SOLOMON ISLANDS

EDUCATION SECTOR SUPPORT PROGRAM

INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT REPORT

This report has been prepared by Dr Graham Dawson under the management of the Government of Australia's (GoA) Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), through its consultancy arrangements with Cardno Australia. The Report was commissioned through the Solomon Islands Resource Facility, managed by Cardno.

The views expressed in the report are those of the independent assessor and author and do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of the Government of Australia, the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) or their agencies and personnel.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE	OF CONTENTS	II
ACRO	NYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	III
1. IN	NTRODUCTION	1
	ACKGROUND AND CONTEXT	
3. T	HE ASSESSMENT PROCESS	1
4. R	EVIEW OF PERFORMANCE AGAINST 2016 TARGETS	4
4.1	OVERARCHING TARGET — PERCENTAGE OF SIG BUDGET SPENT ON EDUCATION	4
4.2	Target 1.1 – Teacher Training Quality	5
4.3	TARGET 2.1 – RECURRENT ALLOCATION TO PRIMARY EDUCATION IS PROTECTED	6
4.4	TARGET 2.2 - SCHOOL FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF GRANTS	6
4.5	TARGET 3.1 – PFM ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION ON-GOING	9
4.6	TARGET 3.2 – MEHRD COMMITMENT TO AN EFFICIENT ALLOCATION OF TERTIARY BUDGETS	9
4.6	TARGET 3.3 – PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN MEHRD AND EAS AND INCREASING THE CAPACITY OF EAS	TO HOLD
	MERHD TO ACCOUNT.	11
4.7	TARGET 4 – CREATE A DISABILITY INCLUSIVE CULTURE AND GENDER INCLUSION	12
5. P.	AYMENT RECOMMENDATION	13
6. S	TRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF 2016 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	14
7. P	ROPOSED EDUCATION TARGETS AND INDICATORS FOR 2017	14
APPEN	NDICES	20
Appi	ENDIX 1 EDUCATION PERFORMANCE MATRIX 2016	21
Appi	ENDIX 2 TERMS OF REFERENCE	25
Appi	ENDIX 3 MID-YEAR REVIEW - WORKSHOP AGENDA	28
Аррі	ENDIX 4 BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR EDUCATION 2015 & 2016	30
Appi	endix 5 Scholarships Allocations – 2015 & 2016	32
Appi	ENDIX 6 TRANSITION RATES - BOYS & GIRLS: 2012 TO 2016	34

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AWP Annual Work Plan

DFAT Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (GoA)

EA Education Authority

EPM Education Performance Matrix
GoA Government of Australia
GPI Gender Parity Index

LEAP Leadership for Education Authorities Program

M&E Monitoring and Evaluation

MEHRD Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development

NER Net Enrolment Rate

NEAP National Education Action Plan
PAR Performance Assessment Report
PEA Provincial Education Authority
PFM Public Finance Management
SIG Solomon Islands Government

SITESA Solomon Islands Tertiary Education and Skills Authority

SSU Strategic Support Unit - MEHRD

1. Introduction

This report presents the findings and recommendations of an independent, external assessment of the extent to which the MERHD has achieved the targets and objectives articulated in the 2016 Education Performance Matrix (EPM - see Appendix 1).

The purposes of the independent review, detailed in the assessor's terms of reference (see Appendix 2), were to:

- 1. Review SIG performance against the agreed milestones for 2016 in the attached performance matrix.
- 2. Provide a recommendation of what performance payment should be made based on the SIG performance.
- 3. Provide advice on the strengths and weaknesses of 2016 performance indicators.
- 4. Provide advice on indicators for the next year 2017, based on MEHRD's new M&E framework.

The findings from the review process were reported at the Education Sector Mid-Year Review conducted in Honiara on 8th June 2017 (see Appendix 3).

2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The GoA and SIG signed a four-year Direct Funding Agreement in 2015 which gave effect to the implementation of the Education Sector Program 2. The Agreement, and the related Principles of Partnership and Letter of Arrangement, established the conditions for the provision of AUD 32 million over four years through direct budget support for basic education, skills and education management. An additional AUD 32 million was to be provided for resource and technical assistance through Australian managed activities.

Of the AUD 32 million in direct budget assistance, 20 per cent was to be provided as annual bonus payments, subject to the MEHRD meeting the targets detailed in the annual EPM.

The targets in the 2016 EPM and the targets in the 2017 EPM are derived from the SIG Education Strategic Framework 2016-2030 and the MEHRD National Education Action Plans (NEAP) 2013-2015 and 2016-2020.

The core goals of these documents can be summarised as:

- Education quality
- Equitable access at all levels of the system
- Improved functions and practices to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

This is the fifth year that the independent assessment against the targets in the EPM has been conducted.

3. THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The assessment process, including the preparation of this report, was conducted over a three-week period from 2 June 2017.

Background and contextual information was collected through the review of key documents, the preparation of review questions and the identification of key personnel for interviews. The assessment was undertaken in Honiara from 4 – 9 June. The assessment process involved:

- The conduct of key informant interviews with DFAT and MEHRD personnel, and the team leader of the GoA funded Skills for Economic Growth Program.
- The review and analysis of data and information provided by MEHRD.
- Presentation to and participation in the Mid-Year Review Workshop.

Details of documents reviewed and personnel interviewed are provided in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: Key Documents reviewed

Document	Source
Direct Funding Agreement between the Government of Australia and Solomon Islands Government	DFAT
Solomon Islands Education Sector Statement of Partnership Principles between Solomon Islands Government and Development Partners 2016 – 2020	DFAT
Solomon Islands Education Sector Support Program Independent Performance Assessment 2015	DFAT
Solomon Islands Education Sector Support Program Independent Annual Performance Assessment 2016	DFAT
National Education Action Plan 2016-2020	MEHRD
National Education Action Plan 2016-2020 Implementation Framework	MEHRD
Performance Assessment Report 2015 & 2016	MEHRD
MEHRD 2017 Quarter 1 Report	MEHRD
MERHD Annual Work Plan	MEHRD
Public Finance Management Plan	MEHRD
Revenue and Expenditure Statement – December 2016	MEHRD
School Financial Management Handbook	MEHRD
Solomon Islands National Disability Inclusive Education Policy 2016-2020	MEHRD
Whole-School Inspection Guidelines for Inspectors in the Solomon Islands 2017	MEHRD
Accounting for School Funds Handbook	MEHRD

Table 2: Key Informant Interviews

Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Jane Bastin-Sikimeti	First Secretary Development Cooperation	DFAT	5 June
Helen Rose	Technical Adviser	MEHRD – SSU	5 June
Joe Ririmae	Manager, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager	MEHRD –SSU	6 June
Richard Ardomana	Manager, Planning	MEHRD – SSU	6 June
Matthew Prowse	Technical Adviser, Payments and Finance	MEHRD – Finance	6 June
Martin Marairi	Chief Accountant	MEHRD – Finance	6 June
Moses Maru	Manager, Grants	MEHRD – Grants	6 June
Gladys Siale	Manager, Education Authorities (EA) Performance & Evaluation	MEHRD – EA Services	6 June
Cooper Muaki	Principal Education Officer, Performance & Evaluation	MEHRD – EA Services	6 June
Charles Roukera	Manager, Teacher Professional Development	MEHRD – National Education Services	7 June
Emily Siriki	Manager, Inspectorate	MEHRD – National Education Services	7 June
Clement Aitorea	Inspectorate	MEHRD – National Education Services	7 June
Henson Makoani	Manager, Assets	MEHRD – EA Services	7 June
Barry Peddle	Team Leader	Skills for Economic Growth Program	8 June
Steve Rose	Technical Adviser, M&E	MEHRD – SSU	7 June
Dr Franco Rodie	Permanent Secretary	MEHRD	9 June
James Bosamata	Deputy Secretary	MEHRD	9 June
Joe Takeli	Team Leader, Literacy and Numeracy Unit	MEHRD – National Education Services	9 June
Paul Sukulu	Literacy Program Officer	MEHRD – National Education Services	9 June

The Mid-Year Review Workshop, held on 8th June 2017, was chaired jointly by Dr Franco Rodie and James Bosamata. The workshop received the findings of the independent assessment, and received progress reports and inputs from personnel from DFAT, New Zealand Aid Program and MEHRD. Barry Peddle, Team Leader of the Skills for Economic Growth Program provide a detailed report of progress on the establishment of the Solomon Islands Tertiary Education and Skills Authority (SITESA).

The workshop also considered future priorities for the education sector and donor partner support. These recommendations provided important input for the development of the 2017 targets and indicators. The agenda for the Mid-Year Review Workshop is provided in Appendix 3.

4. Review of Performance Against 2016 Targets

This section of the report provides information about the extent to which the 2016 EPM targets have been achieved. It also provides comment and suggestions about how MEHRD could improve, where necessary, the processes and procedures it uses to collect data or achieve targets.

It was pleasing to note that during the review process that Ministry personnel had prepared well for the review and that they were committed to using data and evidence to guide decisions and future programs. The Ministry appears to be building a culture of evidence-based decision making. The development and implementation of the Results Framework and M&E Framework for the NEAP will greatly assist in this process.

4.1 Overarching Target – Percentage of SIG Budget spent on Education

Target: Twenty-three per cent (23%) of the SIG national recurrent budget was

spent on education in 2016.

Evidence Source: MEHRD Budget Analysis 2016

Assessment: Target Achieved

Evidence presented to the assessor by the Technical Adviser, Finance, (see Table 3 below) confirmed that the education budget allocation for 2016 was \$1,038,552,570¹. This represented twenty-four per cent (24%) of the total 2016 SIG budget of \$4,301,152,572.

However, it should be noted be noted that \$100,000,000 of that total was supplementation for scholarships and was not requested by MEHRD. While the additional allocation for scholarships is correctly included in the analysis of the SIG budget allocation, it should be noted that, without this supplementation, the total percentage allocation to education would have fallen to twenty-two per cent (22%).

During the independent review, some people expressed concern about the effectiveness of the scholarship program. However, information was not available to test this concern as, to date, no detailed studies of the cost effectiveness of the scholarships program have been implemented. For this reason, the targets for 2017 include provision for the design and implementation of a study to assess the cost effectiveness of the scholarship program.

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¹ Unless otherwise indicated all amounts are in Solomon Islands dollars

Table 3: SIG Budget Allocations - 2016

	272 Education and Human Resource Development Appropriated Funds (2016)			Total MEHRD (2016)
272	871,552,570.00		77,000,000.00	948,552,570.00
372	90,000,000.00			90,000,000.00
Total	961,552,570.00	-	77,000,000.00	1,038,552,570.00

l ·· · ·	, ,	Total Funds Appropriated through the Development budget (2016)	Total SIG (2016)
3,039,054,521.00	3,123,285,435.00	1,177,867,137.00	4,301,152,572.00

% MEHRD 272 + 372 of total SIG

31.64%	0.00%	6.54%	24.15%
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Source: SOLOMON ISLANDS GOVERNMENT, YEAR 2016, APPROVED RECURRENT ESTIMATES Budget Paper: Volume 2

(Page 14)

4.2 TARGET 1.1 – TEACHER TRAINING QUALITY

Target: Ten per cent (10%) additional teachers are assessed and appraised as meeting the standards by the inspectorate.

Evidence Source: Inspectorate appraisal records for 2015 and 2016

Assessment: Target Achieved

In 2015, 143 probationary teachers were assessed as meeting the teacher standard. In 2016, this number had increased to 216 teachers. This represents an increase of fifty-one per cent (51%) of assessed teachers meeting the standard.

It should be noted, however, that only probationary teachers are assessed against the standard by inspectors. All other teachers are required to undergo annual appraisal by principals and the findings from this process are held by Education Authorities (EA). This is a potentially rich source of data about teacher quality but is not collected or analysed by MEHRD. Also, there appears to be minimal quality assurance of the appraisal process conducted by principals.

If these two issues, national data collection and quality assurance of the appraisal process, could be addressed by MEHRD in partnership with EAs it would provide the education system with valuable data about teacher quality in respect of each component of the standard. This information could be used to target professional support to areas of high need. Given that the quality of teachers and teaching are crucial for improving educational outcomes this should be considered by MEHRD in its planning for 2017 and beyond.

4.3 TARGET 2.1 – RECURRENT ALLOCATION TO PRIMARY EDUCATION IS PROTECTED

Target: 2016 per unit cost of primary education is at least equal to 2015 per unit cost of primary education, indexed to inflation.

Evidence Source: MEHRD Budget Analysis 2015 and 2016

Assessment: Target Achieved

The total primary budget allocation for 2016 was \$353,633,710 which translates to a per unit cost of \$2,671. This represented a 2.4% increase on 2015 per unit allocation of \$2,610. The inflation rate for 2016 was deemed to be 2.3%.

While per unit allocations increased in 2016, per unit expenditure for primary education fell to \$2,458 per student. This was caused by the recoding of significant number of miscoded teacher salaries from primary to junior secondary (\$32,000,000) and under-expenditure of donor agency grants by Curriculum Division, the Inspectorate and Examination Unit.

The unexpended funds where reallocated to the 2017 budget and will not be lost. However, the underspend in curriculum is a concern as the provision of teacher support for curriculum implementation is an important strategy for improving the quality of teaching and learning. For this reason, the 2017 targets include an indicator relating to curriculum and curriculum support.

The recoding of teacher salaries will need to be taken into account if per unit budget allocation for primary education is included as an indicator for the 2017 EPM.

Details of the 2015 and 2016 budget allocations for education are provided in Appendix 4.

4.4 TARGET 2.2 - SCHOOL FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF GRANTS

Target 2.2.1: 70% of retirements (of school grants) are received on time.

Evidence Source: MEHRD School Grants Analysis - 2016

Assessment: Target Achieved

Data provided by the MEHRD Finance Unit (Table 4) indicates that seventy-four per cent (74%) of school grants were retired on time in 2016.

Table 4: 2016 Biannual Grant Retirement Details

SECTOR	PAID	RETIRED	RATE OF	Out Standing	% Rate of
JECTOR	FAID	KLIIKLD	RETIREMENT %	retirements	Unretirement
ECE	88	65	74%	23	26%
PRIMARY	572	428	75%	144	25%
SECONDARY	219	162	74%	57	26%
TVET	22	10	45%	12	55%
OVER ALL RATE	901	665	74%	236	26%

MEHRD have made considerable efforts to improve the acquittal rate for school grants as non-acquittal affects the payment of the following year's grants. However, the rate of retirement, especially for TVET sector, is a cause for concern. Investigations by MEHRD revealed that the main problems were:

- Lack of knowledge among some teachers and principals about the retirement process.
- Lack of commitment by some EAs causing unnecessary delays at EA level.
- Lack of capacity (no accountant) in some EAs.

MEHRD is undertaking work to address these issues (see target 2.2.3) but retirement rates need to be monitored closely in future years.

Target 2.2.2: MEHRD disburses first tranche of grants (2017) in a timely manner.

Evidence Source: MEHRD School Grants Analysis - 2016

Assessment: Target Achieved

In 2017, eighty-four per cent (84%) of schools and institutions had received their first tranche payments in February. Of this total, ninety-four per cent (94%) of primary and junior secondary schools received the first tranche of their Basic Education Grant (Table 5) in February 2017.

Table 5: Disbursement of First Tranche of 2017 Grants by Institution Type

Account Description	Budget	Registered schools	Total Paid (1st Biannual 2017)	Payment Rate	YTD Actual
ECE Grant	1,200,000.00	302	177	59%	949,950.00
T.V.E.T. Grant	1,861,200.00	43	36	84%	1,155,130.00
Basic Education Grant	48,841,350.00	727	687	94%	24,943,400.00
Senior Education Grant	77,060,936.00	271	255	94%	28,318,685.00
TOTAL	128,963,486.00	1,341.00	1,155	86%	55,367,165.00

This represents important progress for MEHRD, EAs and schools. However, support will be needed from MEHRD and EAs to improve the provision of relevant information by Early Childhood Education Centres (ECE) and TVET institutions to improve the on-time distribution of their grants.

Target 2.2.3: Strengthen skills of school leaders to effectively deploy and spend a minimum of 40% finances on learning material

Evidence Source: MEHRD Grant Training Plan, program and program completion

data

Assessment: Partially Achieved

MEHRD has commenced action to skill principals to ensure they are able to manage grants in the required manner, including expending forty per cent (40%) of their grants on learning materials. The target of a forty per cent (40%) spend on learning materials has been incorporated into the MEHRD *School Financial Management Handbook* that has been distributed to schools. The MEHRD Grants Unit has developed a pilot training plan for schools in six EAs and implementation of the pilot has commenced. At the time of the review 106 participants from 48 schools and three EAs had participated in training.

Table 6: Competed School Financial Management Workshops

Education Authority	ECE	PRI	SEC	RTC	TOTAL
Honiara CC	0	16	12	2	30
Seventh Day Adventist	0	11	3	0	14
Archdiocese of Honiara	0	1	2	0	3
Totals	0	29	17	2	48

In addition to participation in the training program, MEHRD has developed a plan for its personnel to conduct a series of follow-up visits to schools to support principals in managing and acquitting grants. These visits have commenced.

MEHRD is at a very early stage in its plan to improve the skills of principals. Personnel interviewed stated that they had a five-year plan to train all principals. It is appreciated that the Ministry may lack the resources to complete the training in a shorter timeframe using the presently proposed methodology but, given the importance of the grants for schools, it is recommended that the Ministry explores other options to reduce the time in which all schools will be trained.

Another area where the pilot training program could be improved is by establishing more rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures. The findings from the pilot will be important for future training and support for all schools. However, current M&E plans will not provide the richness of data, especially about program effectiveness, that will be needed.

Once the pilot program is completed and evaluation data analysed, it may be necessary to adjust the training model. At the very least, MEHRD should seek to improve the skills of personnel in EAs so that they take greater responsibility for training delivery and school support. In addition, training and school visits could be targeted at schools that have new principals or that have not acquitted their grants adequately in the past. Another option is for the MEHRD to develop a self-paced learning package that is distributed to all schools together with the *School Financial Management Handbook*.

It will be important also for MEHRD and EAs to collect data about the extent to which schools are meeting the requirement to spend forty per cent (40%) of their grants on learning materials.

While it is too early to state that this sub-target has been fully achieved, MEHRD has made a sound start in moving towards the achievement of the sub-target.

4.5 TARGET 3.1 – PFM ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION ON-GOING

Target 3.1: 100% of all activities scheduled for 2016 are completed, and all other

activities are planned/commenced

Evidence: PFM Action Plan

Assessment: Achieved

The *PFM Action Plan* was reviewed by the assessor and evidence was provided that planned actions, for which MEHRD was responsible, had been implemented.

The only activity that had not been implemented was the implementation of external audits by the Auditor-General's Department. This was attributed to lack of personnel and capacity in the Auditor-General's Department and was an issue over which MEHRD had no control. It was noted that a program of internal audits had been conducted.

External audits are an essential component of effective financial management and it is recommended that, if the Auditor-General is unable to conduct an external audit in 2017, MEHRD should outsource the audit to an appropriately qualified external, independent auditor.

4.6 TARGET 3.2 – MEHRD COMMITMENT TO AN EFFICIENT ALLOCATION OF TERTIARY BUDGETS

Target 3.2.1: Using business as usual procedures 2016 scholarships budget is not higher than 2015 scholarships budget.

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Evidence: MEHRD Financial Records and Analysis

Assessment: Not Achieved

The 2015 budget allocation for scholarships was \$198,275,587 and the 2016 budget was \$275,416,146, representing a thirty-nine per cent (39%) increase on the 2015 allocation. Appendix 5 provides more detailed figures for scholarships.

The increase in budget allocation was due to the provision of supplementation of \$100,000,000 by the SIG. Although personnel advised that the supplementary allocation was not requested by MEHRD, the provision of the additional funding meant that the target was not achieved. This issue is addressed further in the section below.

Target 3.2.2: Beyond scholarships, the baseline figures for tertiary education need rebalancing to reflect wider skills training needs.

Evidence: MEHRD Financial Records and Analysis

Assessment: Not Achieved

This target was not achieved as evidence indicates that had been no attempt to adjust the balance in the allocations. MEHRD personnel interviewed indicated that they had little control over the tertiary budget because allocations were made by the Department of Development Planning and Donor Coordination. However, this would appear to underplay the capacity of MEHRD to influence budget decisions and set priorities for the education sector.

As discussed earlier in the report one of the issues limiting MEHRD's ability to present a case for budget reform in the tertiary sector, especially concerning scholarships, is the apparent lack of meaningful data about:

- The cost benefits of scholarships.
- The contribution of scholarship recipients to the well-being and economic growth of Solomon Islands.
- The proportion of scholarship funds that are expended in Solomon Islands institutions and overseas institutions

There would be considerable value in MEHRD commissioning a study that addressed these and similar issues. This would provide information that could be used to reframe the allocations for the tertiary and skills sectors.

It is acknowledged that SIG is in the process of establishing the Solomon Islands Tertiary Education and Skills Authority (SITESA) which, it is envisaged, will lead to changes in current policies and action for tertiary education and the vocational education sector, including the allocation and management of scholarships. It is anticipated that SITESA will review the current balance between university and vocational education tertiary sectors and this may result in a changed balance between the skills sector and general tertiary budget allocations. This issue should be monitored in future independent assessments.

Target 3.2.3: Cost-sharing of scholarships is piloted, and transparency in awards and procedures are robustly promoted.

Evidence: MEHRD financial records; scholarship distribution

Assessment: Achieved

MEHRD has made progress in these two areas. Cost sharing of a proportion of scholarships was implemented in 2016 and will be continued in 2017.

MEHRD personnel advised that new scholarships legislation before parliament will provide a stronger legal basis for ensuring transparency in the scholarship selection processes. However, the legislation will only be effective if the relevant personnel implement the new legislative requirements rigorously and feel able to resist external pressure that may be applied during the selection process.

The review found that Target 3.2 was only partly achieved.

4.6 TARGET 3.3 — PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN MEHRD AND EAS AND INCREASING THE CAPACITY OF EAS TO HOLD MERHD TO ACCOUNT.

Target 3.3: Baseline of Provincial Education Authorities capacity (is established).

Evidence: Results of Capacity Analysis; Planning for Improvement

Assessment: Achieved

The baseline review of the capacity of Provincial Education Authorities (PEA) has been largely completed with the reviews of the final two provinces to be finalised before the end of June 2017.

The capacity reviews identified weaknesses in the areas of leadership, performance monitoring and financial accountability. As mentioned previously regarding the retirement of school grants, some PEAs do not have trained accountants and this is placing considerable stress on the financial management capacity of EAs and MEHRD.

The information from the analysis of the findings is being used to develop individual PEA Improvement Plans. These will be developed and implemented in partnership with each PEA. In addition, MEHRD personnel are planning to develop standards for PEAs and School Management and these standards will be used as part of the individual improvement plans and improvement process.

The New Zealand Government is also funding Leadership in Education Authorities Program (LEAP) which provide capacity development for a limited number of PEAs. This will support the capacity development programs being planned by MEHRD.

The work undertaken by MEHRD in this area is impressive. As EAs are key players in leading and managing education in the Solomon Islands, improvements in their capacity will be essential for improving access to and the quality of education.

4.7 TARGET 4 – CREATE A DISABILITY INCLUSIVE CULTURE AND GENDER INCLUSION

Target 4.1: Girls' transition rate from Primary to Secondary increases.

Evidence: Analysis of enrolment figures and transition rates

Assessment: Achieved

MEHRD has demonstrated a strong commitment to ensuring girls and boys have equal access to education and this reflected in the transition rates and Net Enrolment Rates (NER) for girls and boys in basic education. While the participation rate in primary and junior secondary schooling is slightly higher for boys than girls, with a Gender Parity Index (GPI) of 1.04, the difference is not likely to be statistically significant.

The 2015-2016 *Performance Assessment Report* did not analyse or report on Year 6 to Year 7 transition rates by sex and this should be addressed in the 2017 PAR. However, for the independent review, SSU officers analysed retention rates for girls and boys (see Appendix 6) and this indicated that the transition rate for girls increased marginally from 2015 to 2016 – from 93.6% to 93.9%. The transition rate for boys increased from 93.6% to 94% in the same period.

MEHRD built two new dormitory complexes in 2016, one for boys and one for girls, to improve access to senior secondary education. In 2017, it plans to build seven new dormitory complexes for girls to support their participation in senior secondary education.

Improved access to school for boys and girls is a high priority for the Permanent Secretary. He is particularly committed to improving the retention rate between Year 1 primary and Year 10 secondary education.

Target 4.2: Data on disability by school was collected and reported as part of the 2016 PAR.

Evidence: 2015-2016 Performance Assessment Report

Assessment: Achieved

Data about the number of students with disabilities were collected and reported in the 2015-2016 PAR. This was the first time that this information was collected. However, the data tends to be anecdotal in nature and is not yet underpinned by agreed definitions of different disabilities nor is it subject to rigorous validation processes.

Table 7: Students with Disabilities by School Type 2016 (from 2015-16 PAR)

Disability	Primary School	Community High School	Provincial Secondary School	National Secondary School	Total	Percentage of Total
Sight Impairment	142	177	5	34	358	10.2%
Hearing Impairment	434	382	44	22	882	25.2%
Speech Impairment	161	67	2	13	243	6.9%
Moving impairment	60	52	5	3	120	3.4%
Gripping impairment	50	34	-	2	86	2.4%
Mental Disability	61	53	-	-	114	3.2%
Learning Disability	537	477	35	-	1,049	30.0%
Other Disability	47	510	-	-	557	15.9%
Multiple Disabilities	40	44	-	-	84	2.4%
Total	1,532	1,796	91	74	3,493	100%

Improved procedures for disability data collection will be implemented by MEHRD during 2017 and 2018. The approval of the draft *Solomon Islands Inclusive Education Disability Policy* will support this process. As part of the improvement process formal definitions of the different categories of disability will need to be developed and shared with schools. In addition, school personnel will need support to identify students with disabilities and report the number of students in the various categories.

Building a community culture in which children and young adults with disabilities are encouraged to participate in education is a longer-term process and will need to be supported by SIG agencies and community groups. MEHRD should continue to focus on this area in future years.

5. PAYMENT RECOMMENDATION

The payment recommendation has been calculated by giving equal weighting to each of the targets/objectives, including the overarching objective. Where a target/objective included sub-targets the value accorded to the main target/objective was sub-divided equally between sub-targets.

At the Mid-Term Review Workshop the assessor recommended that ninety per cent (90%) of the donor bonus payment be made based on the level of achievement of targets. After the workshop MEHRD provided additional information about Target 2.2.3.

Based on the additional information provided by MEHRD, it is recommended that the DFAT bonus payment be increased slightly to ninety-one per cent (91%) of the available bonus allocation.

6. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF 2016 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The performance indicators for 2016 were generally appropriate given the priorities being pursued by MEHRD. There were some problems, however, with the organisation and wording of some targets as the indicators were not always related closely enough to the target in question.

The other main issue with the 2016 targets/objectives was that they did not focus sufficiently on education quality, which, together with equitable access, is the main challenge facing education in the Solomon Islands.

For these reasons the targets and indicators presented in the next section of the report emphasise quality and access, with management and resourcing being enabling factors. The revised target and indicators also relate more closely to the priorities identified by MEHRD in the NEAP 2016-2020 and during the Mid-Term Review Workshop.

7. Proposed Education Targets and Indicators for 2017

Table 8 below provides proposed targets, indicators and means of verification for the 2017 education sector performance matrix. The proposed targets have been developed after taking into consideration the objectives, goals and plans articulated in the:

- Solomon Islands Education Strategic Framework 2016-2030
- National Education Plan 2016-2020
- Statement of Partnership Principles between Solomon Islands Government and Development Partners 2016 2020
- Decisions of the 2017 Mid-Year Review of the education sector.

The key themes of these statements and documents are *Equitable Access* and *Education Quality*. The achievement of goals related to access and quality are, to a considerable extent, dependent on the quantum and utilisation of resources provided by government and development partners, and the effectiveness of educational management and leadership at all levels of the education system.

To better reflect these themes and goals, the targets for 2017/18 have been changed from 2016 to place greater emphasis on quality and equitable access. Resourcing and management are presented as key enabling factors to improve quality and access.

The former overarching objective concerning the percentage of SIG resources allocated to education has been retained, but as one of the key enabling resource factors.

For the 2017 targets it is proposed that the overarching goal becomes – *To improve the quality of education in the Solomon Islands*. The individual targets presented in the framework, if achieved, will contribute to the achievement of this goal.

There are three other important factors that contribute to education quality that are not explicitly addressed in the NEAP and have not been included in the 2017 matrix. They relate to teacher effectiveness and have been cited in research as important factors affecting the quality of teaching and learning. They are:

- Time spent on learning (time on task)
- Teacher absenteeism
- Teacher turnover.

Given the importance of these factors, it is suggested that consideration be given to including these factors in the 2018 performance matrix and that data about these factors be collected as part of the 2017 NEAP monitoring and evaluation activities.

Goal of 2017 EPM

To improve the quality of education in Solomon Islands by improving:

- 1. The quality of teachers and teaching.
- 2. Equitable access to education.
- 3. The quality and effectiveness of educational leadership and management at all levels of the system.
- 4. The resourcing and utilisation of available education resources.

	TARGETS	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	EVIDENCE MEANS OF VERIFICATION
1.	Education Quality		
1.1	SISTA 2017 results are analysed to assess improvements in	1.1.1 SISTA 2017 results are analysed by MEHRD and the findings communicated to schools and Education Authorities	 Copy of SISTA analysis conducted by MEHRD Copy of communique to schools and EAs
	literacy and numeracy and design	1.1.2 SISTA 2017 results indicate an improvement in student numeracy and literacy at each year level assessed.	SISTA results 2017 and 2015Copy of MEHRD analysis of results
		1.2.1 Findings from SISTA 2017 are used to develop professional development programs or teacher support packages to for teachers and principals.	Copy of professional development programs or support packages
1.2	SISTA 2017 analysis is used to develop strategies to improve the quality of literacy and numeracy teaching in schools.	1.2.2 Professional development programs for teachers and principals are implemented their effectiveness evaluated.	 Copy of professional development program agendas Record of participation in any professional development programs Copy of PD evaluation report(s).
		1.2.3 Teacher and principal SISTA support materials are distributed to relevant schools.	Record of distribution of any teacher support package.
1.3	The quality of teaching in primary	1.3.1 MEHRD analyses teacher appraisal data, or establishes new data collection methods, to assess the percentage of teachers who meet the Teacher Standard and establish a baseline against which future improvement can be measured.	 Copy of analysis and reports of findings Baseline rates of achievement for each section of the Teacher Standards
1.3	and junior secondary schools is improved.	1.3.2 Increase from 2016 in the percentage of trained teachers in primary and junior secondary schools.	 Data from 2016 and 2017 showing percentage of trained teachers in schools by province. Training records.

	TARGETS	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	EVIDENCE MEANS OF VERIFICATION	
		1.4.1 Revised basic education curriculum is completed for all learning areas.	Copy of curricula completed by end of May 2018	
1.4	Curriculum support materials support the implementation of	1.4.2 Teacher support materials are developed and distributed to all primary and junior secondary schools	Copies of teacher support materialsDistribution records	
	the basic education curriculum	he basic education curriculum 1.4.3 Teacher professional development programs are designed to support the implementation of the revised curriculum.		
2.	Education Access	Education Access		
	Access to basic education for all children and young people is improved	2.1.1 MEHRD develops and publishes a strategy that identifies and plans the progressive removal of blockages to student participation in school education.	Copy of strategy document	
2.1		2.1.2 2017/2018 transition rates, for boys and girls, from Year 6 to Year 7, and from Year 9 to Year 10, improve from 2016/2017 rates.	Transition rates as reported in 2016 and 2017 Performance Assessment Reports	
2.1		2.1.3 The draft Solomon Islands National Disability Inclusive Education Plan is approved and disseminated.	Minute of Ministerial approvalDistribution record	
		2.1.4 More structured and formalised processes are implemented to collect and analyse data about the participation rates of students with disabilities in basic education.	 Data collection plan Documentation of definitions of various disabilities Data from data collection process Record of data analysis 	

	TARGETS	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	EVIDENCE MEANS OF VERIFICATION
3.	Education Management		
		3.1.1 Standards for Education Authorities are developed in partnership with EAs.	Copy of approved standards for EAs
3.1	Management capability of Education Authorities (EA) is improved.	3.1.2 Baseline data to determine strengths and weaknesses of EAs is collected and analysed.	Data and subsequent analysisBaseline figures for each component of standards
		3.1.3 MEHRD implements programs or activities to improve the management capability of Education Authorities.	Copy of programsProgram implementation recordsParticipation records
3.2	NEAP M&E Framework is	3.2.1 M&E Framework is approved by Permanent Secretary.	Copy of M&E FrameworkMinute of PS approval
3.2	developed and implemented, and data are analysed.	3.2.2 M&E data are collected and analysed.	Record of dataReport of data analysis
3.3	NEAP M&E data are analysed and reported, and used for planning	3.3.3 NEAP M&E data are reported in the 2017 Performance Assessment Report	Copy of 2017 Performance Assessment Report
3.3	and policy development purposes.	3.2.4 M&E findings are used to develop 2018 NEAP Annual Work Plan.	Analysis of 2018 Work Plan against M&E Report and 2017 PAR.

	TARGETS	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	EVIDENCE MEANS OF VERIFICATION		
4.	Education Resourcing				
4.1	The Solomon Islands Government maintains its recurrent budget allocation for education in 2017	4.1.1 At least 23% of SIG national recurrent budget was allocated to education.	SIG and Education budgets for 2017		
4.2	The 2017 recurrent allocation for	4.2.1 Allowing for inflation the 2017 recurrent allocation for the per unit cost of primary education is at least equal to the 2016 per unit cost of primary education.	Analysis of per unit allocationsEvidence of 2017 inflation rate		
4.2	Basic Education is maintained or improved	4.2.2 Allowing for inflation the 2017 recurrent allocation for the per unit cost of junior secondary education is at least equal to the 2016 per unit cost of junior secondary education.	Analysis of per unit allocationsEvidence of 2017 inflation rate		
4.3	Acquittal percentage of 2017 School Grants and distribution percentage of 2018 first tranche grants improve.	 4.3.1 At least 80 % of 2017 School Grants are retired on time 4.3.2 At least 85% of schools receive the first tranche of their 2018 School Grant by the end of March 2018. 	 Record of acquittals Record of distribution of 2018 Tranche 1 		
4.4	External Audits of MEHRD finances are conducted.	4.4.1 At least one external audit is conducted by the Auditor- General's Department or a suitably qualified outside provider.	Audit PlanAudit Report		
4.5	The economic and educational benefits of the SIG tertiary scholarship program are reviewed assessed.	4.5.1 A cost-benefit analysis of the scholarships program is designed and approved for implementation.	Study proposalMinute of PS approval		

APPENDICES

Independent Assessor Report 2017

APPENDIX 1

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE MATRIX 2016

Overarching Target: 23% of SIG national recurrent budget was spent on education in 2016

	Objective	2016/17 Target – to be achieved by 30 May 2017	Measurement	Specific reports required	Responsible
1.1	Learning Outcomes: Teacher Training Quality	10% additional teachers are assessed and appraised as meeting the standards by the Inspectorate.	Inspectors to include data on the quality of training for teachers. Baseline is: 52% Teacher Workforce Management to contribute to the achievement of better quality of trained teachers	Report on the quality of training (Inspectorates)	TPDD TSD Inspectorate
2.1	Recurrent allocation to primary education is protected	2016 per unit cost of primary education is at least equal to 2015 per unit cost of primary education indexed to inflation.	Subsector expenditure analysis using existing methodology confirms calculation (abridged)	Subsector expenditure analysis Report for the unit cost of primary education	CESS & Finance department
2.2	School finance and management of grants	2.2.1 - 70% of retirements are received by MEHRD on time (last year's target of 100% included follow-up actions by MEHRD. This year's marker was unrealistic and it is suggested that MERHD adjust the measure accordingly.	Plan approved and put into action including monitoring for how school grants contributes to improved learning outcomes	Report on the review of the School Grant Retirement to ensure quality spending	CESS, School Grants division, Retirement unit – Finance department
		 2.2.2. MEHRD disburses first tranche of grants in timely manner. 2.2.3 Strengthen skills of school leaders to effectively deploy and spend minimum 40% finances on learning material. 	Plan approved and begun implementation	Plan to train all school leaders in the newly approved, revised School Financial Management Handbook.	School Grants Unit

Appendix 1 22

Independent Assessor Report 2017

	Objective	2016/17 Target – to be achieved by 30 May 2017	Measurement	Specific reports required	Responsible
3.1	PFM Action plan implementation ongoing	100% of all activities scheduled for 2016 are completed, and all other activities are planned/ commenced.	MEHRD management approves the revised PFM Action plan (abridged)	Report on the approval of the revised PFM action plan	Finance department
3.2	MEHRD commitment to an efficient allocation of tertiary budgets, including managing risks to scholarships	 3.2.1 – Using business as usual procedures 2016 scholarships budget is not higher than 2015 scholarships budget 3.2.2 - Beyond scholarships, the baseline figures for tertiary education need rebalancing to reflect wider skills training needs. 3.2.3- Cost-sharing of scholarships is piloted, and transparency in awards and procedures are robustly promoted. 	-Cabinet approval of policy -SIMS captures all info on new and existing students, to aid decision making (abridged) -2016 expense less than 2015 budget	Report on the progress of Scholarship policy cabinet approval	NTU NTU Finance department
3.3	Partnership between MEHRD and EAs as a shared responsibility; and increasing the capacity of EAs to hold MEHRD to account	3.1 – Baseline of Provincial Education Authorities capacity.	Capacity Evaluation of PEAs, designed to plan EA capacity development	Capacity Evaluation Report	EA PE Division Inspectorate division EA group

Appendix 1 23

Independent Assessor Report 2017

		Objective	2016/17 Target – to be achieved by 30 May 2017	Measurement	Specific reports required	Responsible	
	4.1	Create a disability inclusive culture and gender inclusion	4.1. – Girls transition rate from Primary to Secondary increases.	Comparative transition rates 2015 to 2016.	PAR SIEMIS reports	SSU SSU	
	gender inclusion		4.2 - Data on disability inclusive education	Data collected, collated and analysed on student disability by disability type, school type.	PAR	SSU	
				Dialogue between Ministry and Education Authorities to reinforce girls' participation.	Report by Community Education and Schools Services	AMD	
			New government investments in dormitories to include more balanced provision for girls and boys.	Asset management report			

Appendix 1 24

APPENDIX 2

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Independent Assessor for the 2016 Education Performance Matrix

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Background

The National Education Action Plan (NEAP), 2016-2020 and the Education Strategic Framework (ESF) 2016-2030 represent the strategic planning framework for the education sector in the Solomon Islands. They establish priorities and a plan of action to improve access, quality and management of education in the medium and longer term.

The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) manages the NEAP. Two Development Partners (DPs), New Zealand and Australia, provide sector budget support.

Australia and Solomon Islands Government have agreed to set annual targets in an *Education Performance Matrix* attached to the Direct Funding Agreement (DFA) that links performance payments to achievement of the agreed targets.

The aim of these payments is to incentivise performance of the education sector. A pre requisite for any funding is that at least 22% of the SIG national recurrent budget is spent on education in the previous year. A further incentive payment will be provided annually on the achievement of annual agreed targets set out in the education performance matrix.

This year will be the fifth year that an Independent Assessor has assessed performance against the performance matrix.

2. Objective and tasks

Provide advice to all parties on the payment of the performance component of the education sector budget support, specifically:

- a) Review SIG performance against the agreed milestones for 2016 in the attached performance matrix
- b) Provide a recommendation of what performance payment should be made based on the SIG performance
- c) Provide advice on the strengths and weaknesses of 2016 performance indictors
- d) Provide advice on indicators for the next year 2017, based on MEHRD's new M&E framework

3. Qualifications and experience

- a) Extensive experience in Sector Wide Approaches (SWAp)- design, implementation, evaluation and review particularly in the service delivery sectors.
- b) Extensive experience of performance incentive programs/mechanisms.
- c) Experience in the education sector important, and knowledge of education in the Pacific and Solomon Islands an advantage

Appendix 2 26

d) Academic qualifications, i.e. master's degree or higher in a relevant field.

5. Process

- a) Document review (see list attached)
- b) Consultations with key stakeholders:
 - MEHRD executive and key division heads
 - Donor Partners

6. Reporting

- a) An early draft report.
- b) A 20min presentation of findings to the Joint Review Meeting 8 June 2017.
- c) Final report submitted to all parties no more than 2 weeks after the review on 8 June

7. Timing – up to 20 Days (travel inclusive)

- a) In country visit 3 to 10 June 2017
- b) Data collection, analysis, consultations, drafting, [date tbc].
- c) Presentation 7/8 June 2017.
- d) Final Report no later than 22 June 2017.

Key Documents

Primary Documents

- 1. Annual Work Plans 2016
- 2. MOFT Financial Report, 2016
- 3. Expenditure Analysis Report
- 4. School Grants Retirement Report for 2016
- 5. PFM Action Plan (Road Map), and progress
- 6. Performance Assessment Report 2016
- 7. DFAT and SIG Direct Funding Agreement
- 8. TSD data on the % of trained teachers

Background Documents

9. NEAP 2016 -2020

Appendix 2 27

APPENDIX 3

MID-YEAR REVIEW - WORKSHOP AGENDA



SOLOMON ISLANDS Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development

MID-YEAR REVIEW 2017

VENUE:

Monarch Grill - IBS (Iron Bottom Sound)

DATE:

Thursday 8th June 2017

CHAIRPERSON:

Permanent Secretary

AGENDA

TIME	ITEM	LEAD FACILITATOR
8:30-9:00	Arrival and registration	Logistics Team
9:00-9:05	Opening Prayer	Director NTU, Mr Clement Tito
9:05-9:15	Introduction/Welcome	Deputy Secretary (MEHRD), Mr James Bosamata
9:15-9:30	How the review outcomes will help shape Education	Permanent Secretary (MEHRD), Dr Franco Rodie
9:30-10:00	Findings of the Review	Independent Assessor, Mr Graham Dawson
10:00-10:40	Facilitated discussion	Participants
10:40-11:00	Morning TEA BREAK	All
11:00-11:20	Development Partners	First Secretary (DFAT), Ms Jane Bastin-Sikimeti, Second Secretary (MFAT), Ms Dana Avram
11:20-11:35	Questions/comments	Participants
11:35-11:50	MEHRD Finance Overview	Under Secretary Corporates, Mr Dagnal Dereveke Technical Advisor, Mr Matthew Prowse
11:50-12:20	Questions/Comments	Participants
12:20-1.20	LUNCH	All
1:20-1:35	MEHRD Progress Updates	Under Secretary NES (MEHRD), Ms Constance Nasi
1:35-1:50	Questions/Comments	Participants
1:50-2:05	PAR 2016	Manager M&E, Mr Joe Ririmae
2:05-2:20	Questions/Comments	Participants
2:20-2:35	LEAP update	Under Secretary EA, Mr Ambrose Malefoasi LEAP Co-Lead, Ms Rebecca Spratt
2:35-2:50	Questions/Comments	Participants
2:50-3:10	Afternoon TEA BREAK	All
3:10-3:30	SITESA Update	Team Leader, Mr Barry Peddle
3:30-3:50	Questions/comments	Participants
3:50-4:10	Discussion on Way Forward	Participants
4:10-4:25	Closing Remarks	Deputy Secretary (MEHRD), Mr James Bosamata
4:25-4:30	Closing Prayer	Human Resource Manageress (MEHRD), Ms Christina Tefekome

Appendix 3 29

APPENDIX 4
BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR EDUCATION 2015 & 2016

Payroll

	2015	2016
Admin	3,646,419.00	5,556,382.00
ECE	27,571,458.35	29,635,612.87
Primary	209,011,075.83	218,541,623.51
Secondary	142,863,967.43	159,577,863.93
TVET	15,992,033.19	17,470,229.70
Tertiary	698,500.20	692,083.00
Total	399,783,454.00	431,473,795.00

Other

	2015	2016
Admin	19,995,330.00	18,016,877.00
ECE	29,960,642.89	20,583,733.06
Primary	126,786,611.97	135,092,086.90
Secondary	117,329,963.48	133,616,669.99
TVET	3,500,436.86	3,782,914.67
Tertiary	224,513,957.80	323,208,301.38
Total	522,086,943.00	634,300,583.00

TOTAL

	2015	2016
Admin	23,641,749.00	23,573,259.00
ECE	57,532,101.24	50,219,345.92
Primary	335,797,687.80	353,633,710.40
Secondary	260,193,930.91	293,194,533.92
TVET	19,492,470.05	21,253,144.37
Tertiary	225,212,458.00	323,900,384.38
Total	921,870,397.00	1,065,774,378.00

Appendix 4 31

Independent Assessor Report 2017

APPENDIX 5
SCHOLARSHIPS ALLOCATIONS — 2015 & 2016

Independent Assessor Report 2017

2016

Head	SubHead	Account	Account Description	Original SET	Revised Budget	YTD Actual	Reserved	Budget To Go
272	0191	2604	Training - Other	37,521,876.00	64,812,511.00	21,579,873.76	21,579,873.76	43,232,637.24
272	0191	2605	Training - Overseas	110,588,962.00	184,820,135.00	174,619,589.84	174,619,589.84	10,200,545.16
272	0191	2718	Others - Overseas Fares	9,594,000.00	9,594,000.00	7,628,134.27	7,628,134.27	1,965,865.73
272	0191	2720	Others - Overseas Other Costs	1,189,500.00	1,189,500.00	1,185,969.76	1,185,969.76	3,530.24
272	0191	4043	MP Scholarships Award Grant	15,000,000.00	15,000,000.00	14,100,000.00	14,100,000.00	900,000.00
				173,894,338.00	275,416,146.00	219,113,567.63	219,113,567.63	56,302,578.37

2015

Head	SubHead	Account	Account Description	Original SET	Revised Budget	YTD Actual	Reserved	Budget To Go
272	0191	2604	Training - Other	38,510,372.00	18,510,372.00	16,791,114.63	16,791,114.63	1,719,257.37
272	0191	2605	Training - Overseas	133,981,715.00	153,981,715.00	134,797,348.58	134,797,348.58	19,184,366.42
272	0191	2718	Others - Overseas Fares	9,594,000.00	9,594,000.00	5,787,787.89	5,787,787.89	3,806,212.11
272	0191	2720	Others - Overseas Other Costs	1,189,500.00	1,189,500.00	1,198,153.22	1,198,153.22	-8,653.22
272	0191	4043	MP Scholarships Award Grant	15,000,000.00	15,000,000.00	14,650,000.00	14,650,000.00	350,000.00
				198,275,587.00	198,275,587.00	173,224,404.32	173,224,404.32	25,051,182.68

Appendix 5

APPENDIX 6

Transition rates - Boys & Girls: 2012 to 2016

			2012/13		2013/14			2014/15			2015/16		
	from class	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot
	Prep	88.3%	88.3%	88.3%	91.7%	87.6%	89.7%	93.4%	91.2%	92.3%	89.6%	90.9%	90.2%
	Year 1	96.0%	94.8%	95.4%	94.7%	92.0%	93.4%	93.5%	94.9%	94.2%	93.5%	93.3%	93.4%
	Year 2	96.8%	98.5%	97.6%	97.9%	96.5%	97.2%	97.9%	98.8%	98.3%	99.9%	99.6%	99.7%
	Year 3	95.1%	95.2%	95.1%	94.6%	93.9%	94.2%	93.5%	97.7%	95.5%	93.7%	95.6%	94.6%
	Year 4	93.5%	95.8%	94.6%	94.0%	93.1%	93.6%	90.9%	94.5%	92.7%	95.1%	94.8%	95.0%
	Year 5	88.4%	91.0%	89.6%	88.6%	88.3%	88.5%	88.0%	91.4%	89.6%	93.0%	91.5%	92.3%
	Year 6	92.9%	91.1%	92.0%	91.6%	94.0%	92.8%	93.4%	93.6%	93.5%	94.0%	93.9%	93.9%
Form													
1	Year 7	90.4%	89.6%	90.0%	92.5%	94.9%	93.7%	94.1%	94.5%	94.3%	92.7%	93.1%	92.9%
Form 2	V0	00.70/	00.70	00.0%	04.50	02.20/	02.0%	05.0%	0.4 50/	0.4.00/	02.20	01 40/	00.40/
	Year 8	89.7%	88.6%	89.2%	94.5%	93.2%	93.9%	95.0%	94.5%	94.8%	93.3%	91.4%	92.4%
Form 3	Year 9	126.0%	90.6%	109.2%	91.3%	84.4%	88.0%	80.0%	79.8%	79.9%	79.0%	78.4%	78.7%
Form													
4	Year 10	88.8%	85.8%	87.4%	94.2%	90.9%	92.6%	92.4%	88.0%	90.3%	92.0%	89.4%	90.7%
Form													
5	Year 11	56.7%	54.8%	55.8%	60.2%	61.7%	60.9%	60.7%	56.9%	58.9%	61.2%	58.4%	59.9%
Form													
6	Year 12	29.3%	26.4%	28.1%	23.5%	23.3%	23.4%	24.3%	23.3%	23.8%	24.1%	21.0%	22.8%

Appendix 6