Director, Professor Patrick Griffin, and International Research

Coordinator, Associate Professor Esther Care, are based in our Assessment Research Centre (ARC).

The project has produced an entirely new way of assessing student learning. A range of online tests are being launched this year, assessing students' ability to solve problems collaboratively and use social media to learn.

These skills have never been assessed before. More than that, the programs are designed to

assess how children work through the tasks, rather than just the answers they provide.

There has already been phenomenal international interest in the software and the teaching and learning approaches implied by the project. Already, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has decided to include collaborative problem solving as part of their PISA assessment activities in up to 90 countries in 2015.

TheatreSpace

TheatreSpace is the largest study of its kind in Australian history, surveying the views of 2,779 young theatre-goers from Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne across four years. It is led by MGSE in partnership with the University of Sydney and Griffith University.

Late last year the study launched its findings. Young people with a strong family tradition of theatre-going have the highest likelihood of

attending after school. For young people without such a tradition, committed English and Drama teachers play a crucial role.

Young people also told researchers they seek live performances that are relevant and challenging. In particular, they enjoy dynamic interactions, sensory experiences, humour, physical action and believable characters. Deterrents from attending included lack of information, lack of social

connectedness to other young theatre-goers and a perceived risk that the performance may not be enjoyable.

This year, the project team is finalising its recommendations to its many industry partners, and producing a book.

Australia's academic profession

A major report published by the Centre for the Study of Higher Education highlighted the challenges currently facing Australia's academic profession.

The Australian Academic Profession in Transition: Addressing the Challenge of Reconceptualising Academic Work and Regenerating the Academic Workforce, was based on the views of 5,525 academics from 20 universities.

It found that although Australian academics are highly intrinsically motivated and most find their careers rewarding, a lack of security, perceptions of poor management and overwhelming layers of bureaucracy are leading to widespread dissatisfaction.

Overall, just under one half of academics indicated their workload is not manageable and close to half

intend to retire, move overseas or leave Australian higher education at some time in the next ten years.

The study outlined principles to help policy-makers and university managers meet the challenge of building and maintaining a robust academic workforce.

Abecedarian Approach Australia

Professor Joseph Sparling's pioneering 1970s research confirmed the importance of stimulating children's brains from a very early age. His Abecedarian approach uses learning games, conversational reading and enriched care-giving to ensure children from disadvantaged backgrounds do not fall behind their peers before starting school.

The children who took part in Professor Sparling's study in the US are now in their 30s, and have

benefitted significantly from this early intervention. By 21 years of age, almost 70% of them were attending college or were employed in a skilled job, compared to about 40% of their peers.

Professor Sparling, who is a professorial fellow in the Graduate School, is now working with Professor Collette Tayler to deliver the 3A program (*Abecedarian Approach Australia*) in Victoria and the Northern Territory.

The 3A program is a version of the Abecedarian approach, tailored for Australia and especially to the needs of indigenous children. Based on the knowledge that waiting until vulnerable children are 3 or 4 years old is too late to stop them falling behind their peers, the program aims to address some of the inequalities faced by indigenous communities.

Young Learners' Project

The personal and community benefits of achieving high levels of literacy are widely recognised. Since 2007, the *Young Learners' Project* team has been working on identifying factors in four-year-old preschoolers' educational programs, home-life or personal characteristics that are positively associated with the development of strong literacy outcomes in the first year of school-education.

The team has worked with 500 children, their families and teachers in Victorian preschools, following them into their first year at primary school.

The study's final findings will be released in 2012, with a book due in early 2013. The study will also produce an instrument for teachers to assess children's early literacy in the year before school and upon entry to school.

The *Young Learners' Project* is lead by Associate Professor Margaret Brown (Principal Investigator), Associate Professor Esther Care, Professor Field Rickards and Professor Bridie Raban in collaboration with the Australian Scholarships Group.

Positive Psychology

Last year, Professor Michael E. Bernard released the results of a study examining the impact of *You Can Do It! Education* on the wellbeing of students across six Victorian primary schools.

The study found when students are explicitly taught how to be confident, persistent, organised, resilient and to get along with others, and when this teaching is integrated through classroom and school-wide practices, students become more

self-managing of their emotions and behaviour, showing greater morale and less stress.

The *You Can Do It! Education* program, designed by Professor Bernard, is already used in thousands of schools throughout Australia. For this study it was introduced to schools through a train-the-trainer model.

"I'm really encouraged by the success of the low-cost train-the-trainer approach used in this study," Professor Bernard said. "It indicates that school-based wellbeing programs that incorporate positive psychology can realistically be made available to all schools – they just need enthusiasm and dedication to implement them."



The Young Learners' Project

has worked with 500 children and their families and teachers for the past four years. Its final findings are being released this year.

Children playing outside the school in Indulkana in the Anangu Lands – one of the schools where Master of Teaching candidates taught as part of the

Education, Practice and Place subject in 2011.



Apps for development

In 2011, PhD student Frank van Cappelle won the World Bank's first ever 'Apps for Development' competition, for an application that makes the bank's data easily accessible.

His StatPlanet software, which is used by organisations like UNESCO, NASA, Samsung and Siemens, presents data visually, through interactive graphs and maps. Frank created a customised version of this software for the World Bank competition. The World Bank now uses

StatPlanet to visualise their database of global education statistics, EdStats.

Based in the Melbourne Graduate School of Education's Assessment Research Centre, Frank's PhD is looking at whether and how visualisation of data (like maps and graphs) improves understanding of policy issues.

For Frank, his work is part of the growing open data movement.

"Until recently, accessing data online meant downloading unwieldy databases, and wading your way through large amounts of user-unfriendly, static data," he explained.

"Now we're seeing organisations like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations Development Program making their data really accessible and user-friendly."

According to Frank, accessibility and usability are key to encouraging broad and effective use of open data, and visualisation can play an important role.

LH Martin Institute and the VET sector

The LH Martin Institute's work with the VET sector (and, in particular, dual sector TAFEs) grew from strength to strength in 2011.

In early 2011, the Institute was one of a number of partners to receive National Centre for Vocational Education Research funding to examine the connections between vocational education and work. It also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the TAFE Development

Centre in late 2011, cementing an already fruitful partnership.

Released in early 2011, *The Quality of Teaching in VET* report has been highly influential. It called for a transformation of the VET teaching profession through the introduction of standards, national student evaluations and the establishment of a professional body.

Priorities for 2012 include:

- developing online learning tools for tertiary education managers (in partnership with the Association for Tertiary Education Management)
- providing more bespoke management programs for individual tertiary education institutions
- continuing applied research that increases effectiveness in tertiary education leadership and management.

Education, Practice and Place

In 2011, Master of Teaching candidates undertook two week placements in Thailand, the Anangu Lands, India and Arnhem Land, as part of the new *Education, Practice and Place* elective.

Secondary candidate Victoria Bell completed a placement in the Anangu lands in late June.

"I am so grateful for such an incredibly challenging experience," she said. "I attribute a significant amount of my professional development to this placement."

Another group taught at the Mechai Pattana Bamboo School in rural Thailand. "We all learnt

a great deal about educational practice and Thai culture," said Dr Barbara Kameniar, who led the collaboration.

In November, a group of eight candidates taught in North East Arnhem Land, Katherine and Kalkaringi. Master of Teaching (Secondary) candidate, Amy Palfreyman, said she learned that issues impacting Aboriginal education are complicated and deep-rooted.

"The placement was a truly wonderful, hilarious and infinitely educational two weeks in a stunning part of the world," she said.

November also saw six Master of Teaching candidates teach in the Kalkaji slum area of New Delhi. Working with groups of 10-18 year olds, the candidates supported their English language and literacy development.

"All six teacher candidates found this experience had a profound impact on their readiness to undertake informed interventionist teaching," commented Debra Tyler, who accompanied them.

Academics Dr Barbara Kameniar, Jacinta Duncan, Bernadette Murphy, Debra Tyler and Dr Paul Molyneux each contributed a significant amount of time to facilitate the partnerships and attend the placements.

Building literacy through explicit oracy teaching

A new oral language program is raising students' reading comprehension levels by twice the average rate.

Associate Professor John Munro's research is showing how teaching oral language knowledge and skills in systematic and explicit ways significantly enhances at risk students' reading comprehension levels and capacity to learn.

Between 20 and 25 percent of students enter school with oral language difficulties. Associate Professor Munro's program provides schools and teachers with an explicit guide for supporting these children, through the teaching and monitoring of oral language development.

The approach has successfully enhanced students' literacy learning progress. Prep students showed an annual improvement in reading comprehension of more than 2 years growth. Indigenous students

and students from low socio-economic contexts made the greatest gains.

The team is now seeking to explicitly identify those aspects of oral language that impact most on educational disadvantage in the early primary years.

Associate Professor Munro's program is outlined in *Teaching Oral Language: Building a firm foundation using ICPALER in the early primary years*, published by ACER in 2011.

Vocational studies in school

The Education, Policy and Leadership team is examining the effectiveness of vocational education and training in schools (VETiS). This ARC Discovery project looks at how VETiS strengthens participation, fosters student engagement and supports effective transitions from school to further education or work, considering gender and socio-economic status perspectives.

There is a strong economic and political imperative to enhance VETiS. While in some states this provision sits with the government school sector, in other states there is a greater distribution of VETiS participation and provision across the government, independent and Catholic school sectors.

The project, which started in 2010, is gathering longitudinal case study data from 12 diverse schools in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria over three years. Initial findings show there are considerable differences between states in the implementation of VETiS, as well as gender and regional differences within states.

Investigating bilingual learning

Conducted by Professor Joseph Lo Bianco, Dr Paul Molyneux, Dr Janet Scull and Renata Aliani, this research is a four year evaluation of a bilingual education initiative in the western region of Melbourne.

The initiative seeks to support children's language and literacy learning in English and Karen (Karen is spoken by people in Myanmar and North Thailand).

The study commenced in two pre-schools in 2010 and is continuing into the first three years of primary school.

Findings from the first two years of the research highlight social, linguistic and cognitive advantages for children learning to read, write and communicate in two languages. In addition, this approach to bilingual learning allows these

students to negotiate confident bilingual and biliterate identities. The ultimate aim is to report the long-term impact of this bilingual education model, with a view to informing government policy around possible models of English as a Second Language education.



Associate Professor John Munro's work in oral literacy has raised students' reading comprehension levels by twice the average rate.

The NewGen Asia short course

is empowering
young people
from HIV affected
populations.



Empowering young people affected by HIV to lead change

Responding to a highly concentrated HIV epidemic in the Asia Pacific region, alongside a decreasing average age of infection, the UN is working with governments and NGO partners to target the most affected population groups.

One such initiative is *NewGen Asia*, a short course for young people from affected populations, developed by Dr Helen Cahill from the Youth

Research Centre. Helen led a small team of young writers to design and implement the course, which aims to empower participants by building their advocacy, communication and leadership skills.

By the end of 2011 the course had been delivered to 34 young leaders in the Philippines, as well as a group of 30 young people from a range of countries

including Pakistan, Vietnam, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Myanmar. It is also being observed by UNAIDS headquarters as promising practice, and has the potential to be shared with other regions.

Parental status anxiety and its effect on school choices

Commencing in 2012, this Australian Research Council Discovery project aims to explain why comprehensive school systems are more equitable and effective in some countries than others. It is based in the Centre for Research on Education Systems.

A key issue is the extent to which parents are willing to enrol their children in comprehensive schools, or prefer to use schools that are selective. Parents often fear a poor choice of school will result in their children losing out and ending up in jobs of lower prestige; schools are economic insurance. The extent to which parents experience this status anxiety may depend on how school systems themselves are organised and resourced.

This project will compare the perceptions, attitudes and status anxiety of parents in countries with comprehensive school systems and countries with mainly selective systems.

Making Sense of Data

Despite today's data-driven policy environment, many schools struggle to use national student achievement tests, socio-economic profiles and senior secondary results to guide policy and improve teaching practices. Many teachers who are confident about interpreting data reports still make fundamental errors.

Statistical literacy in the education workplace: Barriers and enablers for school personnel making data-driven decisions is an Australian Research Council Linkage project, led

by Associate Professor Robyn Pierce in partnership with the Victorian Government, the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority and the University of Tasmania.

The project commenced in 2010, conducting a series of interviews, focus groups and surveys with schools to determine the statistical literacy teachers need, and identify barriers to its development.

They used these findings to develop a professional learning program *Making Sense of Data*, which was trialled with 10 Victorian government schools

in 2011 (one primary school and one secondary school in five regions). The half day program prepared teachers to compare and analyse data from a wide range of sources, including NAPLAN.

Making Sense of Data will be reworked as an online professional learning program consisting of a series of targeted modules, promoting statistical literacy in the education workplace. This will be trialled with a new group of schools in 2012.

Mathematics and science performance – international comparison

Led by the International Centre for Classroom Research (ICCR), the *Alignment Project* is investigating the alignment of curriculum, classroom instruction and assessment in mathematics and science classrooms in Melbourne, Beijing and Helsinki. China and Finland have two of the highest performing school systems in the world.

The project, which is supported by the Australian Research Council, is looking at grades 5 and 9. It will identify what mathematics and science performances are valued in each country, and examine the differences between these. It will also establish whether some school systems are more successful than others in aligning curriculum, assessment and instruction.

The ICCR coordinates an international network of classroom researchers around the world and has particular expertise in the investigation of classroom practice and curriculum implementation in mathematics and science.

Chinese Teacher Training Centre

Launched in 2009, the Chinese Teacher Training Centre has created a number of innovative online programs to support Chinese language teachers in Australian and New Zealand schools.

The Specialist Certificate in Chinese Language Teaching is now in its second year, with teachers from across Australia and New Zealand completing the course last year. The Certificate comprises four subjects taught online using texts, visual materials and a discussion forum.

The Centre also runs two regular web conferences – *Sustaining and Leading 21st Century Teachers* and *The Hanyu Laoshi (Chinese Teacher) Show*. The former is a weekly web conference where teachers view and discuss films of Chinese language lessons delivered to Year 9 classes by Centre staff. The latter is a fortnightly web conference covering Chinese language, culture, teaching, learning, news and discussion.

In addition to these professional learning opportunities, the Centre is conducting a number of research projects on aspects of teaching Chinese to school learners.

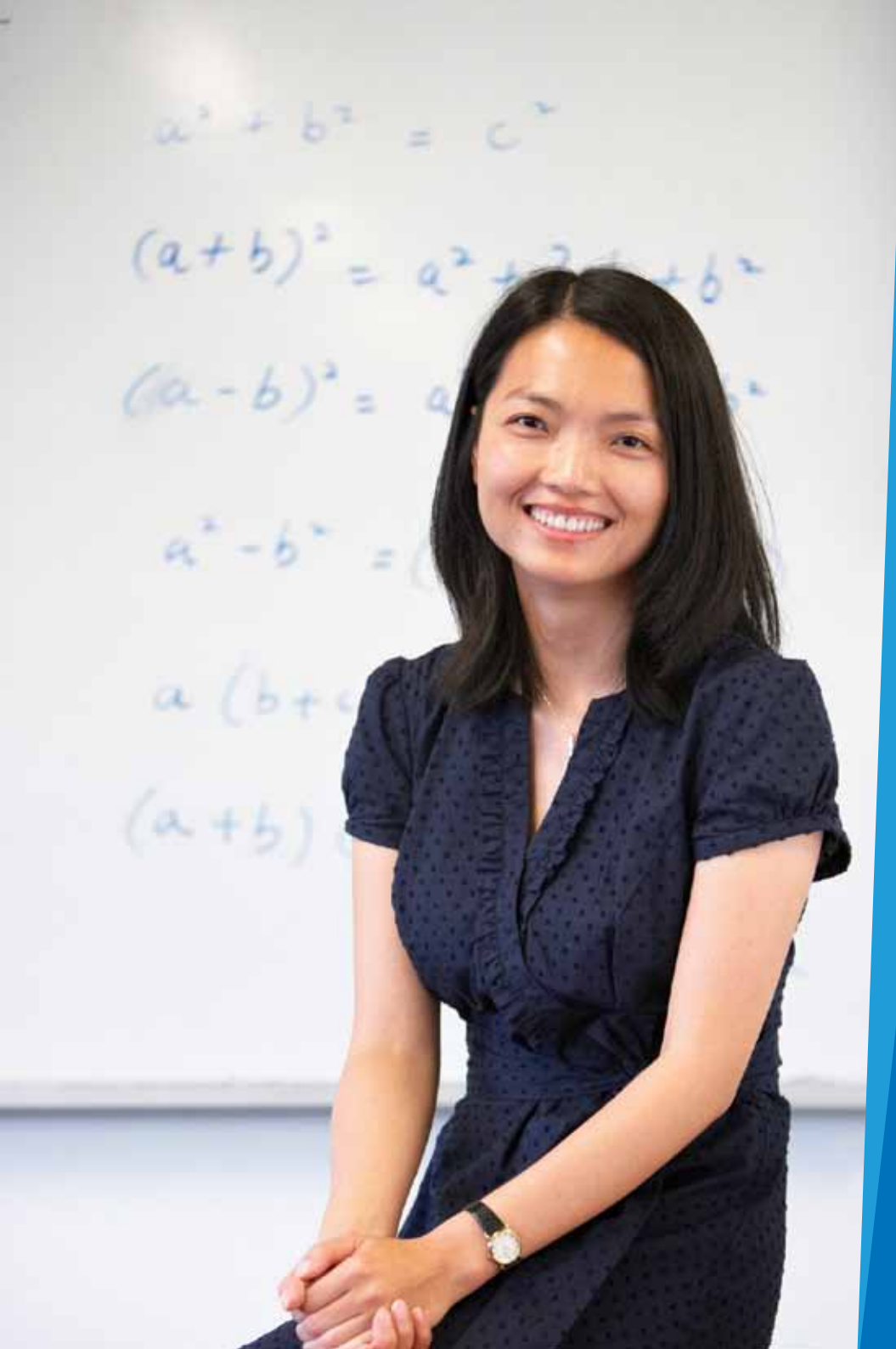
The Chinese Teacher Training Centre is an initiative of the Victorian Government and the Hanban (the executive body of the Chinese Language Council International), based at MGSE.

Evaluation of Independent Public Schools Initiative

The *Independent Public Schools* (IPS) initiative is a major educational reform of the Western Australian Department of Education, designed to give greater control to individual schools and school boards, and reduce bureaucracy.

The Department has commissioned MGSE's Centre for Program Evaluation to evaluate the IPS in its second year of implementation.

The evaluation will determine the extent to which the initiative is being implemented as designed, and to recommend improvements for current and future cohorts. It will be undertaken in three stages using a mixed-methods approach to data collection and analysis. The final report is expected to be released in March 2013.



The Alignment Project
is investigating the alignment
of curriculum, classroom
instruction and assessment
in mathematics and science
classrooms in Melbourne,
Beijing and Helsinki.



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