



**Rewarding
Teaching
Excellence**

Frequently Asked Questions

How long is the trial?

The trials will begin in 2010 and conclude in 2012. Schools will participate for two years, with one group beginning in 2010 and the other group beginning in 2011. This will allow a comparison of the effects on schools who are participating and those that are not.

School Rewards

Reward allocation

Is the School Reward paid to the top 20% of schools in terms of distance travelled in the trials or in the state?

The reward is calculated against all schools, but would only be paid to schools participating in the trial.

If a school is outside the top 20% of schools in terms of distance travelled in Year 1 but inside the top 20% in Year 2, do they access 50% of the reward \$ for their school?

Yes.

Small schools

Will the cluster of small schools be considered as one school for rewards and randomisation purposes? If one school in the cluster did not perform very well, and the others did, would this mean that no School Reward would be paid to the other schools in the cluster?

Yes, the participating cluster would be treated as one school for rewards calculation (weighted index and distance travelled) and randomisation purposes. One school's performance will always have the *potential* to negatively **or** positively affect the performance of the group. The effect of this cannot be known until it comes time to calculate the distance travelled.

Weighted index

What role will intake adjusted school performance measures have once they are in place?

Part of the trial and its evaluation will be an investigation of the potential role of intake adjusted measures in the calculation of the weighted index.

For primary schools, an outcome of the October workshop is to weight each outcome (including the discretionary weighting) such that student learning is never "out-weighted". We propose weighting ratio of 50:30:20 (student learning: engagement and wellbeing: discretionary) to address this concern.

Measures

VCE courses may be a low % of secondary students. What about VET/VCAL?

The inclusion of VET and VCAL completion rates in the calculation of the weighted index will be attempted and included as part of the trial.

In developing a weighted index using current measures (an important aspect) are we missing an opportunity to capture other data not captured now?

It is possible that the use of other data could be included under the discretionary weighting – schools would be free to negotiate this with their RNL.

Base year

What is the base year for measuring a school's performance? Is it the same for both groups?

It would be possible to test two approaches as part of the trial, with the first approach being to use a single "base year" for all trial schools regardless of their starting year - so everyone would have their "distance travelled" measured against 2009 performance. The second approach would be to use a rolling base year in accordance with the school's starting year - so, the cohort that commences the trial in 2010 would have their "distance travelled" measured against 2009 performance, while the 2011 starting cohort would be measured against 2010 performance.

A related point raised at the workshop is the use of an aggregated "base year" over a two-year period – so two years become the base "year". This approach is worth investigating and would be particularly beneficial for smaller schools.

Teacher Rewards

Eligibility

What percentage of teaching staff needs to express interest for the school to be in the trial?

The aim is for all teachers to participate. However, recognising this will be difficult for some schools, schools are asked to discuss this with their Regional Network Leader and each school will be considered on a case by case basis. The principal needs to be confident that the significant majority of staff supports participation in the trial. It should be noted that the participation rate will effect the base grant allocation.

Are contract teachers eligible?

Yes contract teachers are eligible and should be included. However, they need to still be employed at the assessment end of the trial.

How do we treat (assess and reward) part time teachers?

Part time teachers are treated in the same way as full time teachers. They will be eligible for payments on a pro rata basis. The panel should be able to take the teacher's circumstances into consideration.

Evidence

How would improvement be measured or judged?

Multiple sources of evidence, including student achievement data where this is possible, will be used. Schools can add further evidence as appropriate in consultation with teachers. Sources of feedback used as part of the Performance & Development Culture process could be considered. Methods for panels to be provided with evidence will be worked out collaboratively by the participating schools before the trial begins.

Performance and development process

Will we need to make a major shift in how we do our performance and development process?

This is dependent on how comprehensive the current performance and development processes are in each school. By aligning the performance and development process with the Teacher Rewards process it is intended to keep the related work for the panel and the teacher to a minimum. The professional standards, balanced scorecard and evidence provided will allow judgement for both purposes.

Panel process

How can we manage the associated cost and workload?

Additional support will be provided to assist schools in conducting the panel process. Combining the judgement for reward with the normal performance and development process for incremental progression should also assist in reducing the amount of additional work. A number of suggestions for implementation were suggested at the October 7 workshop and will be explored with participating schools.

Culture

How do we build the trial process into our performance and development process and not destroy our performance and development culture?

The processes will be developed collaboratively and will also provide a reasonable amount of local customisation so that there should be no negative affect on existing good practice.