



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Education**

Your ref :  
Our ref : D20/0325200  
Enquiries :

Ms J J Shaw MLA  
Chair  
Legislative Assembly Economics and Industry Standing Committee

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Dear Ms Shaw

Thank you for your letter dated 23 April 2020 requesting advice into the inquiry into Western Australia's economic relationship with India. The Department of Education's responses are below.

**Question 1: Are there any plans to extend the State Government's selective entry program for entry in Western Australian high schools to Indian students?**

- No. This is a program currently targeted at China and on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Question 2: Do any secondary schools in Western Australia participate in student exchanges with schools in India, or have a sister-school relationship with a school in India?**

- The Department of Education does not currently collect data on student exchanges or sister school relationships.
- The Department is aware that Geraldton Grammar School and Coinda Primary School are members of the Asia Education Foundation India Bridge program. The program has a focus on teacher exchanges, the establishment of collaborative learning via the internet, and informal learning of the Hindi language.
- The Department is advised that TAFE International Western Australia is not aware of any sister-school relationships or student exchanges with schools in India.

**Question 3: Do any secondary schools in Western Australia teach Hindi?**

- Hindi is not formally taught in any public secondary schools in Western Australia.
- The School Curriculum and Standards Authority does not have its own Year 11 or Year 12 Hindi senior secondary courses and, therefore, borrows the syllabus and examination from Victoria.
- This enables a student to study Hindi and as a non-school candidate and use it in the calculation of their ATAR. Students typically enrol in the course as a private candidate and complete the course by themselves or occasionally with the support of a community language centre.
- At 2 June 2020, there are eight Year 12 Western Australia students enrolled to sit the Hindi 2020 ATAR course examination.

**Question 4: Do primary or secondary schools in Western Australia celebrate Indian culture or promote Indian cultural awareness? If so, how?**

- The Department does not collect information on specific cultural activities.
- The Western Australian Curriculum includes opportunities to teach students about India. These include:
  - exploring India as part of the Asia region in Year 6 Geography;

- researching the impact of Ancient India on the history of human endeavour in Year 7 History;
- analysing the level of economic interdependence between Australia and India in Year 9 Economics and Business; and
- discussing the importance of India as the world's largest democracy in Year 10 Civics and Citizenship.
- The Western Australian Curriculum also includes three cross-curriculum priorities. One of these is Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia. This priority provides schools with the opportunity to incorporate studies about Asia, including India, across all learning areas.
- Harmony Week, a Western Australian State Government initiative, is held from 15-21 March every year, concluding on the United Nations' International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. During the week, schools are encouraged to celebrate multiculturalism and support students to appreciate cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity.

**Additional information: International education and the ways in which the State can develop existing and new export markets.**

- The Department of Education, in collaboration with the Department of Training and Workforce Development, regularly reviews target markets to identify potential new ones. While India is not a particular focus at present, applications are welcomed from Indian students wishing to study in Western Australia.
- In June 2019, Cabinet approved the expansion of the School Curriculum and Standards Authority's international education program.
- The Authority's international education program includes the licensing of the following Western Australian curriculum program to overseas schools:
  - Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) – Years 11 and 12
  - Australian Matriculation Program (AUSMAT) – Year 12 only
  - *Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline (the Outline)* – Kindergarten to Year 10.
- The approved recommendations include a phased expansion of 17 additional overseas schools in the 2020 school year.
- As at June 2020, the Authority has approved 11 of the 17 additional schools under the expansion.
- The Authority is working with six more schools to finalise Authority due diligence processes; however, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted these processes.
- The Authority made a submission to the Economic and Industry Standing Committee's (EISC) *Inquiry into Western Australia's Economic Relationship with the Republic of India* (the Inquiry) in November 2019.
- The Authority's submission addressed Inquiry foci 3 and 4, which include existing barriers or impediments to trade and opportunities to strengthen the trading relationship with India (written from an international education perspective).
- In March 2020, the Authority was requested to appear before the EISC to discuss its submission.
- The Authority notes the report commissioned by the Australian Government in 2014, written by Mr Peter Varghese AO, entitled *An India Economic Strategy to 2035*.
- In particular, the Authority notes comments made by Mr Varghese with respect to the potential benefits of increased trade with India and the need to identify unique strategies for engagement to access this market.
- Mr Varghese's comments reflect the findings from the Authority's investigations and discussions with members of the Indian business community, the Western Australian Government Office representative for education based in Mumbai and Austrade, New Delhi.



- The Authority considers a multi-tier approach is necessary for Western Australian curriculum export in India, whereby this market is simultaneously engaged using top-down and bottom-up approaches.
- India has a well-established education system, which includes national and state-based education boards, with state boards having autonomy in setting curriculum standards. Furthermore, the national Indian Government recognises the Cambridge and International Baccalaureate foreign curriculum systems.
- Under a top-down approach, identification of pilot Indian states suited for Western Australian curriculum delivery is necessary in consideration of a range of factors including government receptiveness, economic indicators, sister-state relationships and education system preparedness.
- The top-down approach would then include dialogue at the appropriate levels between the Western Australian Government and Indian national and state governments, to seek recognition for Western Australian curriculum delivery in pilot Indian states.
- A bottom-up approach includes a review of the Authority's financial parameters for the licensing of Western Australian curriculum in India to recognise that it is a volume-based market.
- Further bottom-up activities include working with members of the Indian and Western Australian business communities, schools and/or education societies to undertake market-sensitivity analysis, establishing suitable branding and marketing tools, and to identify potential Indian schools for the delivery of Western Australian curriculum.

I trust this provides the inquiry with sufficient information and thank you for providing us with the opportunity for input. The Department will be pleased to hear if it can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely



Lisa Rodgers  
**Director General**

29 JUN 2020