

## Appendix 2: About the audit

### Audit objective

This audit assessed how well New South Wales public schools are using information and communications technologies to improve teaching and learning.

### Audit criteria

We addressed the audit objective by answering the following questions:

1. Does the Department identify key strategic opportunities to enhance the use of ICT platforms and technologies in schools?
2. Are teachers integrating ICT into classroom practice?
3. Does the Department monitor the impact of ICT on student learning?

We broadly define 'ICT' as encompassing hardware, software, internet-based applications, network infrastructure and supporting equipment.

### Audit scope and focus

For Question 1 we assessed the extent to which:

- the Department plans for current and future ICT needs in schools
- schools tailor plans for enhancement of ICT within the context of departmental policies and in consideration of local needs
- Departmental approaches to ICT use in schools are based on sound evidence.

For Question 2 we assessed the extent to which:

- teachers are supported to develop their skills in using ICT for teaching
- teachers have access to resources and know how to integrate these
- the Department provides guidance to teachers on the best use of ICT in the classroom environment.

For Question 3 we assessed the extent to which:

- ICT is being effectively used to support student learning across a range of subject areas
- students are improving their abilities in using new technologies to support learning
- students have equitable access to technology, software and hardware that supports learning opportunities.

### Audit exclusions

The audit did not specifically assess:

- the Learning Management and Business Reform program
- early childhood education or Vocational Education and Training in schools
- assistive technologies for students with disability or special learning needs
- work of the New South Wales Education Standards Authority.

However, we may have commented on these issues/areas where they affect our findings and to provide context.

### Audit approach

Our procedures were:

1. Reviewing documents in areas including:
  - research on ICT in schools produced or commissioned by the Department

- best-practice examples or resources produced or commissioned by the Department
  - policies and procedures relating to use of ICT in schools
2. Analysing data relating to:
    - professional learning in ICT-related areas
    - a survey of teachers reporting on their use of ICT
    - usage of online learning resources by teachers and students
    - number, distribution and age of ICT assets in schools
  3. Interviewing staff from the Department, including
    - executives and managers with responsibility for supporting ICT in schools
    - school principals, deputy/assistant principals and ICT coordinators.

The audit approach was complemented by quality assurance processes within the Audit Office to ensure compliance with professional standards.

### Fieldwork visits

We also visited eight public schools. We based our selection on the following factors:

- Location - schools in inner-metropolitan, outer-metropolitan and regional areas
- School level - primary and secondary schools
- Socio-economic influences.

Primary schools	Secondary schools
Blackett Public School	Colyton High School
Fairy Meadow Demonstration School	Keira High School
Lindfield East Public School	Killarney Heights High School
Nemingha Public School	Tamworth High School

### Audit methodology

Our performance audit methodology is designed to satisfy Australian Audit Standards ASAE 3500 on performance auditing. The Standard requires the audit team to comply with relevant ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance and draw a conclusion on the audit objective. Our processes have also been designed to comply with the auditing requirements specified in the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*.

### Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the co-operation and assistance provided by staff at the Department of Education who gave their time to participate in interviews and provide documents and data. We also thank the other stakeholders that made the time to speak to us during the audit.

### Audit team

Kevin Hughes conducted the performance audit. Claudia Migotto and Michael Thistlethwaite provided direction and quality assurance.

### Audit cost

The cost of the audit was approximately \$180,729 including overheads and travel costs.