THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

The Current State of Chinese Language Education in Australian Schools

October 2008

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Jane Orton, PhD
Melbourne Graduate School of Education
The University of Melbourne

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Third edition

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Context and Purpose

Australia 2008 finds itself in a new situation: there is now one country which is:

- a regional neighbour
- its largest trading partner
- a rising world economic power
- a major source of immigrant workforce
- a major source of international students
- a major source of tourists to Australia
- a major destination for Australian tourists
- the biggest source of its immigrant settlers
- a country with a long and prestigious culture
- home to 1 in 5 human beings on the Earth.

To develop the present relationship with this country, China, to great mutual economic and social benefit would require a solid pool of Australians in a range of sectors who deeply understand China and who can speak Chinese well. Figures at the end of 2007 show that fewer than 20 per cent of Australians working in China can speak the language, and only 10 per cent have studied even one China-related subject. At Year 12 nationally, a scant 3 per cent of students take Chinese, 94 per cent of whom are first language speakers of Chinese.

Report

The educational challenge to develop a strong body of China-literate Year 12 students nationally has been taken up by the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, supported by Asialink and the Melbourne Confucius Institute, and has led to this report on Chinese language education in Australia and its recommendations for future action. The report is being circulated to a nationally representative group of stakeholders. It will be the focus of discussion at a National Forum funded by the Australia China Council and hosted by the Asia Education Foundation in Melbourne on 27–28 October, 2008.

Findings

1 Retention of classroom second language learners needs to be the first priority in any campaign to increase numbers in Year 12 Chinese.

- By senior secondary school, the teaching and learning of Chinese in Australia is overwhelmingly a matter of Chinese teaching Chinese to Chinese.
- The numbers of these first language users is likely to remain stable, and they total only half the proposed 2020 target of 8,000.
- Any increase in the numbers taking Year 12 Chinese will need to come from increasing the number of classroom second language learners.
- The numbers already learning Chinese as a second language in Australia would be sufficient to meet the proposed 2020 target by 2009.
- The problem is that 94 per cent of these learners drop out before Year 12, usually once the language is no longer mandated.
- Unless this phenomenon is understood and dealt with, there seems little point in planning to expand the number of students starting Chinese at school.

2 Students who speak Chinese at home should be taught and assessed separately from students who learn the language in a classroom.

- Classroom second language students of Chinese (L2) drop out due to three factors:
  - i The presence of strong numbers of first language speakers, locally born or otherwise, who share their classes and overwhelm them in assessment.
  - ii Their lack of success in developing proficiency, which is due to the intrinsic difficulties of Chinese for an English speaking learner, combined with insufficient teaching of certain aspects, and a totally inadequate provision of time needed for the task.

iii They attempt to learn the language in an often unsupportive environment at school, in their family, and in the community.

- Learning Chinese is different from learning a European language:
  - i Over their secondary schooling, Australian language students receive some 500 hours of instruction. The Foreign Service Institute in Washington DC estimates that it takes their native English-speaking learners approximately 2,200 hours to become proficient in Chinese (600 hours for French).
  - ii Chinese as a Second Language at Year 12 requires mastery of some 500 characters, a number reached in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan in Grade 1 primary. As a result, classroom learners of Chinese cannot compete with those who speak Chinese and have mastered 2,000 characters or more.

3 A separate curriculum and assessment framework should be developed for students entering Australian schools in primary who speak Chinese at home, while a further curriculum and assessment framework should be maintained for those who speak Chinese at home who enter Australian schools only in their secondary years.

- Students who speak Chinese at home should receive education and assessment in the language appropriate to their level of proficiency. Those living in Australia by the time they begin their primary schooling should be regarded as one level – Background Speakers (BS) – and those who do not come to Australia until their secondary school years (as immigrants or international students) as another– first language user (L1). Both constitute an independent language learner set from the classroom second language learners.
- BS students and L1 citizens should be particularly nurtured as they comprise a future pool of professionals, including teacher candidates, who are bilingual, bicultural and familiar with Australian schools, relationships and learning styles.

4 There needs to be concerted, sound and innovative development in pedagogy for Chinese and in education of teachers of Chinese.

- The key difficulties for learners need particular attention and recourse to innovative practice which is studied.
- Scaffolded practice resources need to be developed for all levels of Chinese learner.
- Ways to provide frequent, sustained opportunities to hear the language used naturally, and inviting opportunities to use it productively need to be created.
- Principals, school staff, parents and community members need to be helped to better appreciate the task of learning Chinese, its value for the individual and the country, and be aware of how they may assist its success.
- Teacher education programs for pre-service and in-service participants are needed to develop teachers' expertise in helping their students meet the learning challenges of Chinese, and to be sufficiently competent in digital technology to be able to use it creatively.

Recommendations

1 Administrative action needs to be taken on the following:

- i In consultation with the Chinese Language Teachers' Federation, the Schools of Languages, Ethnic Schools Association, and the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Certification Authorities (ACACA), State and Territory departments should create three streams of Chinese learning that are officially recognised nationally and provided for in Chinese language assessment.
- ii Time spent on Chinese in all programs should be extended through increased allocation of hours, use of digital resources, and opportunities to hear and use the language in shops, restaurants, cinemas, excursions, language camps, and in-country sojourns.

iii Decisions should be made about the definition and support of Chinese classes at primary level to ensure they are language focused, have sufficient hours per week and lead to continuing development. Queensland's 'Intercultural Investigations' program, or not starting until upper Primary levels, may need to be options, at least for the interim.

iv Innovative programs should be initiated which permit seriously concentrated periods of time to be spent on the language. Queensland's late years primary intensive program, the immersion programs at primary in various cities, and Brisbane's content-based secondary Chinese program may serve as model or catalyst.

v Working with the Hanban and others in the Australian education community, standards of language proficiency and pedagogy for teachers of Chinese should be developed.

vi A survey should be undertaken of teachers of Chinese already available in Australia, and the graduate flow likely in the foreseeable future. Based on these data, recruitment plans should be developed.

2 An Australian Centre for Chinese Language Education should be established to initiate, influence and disseminate developments in:

i Public thinking – persistent, long-term advocacy and protection of developments in recognising national strategic need, changing language attitudes, understanding of the difficulty of Chinese, and length of time needed for success; and knowing how those around the learner might help.

ii Teacher education – pre- and in-service content, targeting known difficulties.

iii Teaching resources – targeted resource development of scaffolded practice material, using electronic media.

iv Innovative practice and research – promoting, monitoring and disseminating new approaches to Chinese teaching and learning, investigating gaps in understanding.

1 Introduction

1.1 The Situation

No country wants 18-year-old citizens whose education has not challenged the naturally ethnocentric worldview they held as kindergarten children, and this fundamental benefit of language learning at school, along with the cognitive skills and affective maturity it also develops, is recognised internationally.

Engaging with any new language can provide these benefits, so the choice of which language to offer in a school system or particular institution is made based on links to the local community and assumptions about the learners' eventual contact for work and leisure with people in countries where the language is used. In Australia this has most commonly led schools to offer one or more languages from among Italian, French, German, Japanese, Indonesian and Chinese.

This report was begun from a perception that, while the above principles of choice remain the same, the situation in which the choice is being made has recently changed.

In Australia 2008 there is now one country which is:

- a regional neighbour
- its largest trading partner
- a rising world economic power
- a major source of immigrant workforce
- a major source of international students
- a major source of tourists to Australia
- a major destination for Australian tourists
- the biggest source of its immigrant settlers
- a country with a long & prestigious culture
- home to 1 in 5 human beings on the Earth.

This country is China. While other countries are linked to Australia through two or three of the same factors, no country is linked to Australia through such a dense and varied set of factors as today's China now is.

Furthermore, whatever develops in the world due to economic and climate upheavals, Australia's fate is likely to remain solidly bound up with its relationship with China.

There is potential to develop the present positive Australia-China relationship to great mutual economic and social benefit, and the new situation suggests this should be done. To do so would mean engaging with China at greater depth than is currently the case. Just doing that on today's terms, however, may leave Australia suffering negative consequences from being a subordinate in the relationship. To avoid such an outcome requires the capacity to perceive and manage the risks and opportunities of the deeper engagement. This can only be achieved if there is a solid pool of Australians in a range of sectors who deeply understand China and who can speak Chinese well.

Figures from the end of 2007 show that fewer than 20 per cent of Australians working in China can speak the language at all, and only 10 per cent have studied even one China-related subject (Orton, 2007). At Year 12 nationally, a scant 3 per cent of students take Chinese, more than 90 per cent of whom are Chinese. Even in Victoria, where 33 per cent of the country's Chinese learners reside, 94 per cent of those who begin Chinese at school quit before Year 10; and beginners at university drop out at rates close to 75 per cent.

Urgent development in the breadth and quality of Chinese teaching and learning in Australian schools is needed as a matter of national strategic priority.

1.2 The Goal

The need to ensure the availability of a sufficient number of educated, work-initiated, China-literate, young people to develop Australia's deeper engagement with China is a goal shared by many members of Federal and State governments, business community leaders, educators, parents and students.

To achieve this goal, the task is to begin, as a matter of urgency, to develop a significant increase in the number of students taking Chinese to the end of secondary school, who have learned it well, a learning grounded in sound contextual studies of Asia.

While 'sufficient' is a notion that will need to be redefined in the light of unfolding events, as a start, the Prime Minister has called for 12 per cent of Australian students completing Year 12 in 2020 to be taking Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian or Korean language, a fourfold increase on the number doing so in 2008.

In 2008, the cohort of 2020 Year 12 students are in Grade 1. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2008), they number 265,746, and on current trends, 197,449 (74.3 per cent) can be expected to continue to Year 12.

12 per cent of that cohort would mean 23,694 students taking one of the four named Asian languages as part of their Year 12 studies in 2020. Division of students among the languages is purely speculative, but, proportional to size and significance, it is suggested the ratio might reasonably be something like 8,000 taking Chinese, 6,000 taking each of Indonesian and Japanese, and 4,000 taking Korean. At present there are some 4,534 students taking Year 12 Chinese, though not all are Australian citizens.

As an indicative estimate, taking the 2020 goal as a minimum aim means the number of students learning Chinese needs to double.

1.3 Response

The educational challenge to develop a strong body of China-literate Year 12 students nationally has been taken up by the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, supported by Asialink and the Melbourne Confucius Institute, and has led to this report on Chinese language education in Australia and its recommendations for future action. The report is being circulated to a nationally representative group of stakeholders, including all contributors. It will be the focus of discussion at a National Forum funded by the Australia China Council and the Asia Education Foundation in Melbourne on 27–28 October, 2008.

1.4 Aim, Method and Structure

The aim of this document is to provide a critical review of the current state of Chinese language education in Australia so as to make informed recommendations for how to increase the number of students learning Chinese in the country's schools, and how to raise the quality of their learning and the proficiency level they achieve. In doing this, it has not been the intention to reproduce the huge body of information contained in the comprehensive report *An Investigation of the State and Nature of Languages in Australian Schools* (RCLCE, 2007), but drawing on that database and newer data as support, to focus on concrete feasible plans for effective future action.

Information contained in this document is based on:

i facts and figures supplied in 2008 by the Australian State and Territory Government Departments of Education, Catholic Education Offices, and Associations of Independent Schools, combined with

ii data published in various cited documents of the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and other bodies; and

iii interviews with 75 nationally spread senior school systems administrators, community language providers, language teacher associations and executive members, and a representative set of teacher educators, and of teachers in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, experience, school type and learner level.

The first section of the report provides a snapshot of the situation in facts and figures; the second section discusses the main points and makes salient the issues needing to be addressed in a drive to support and develop Chinese language teaching and learning. The third section comprises proposals for action.

The final section presents appendices which include tables of provision and participation figures provided by the various education systems and assessment bodies and other relevant documentation.

1.5 Note

Education in Australia is principally a State/Territory matter. The government and catholic education systems and the independent schools group, State/Territory by State/Territory, keep different types of statistics on their schools, programs, teachers and students, so even though figures were readily made available for this report, the data needed to make even simple aggregations and comparisons nationally are often not in existence.

Certain fine distinctions in the background of learners that would be relevant to matters discussed in the document cannot legally be collected.

What data educational authorities have available are, variously, from 2006, 2007 and 2008, while much of the published national data available date from 2005.

As a result, the figures discussed in the first sections are indicative only. Unless otherwise noted, however, it is estimated on past trends that the real 2008 figures are unlikely to vary from these by more than 1–2 per cent.

For reference, the exact figures provided by the various States/Territories sectors are presented in the series of tables in the last section of the report.

1.6 Premises

The report proceeds from the above situation and objectives. Data and discussions presented also rest on the following basic beliefs.

1 **Making contact with and gaining entry to a new civilisation is always one of the great educational experiences available to human beings, and is not a simple process.**

To promote the learning of a particular language for utilitarian needs is not to call for any reduction in this educational experience. This is not proposed in order to seem 'politically correct'. Rather, it reflects understanding of what is required to achieve the desired outcome. In the same way that Australian professional and business area people have to be well-educated in English to achieve at work, being able to manage relationships and work matters with Chinese colleagues in Chinese society also demands being well-educated in Chinese and by the experience of learning it.

2 **Remembering the linguistic elements of a language correctly is a necessary but not sufficient condition for attaining proficiency in using it.**

To be able to understand the language used by people in a different society from one's own, and to use it successfully in interaction with them, is not just a matter of learning vocabulary and grammatical structures, pronunciation and spelling. These elements are involved in conveying meaning, but using language competently entails also being able to interpret beyond surface meaning to reach understanding of what the speaker or writer may be intending to say in the context, and being likewise understood as one intended oneself. This entails being able to read the context, and it is the knowledge required for that, and the skill in doing it instantaneously, that constitute proficiency in the language.

3 Learning a language is a multi-faceted process aimed towards integration of all facets.

To develop an educated proficiency in a language requires

i learning a considerable amount of social information, contemporary and historical;

ii recognising how the language reflects and shapes these factors – that there is a separate word for 'older brother' and for 'younger brother' in Chinese, for example, because age has been the significant marker of rank in Chinese society and hence makes a difference in any relationship, a value drawn from the basis of Chinese society: family structure and role;

iii having a great many opportunities to observe the language in use and practise using it; and, not least,

iv achieving proficiency in intercultural interaction, which requires a parallel development of learners' self-awareness about their own culture and society, and about how these are also reflected in language use.

4 There is no call for every school student in Australia to learn Chinese.

While it is proposed here that the number of schools offering Chinese and the number of students learning Chinese be increased as a matter of priority in Australia, the educational value of all language learning is endorsed, and the continued teaching of other languages in Australian schools is supported.

2 Provision

Table A: Number of Schools Offering Chinese and Number of Students Taking Chinese in Australia by State and School Type

States and Territories	School Type	Number of Schools	Number of Students (Primary + Secondary)	Number of Year 12 Students
Australian Capital Territory	DET AIS CEO	12 (2008) 1 No data	625 (2008) No data No data	150 (2008) No data No data
New South Wales	DET AIS CEO	No data 15 (2008) No data	18,532 (2005) 4,279 (2008) 1,325 (2007)	538 (2007) 75 (2008) No data
Northern Territory	DET AIS CEO	1 (2008) 0 (2008) 0 (2008)	602 (2008) 0 (2008) 0 (2008)	10 (2008) 0 (2008) 0 (2008)
Queensland	DET AIS CEO	No data 41 (2007) 11 (2008)	No data 7,021 (2007) 1,994 (2008)	194 (2008) 176 (2007) 41 (2008)
South Australia	DET AIS CEO	38 (2007) 22 (2008) 6 (2006)	5,586 (2007) 3,547 (2007) No data	211 (2007) 90 (2008) 62 (2007)
Tasmania	DET AIS CEO	11 (2007) 1 (2008) 0 (2008)	528 (2007) No data 0 (2008)	39 (2007) No data 0 (2008)
Victoria	DET AIS CEO	80 (2006) 42 (2008) 26 (2007)	15,603 (2006) 12,251 (2008) 5,242 (2007)	2,823 (2006) No data 54 (2007)
Western Australia	DET AIS CEO	12 (2008) No data 0 (2008)	No data 318 (2008) 0 (2008)	71 (2008) 0 (2008) 0 (2008)
TOTAL		319	77,453	4,534

2.1 Schools

Chinese is taught in all States and Territories in Australia in a total of 319 schools. In Victoria, where there is the greatest number of students taking the language, Chinese is taught in government, catholic and independent schools, and in several centres of the government's Saturday Victorian School of Languages, as well as by its Distance Education service, and it is also taught in a number of weekend Ethnic Schools. This widespread provision is mirrored in New South Wales and South Australia, and in Queensland and the ACT, schools within the three sectors and the Ethnic Schools Association offer the

language. In Western Australia and the ACT, Chinese is offered in the government and independent sectors, and in Ethnic Schools, and in Tasmania and the Northern Territory it is offered in the government and independent sectors. The difficulty of finding and holding a language teacher in country Australia means that Chinese is rarely taught outside large urban areas, and in remote area schools the only provision for language learning for the few who seek it may be through distance education.

Provision figures are not easy to compare, however, as even what constitutes 'a school' varies across sectors. A secondary school in one State may mean Years 7–12, in another only Years 8–10, and in other cases 'a school' includes the full span from Prep–Year 12. In the independent sector, what is counted as one school may, in fact, include two or more discrete campuses, each with a full cohort of students and an almost totally separate staff.

While first language users may be found in classrooms around the country working side-by-side with classroom learners, they take a separate course and examination in Year 12. However, while international students coming from Chinese societies are included in this group, the rules for determining allocation for local students as first or second language learners are not uniform around the country.

2.2 Programs

Primary language courses may be mandated or elective, and primary Chinese courses may be totally directed at second language learners, as they are in Queensland, or almost entirely community language programs for those who speak Chinese at home, as they are in New South Wales. In many primary schools, if second language learning does occur, it does not begin until Year 4 or even later. In other cases primary language programs are run from Re/Prep–Year 6.

Within all school sectors, the term 'Chinese program' can cover a wide variation in style of delivery, actual content taught and time allocated. In quite a number of cases in all sectors, a 'Chinese program' in primary schools amounts to little more than familiarisation activities such as cooking, counting to 10, and drawing a few characters. To acknowledge the low place of language learning involved, these programs are sometimes – and erroneously – referred to as 'culture courses', or 'studies programs'.

In Queensland, schools are permitted to choose to offer such a program, formally called 'Intercultural Investigations', in place of a Key Learning Area language program in which solid work on language is mandatory.

A commonly remarked on point of tension in primary second language Chinese is the predilection of native Chinese speaking teachers for spending a considerable proportion of what little time is available teaching characters using flashcards, even with five-year-olds in Prep, while native English speaking teachers aim to engage young learners only through oral activities such as singing, stories and games, and the language of classroom organisation, an emphasis they prefer to maintain even when reading and writing have been introduced in the later years.

There are two government primary school bilingual Chinese programs in Melbourne, both hailed as successful by their schools. One has a high percentage of ethnic Chinese children, the other a relatively small number of ethnic Chinese, although the students are from a high proportion of other immigrant groups. New South Wales also has a primary immersion school and in Queensland some primary schools have adopted an intensive program of one hour per day of language work over the final two years of Primary (Years 6 and 7), amounting to some 400 hours in total. Chinese is among the languages that have been taught in this way for four years to date.

Secondary programs are fairly uniform across the country. In many schools there is not sufficient demand to enable absolute beginners, students who have had primary language studies and students who are proficient in the language to be taught in separate streams. In some private schools with strong primary programs, there may be beginner and ongoing streams in early secondary and later, as more international students enter the school, there may be a native speaker stream as well.

In Queensland, as an option for those who have done well in the 400 hours in the Primary program, a secondary program is available offering 60 per cent of content in Years 8–10 taught in the target language. The first cohort in this type of Chinese program is now in Year 9 and as in the other languages in which the program is offered, it is being hailed by all involved as a great success, both in terms of target language development and participant students' progress in *all* areas of study.

In New South Wales, in the most commonly taught languages including Chinese, and in mathematics, English and a small number of other subjects, all students taking Year 12 units who have achieved 80 per cent in their Year 11 units may opt to do an additional unit of study, called *Extension*. In 2008 the course of study is of a Mainland Chinese feature film. There are no additional benefits to taking an Extension unit in terms of certificate completion or entrance to post-secondary education. It is taken for intrinsic interest in high standard study. In 2008, there are 23 students taking the Extension unit in Chinese.

2.3 Time Allocation

Whatever its content, the most common time allocation for a primary Chinese program is one hour per week, although there are many schools where only 30 minutes are offered per week. The favoured norm is for the hour to be scheduled as 3 x 20-minute sessions of intensive oral work in Chinese only; however, it is also common, but considered less desirable by many second language teachers, that the hour is allocated as 2 x 30-minute sessions. Children's attention tends to fade after 20 minutes, and hence in these cases some 10 minutes of each session are likely to be spent on paper activities in which the children inevitably revert to using English, thus effectively reducing the weekly time spent using Chinese by 33 per cent.

Across the country there is an obligation for all secondary schools to provide language programs in the first 2–3 years, with a minimum of 120 hours per year generally accepted as constituting 'a program'. In New South Wales, however, language study need only total 100 hours of a student's entire secondary schooling. While most often done in Years 7 and 8, in NSW and some other States it is also possible to begin a language, including Chinese, in Year 11. Middle and senior years Chinese programs usually comprise at least 130 minutes per week, and senior classes may have up to 270 minutes per week in independent schools.

In all sectors across the country, the allocation of class hours for the different languages taught in schools is the same. Over the period of their secondary schooling, the learner of a European language and the learner of Chinese will thus each receive approximately 500 hours of instruction.

For reference: the Foreign Service Institute in Washington DC (and similar bodies elsewhere), estimates that it takes one of their adult native English speakers approximately 600 hours of intensive learning to become proficient in a European language such as Italian or French, and 2,200 hours to reach the same standard in Chinese.

2.4 Proficiency Level

Not all States mandate a specific number of characters to be learned or identify which are a priority for school students to know, and whether 'learned' means being able just to comprehend, or also able to pronounce and write, but by the end of the most commonly used senior textbooks, *Hanyu 3* or *Ni Hao! 3*, senior secondary students will in fact have been engaging with about 500 characters. In the New South Wales HSC Chinese as a Second Language, students are only required to have mastered some 250 characters. Candidates taking Chinese as a Second Language in the Victorian Certificate of Education are required to have mastered some 430 characters from a given list. Students from the more dedicated programs may have mastered closer to 600 characters by the end of Year 12.

For reference: children in China, Taiwan and Hong Kong are required to master 500 characters in their first year of primary school. It takes mastery of some 4,000 characters to read a Mainland Chinese newspaper.

2.5 Curriculum

Languages are a Key Learning Area in all States and Territories except New South Wales and Chinese is everywhere grouped with other languages in a common curriculum and assessment framework, with specific language matters added. New textbooks, listening materials and national curricula for primary and secondary Chinese were developed in the early 1990s. Despite extensive curriculum development across Australia in the intervening years, no Chinese school curricula for use nationally have been developed since then. Those from 1993 are now considerably out of date with respect to Chinese society and language, which have both undergone radical change, and with respect to the focus on the learner and interdisciplinary work that are the norm in Australian schools, and to the nationally endorsed intercultural language teaching approach.

Some Chinese textbook series have reappeared in revised editions and some new courses and materials for practice have been developed in the years since then. The range is still quite narrow, however, with only two or three textbook series still commonly used throughout Australia. Since 2000 there have also been some important developments in interactive computer based materials available for learning Chinese, especially for the beginner-intermediate levels of proficiency. They include the government funded Le@rning Federation resources as well as local and overseas commercial products. Materials used for senior levels in addition to the standard textbooks are usually modules of work compiled by teachers, and these are often shared across schools through teacher associations.

There have also been some publications aimed at assisting the teaching of Chinese and other Asian languages published by or for governments in Australia in the past few years and recently a number of more generic language teaching documents, such as the Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning in Practice project (UniSA, 2007), which focused on Asian languages in its first phase.

A great many imported Chinese language materials are published in Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, China and North America. These are used especially in teaching first language speakers. Those intended for the classroom second language learner of any age have been less positively accepted in Australia. This is in part because even a small variation in the character pool they have made use of from those in the local textbooks which students have been learning can transform reading a page of text as a flow into a series of stops and starts to check unknown characters, which quite destroys meaning and hence any hope of practice. Teachers are also critical of the assumed learning style and aims embedded in resources from Chinese societies, especially the Mainland, pointing out especially the lack of scaffolding in tasks, so Chapter 10 asks no more than Chapter 1, the constant use of Question-Answer checks which leave students dependent on the teacher to know if they are right or not, and the lack of interculturality in the interchanges, which assumes the learner to be a cultural blank whose aim is to take on Chinese meanings. Given the learners' lived experience to date and English language proficiency, this is a development which is neither feasible nor even ideally desirable.

2.6 External Programs

Most schools offering Chinese have a sister school in China and arrange a 2/3-week study tour to major Chinese sites, with a visit to the sister school, including a home stay, at least once in the life of a senior student, usually at Year 9 or Year 10 level. There are reciprocal arrangements made for students and teachers from the sister school to visit Australia. In some cases these relationships are very mature and include wider school participation, for example, by orchestras, choirs, sports teams and non-language staff.

A few independent schools have their own campus in China, where students will be based for a period of 5–6 weeks. The aim is intercultural experience and the programs are intended for those not learning Chinese at home as well as for those who are.

In 2008, among a set of programs arranged in various parts of the world funded by the International Office of the Victorian Government Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD), 20 secondary students in Year 10 from schools in one

country region of Victoria have been sent to China for a month, to collaborate on an environmental study project with students in a Nanjing high school. Some are learning Chinese at school, and their accompanying adults include two second language speakers, one a teacher of Chinese in the Region, the other the Regional Languages Officer.

2.7 Development

There has been a small annual increase in the number of schools in all sectors adding a Chinese program in most jurisdictions (numbers cited are from 1 to 3). Development is inhibited principally by lack of clear sustainability. While principals acknowledge the significance of China, many also just feel providing Chinese is 'too hard', due to difficulties with teacher supply, drop out rates and issues for students and parents over final year assessment.

In an effort to encourage the development of Chinese language programs, China's National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language, better known by its abbreviated Chinese name, the *Hanban*, conducts two-week 'Chinese Bridge' study tours to China for school principals. Dozens of principals, from all sectors and several States/Territories, have participated over the years 2006–2008.

The Hanban has provided each of the Victorian and New South Wales departments of Education with a Chinese language consultant for three years. They have also sponsored the national Chinese speaking competition for school students and in several public announcements have expressed their keenness to see an increase in the learning of Chinese by native English speakers. This was the primary aim in the establishment of Hanban Headquarters, as it is called, although in presentations at the 2008 Australian Federation of Chinese Language Teachers conference, it was also made very clear that the Hanban is increasingly appreciative of the needs and potential of first language and dialect speaker students outside China, whether local or international.

The Hanban publishes a number of resources itself and is the distribution agency for a great many more China-developed language learning resources, principally books, intended for use outside China. These have not generally met Australian curriculum norms and for the most part are not readily used by local teachers of second language learners. The Hanban also arranges courses in China for overseas teachers seeking to upgrade their language and pedagogy skills.

Finally, a key activity of the Hanban is to run the *Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi* (HSK) assessment of Chinese proficiency. Initially intended as a placement test for tertiary students going to Chinese universities, the HSK is being expanded to become the leading, if not the only, international accreditation and quality control arbiter of Chinese language proficiency for the world's teachers of the language, students, and those in the workforce. To this end, in 2007 the Hanban published the *Chinese Language Proficiency Scales for Speakers of Other Languages* and the *Standards for Teachers of Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages*. In 2008 the *International Curriculum for Chinese Language Education* appeared, presenting a standardised Chinese language curriculum for learners of all kinds (school, leisure, professional) in countries outside China.

A recent initiative of the Hanban has been to set up Confucius Institutes around the world, and there is now at least one in all State capitals of Australia, partnered by the city government and a local university. While predominantly directed at the wider community of adults, and in some cases business people, it is also open to Confucius Institutes to fulfil part of their brief supporting the learning of Chinese in local schools by sponsoring student events and professional development for teachers. A new initiative has been to promote investment in residential language camps by commercial providers.

3 Participation

3.1 Total Student Numbers

It is impossible to be exact about the numbers taking Chinese because not all systems keep records of actual student numbers, and because there are differences in what is counted as a program and it is also possible for students in some cases to be counted twice, in both a day school and a weekend class. However the variations in totals provided are likely small enough not to distort the overall picture needed for present planning.

Adding conservatively for unavailable data, students of Chinese in Australian schools are estimated to number some 84,000 in 319 schools. This compares nationally with, in round figures, 300,000 students learning Japanese and Italian, 200,000 learning Indonesian and French, and 130,000 learning German. Of those 84,000, 33,000 are in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland each have more than 20,000 students enrolled and South Australia some 9,000, with around 600 in the ACT, Tasmania, the Northern Territory and Western Australia.

The 33,000 in Victoria divide approximately 55–45 primary–secondary, and attend some 148 schools Yet only 2,800 of these are taking Chinese as a Year 12 study, of whom, by the most generous estimate, fewer than 200 are classroom taught learners. The rest, a mix of locally born, immigrant and international students, have Chinese as their first language. The figures are similar or lower elsewhere in the country.

Nationally it is a similar story: almost all of those who begin Chinese as a classroom-taught language quit before Year 10 (most, indeed, before Year 9). At a ratio around 10:1, almost all of those taking Chinese in Year 12 are Chinese first language speakers. Figures provided for learners at other levels may not distinguish between first and second language users, whether they are taking the same course or not.

As national figures are either not available or not sufficiently uniform to be used together, details of the situation in Victoria will be presented to show the breakdowns of participation, which interviews suggest are close to common throughout the country, albeit involving fewer students.

Of the 33,000 students of Chinese in Victoria:

- 15,600 are government day school learners at a ratio to 2:1 primary to secondary.
- 12,251 are in independent schools at a reverse ratio of 1:2 primary to secondary.
- 5,242 are in catholic schools (2007) at a ratio close to 1:1 primary to secondary.
- 1,900 students of Chinese are enrolled in the government's VSL Saturday programs (2005), divided almost evenly between primary and secondary levels.
- 11,274 students attend classes at Chinese Ethnic Schools (2005), held out of school hours, usually half of one weekend day. (Some of these students also take Chinese at school.)
- Enrolments in Year 7 Chinese in government schools increased by 3.2 per cent in the three years 2004–2006 and in Year 12 Chinese as a Second Language by 14.6 per cent over the same period.
- Enrolments in Chinese as a First Language dropped in those same three years by 19 per cent, but are now increasing due to an influx of candidates taking the subject overseas.

3.2 Year 12

Nationally 4,534 students took the final two units of secondary school Chinese in 2007. In most cases students are divided into first and second language candidates, all using different bases, including self-selection or allocation by years resident in Australia. Numbers in some states are extremely small, while Queensland only has L2 Chinese and assessment is entirely school-based. Data are thus hard to aggregate. Issues involving Year 12 assessment procedures, however, are common across the country, and central to any plan to increase Chinese teaching and learning in Australia. They are most easily discerned by examining the details of Year 12 assessment in Victoria, where some 33 per cent of the country's Chinese learners and more than 62 per cent of its Year 12 candidates reside.

There are three divisions of Chinese in the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE)[1] Year 12 (Units 3 & 4). In 2006:

2,716 took VCE Units 3 & 4 in Chinese, of whom:

- 1,588 took First Language (L1) Chinese (L1 = educated in Chinese medium 7+ years)
- 381 took Advanced Second Language (AL2 = more than 3 years China residence + 1 year educated)
- 747 took Chinese as a Second Language (all other students).

By way of reference, in Victoria in the same year:

- 1,698 took VCE French (the largest VCE enrolment for a language)
- 1,194 took Japanese as a Second Language
- 77 took Japanese as a First Language
- 45,000 VCE candidates took a subject at Units 3 and 4. [Note: 45 per cent of Year 11 students do at least one subject at this level.]

Fewer than half of those who sit VCE L1 Chinese are Australian citizens/residents and those who are will have been in the country for four or five years. The rest are international students, who only begin their Australian schooling in senior high school. These fee-paying students have become a lucrative market for government and private schools alike. As well, the VCE is now successfully marketed abroad for international students to take in their home countries. In 2007, some 185 students took VCE L1 Chinese in China. This shift has necessitated an upgrade in the standard of Chinese in the L1 examination to meet the expectations of L1 learners resident since birth in a Chinese society and educated for twelve years in and through Chinese.

In addition to the L1s, many of those taking Chinese as a Second Language in Year 12 are Background Speakers (BS). These are students either born in Australia or long resident in Australia, who use Chinese at home. A large percentage of these students have attended weekend Chinese school for anything up to 10 years. If they have had more than a total of three years (non-continuous) residence in a Chinese speaking society and a maximum of one year of education in a Chinese medium school, BS candidates must take the Advanced L2 assessment.

If they have had less than the stipulated time in a Chinese society and educational institution, BS take the same assessment as those whose Chinese has been learned through 500 hours of classroom instruction from Years 7 to 12. While no breakdown is available on the background of candidates taking this basic L2 Chinese, experienced teachers and examiners estimate that BS candidates outnumber classroom learners at a ratio of about 7:1.

Thus in total, only an estimated 130 of the 743 (17 per cent) presenting for VCE Chinese as a Second Language are, in fact, school language learners. Some 25 of this latter group might be ethnic Chinese or children of mixed parentage who have had little or no linguistic advantage.

1 See Appendix 1 for full details of VCAA regulations on criteria for each level.

Results show that virtually all of the top 50 students each year who score A+ (40/50 or better) even in basic Chinese as a Second Language routinely are of Chinese background.

This picture of ratios and results is the same around the country, often worse. Only Victoria provides three levels of assessment, so elsewhere the division is a simple L1/L2 divide in which BS with very high levels of language expertise are permitted to take L2 level assessment.

3.3 International Baccalaureate

A further 107 Victorian students are taking the International Baccalaureate (IB) Chinese in 2008 (data from 2 schools unavailable). 57 are taking IB Chinese A1, first language level, 50 IB Chinese B, second language level, a number matched in South Australia, and added to from every State (no records available).

IB students self select the level they take, so even native speakers may take the L2 option (however, this does have an effect on which level of English they may sit for, as in IB there must be examination in a language which has been nominated as the student's first language).

The ratio of school learners to native speakers among Victoria's second language IB students is unknown, but, in contrast to VCE, it is estimated to be perhaps as high as 70–30, and the situation in South Australia is similar. As the exam is criterion referenced and candidates are not all competing to enter the same university system, it is possible for all students to obtain high marks without causing the problem of second language learners being overwhelmed by a concentration of bilingual Chinese speakers, as occurs in the VCE and similar certificates around Australia.

IB is expensive for students and schools alike, and participation in IB in Australia is almost exclusively confined to the independent school sector, and even there, to less than 50 per cent of secondary schools. In South Australia, however, quite a number of government schools, several of which teach Chinese, also offer the program.

In sum, the Year 12 figures in Victoria show that out of the estimated 2,807 students taking Year 12 Chinese for VCE or IB, close to 1,700 students take the Chinese as a First Language assessment, some 1,158 take it as a second language, of whom an estimated maximum of 200 (7 per cent) have learned it as a school subject and do not speak Chinese at home. Of the remaining 958 students who speak Chinese at home and will have studied it in Saturday programs or Ethnic Schools, 381 take Advanced L2 assessment, and the remaining 577 are assessed with the classroom learners in basic L2.

3.4 Shifts

Numbers taking L1 Chinese in VCE have wavered over the past five years, but as demand from international students coming to Australia plateaus, increases are coming from overseas candidates buying into a university entrance examination that will allow them locally to bypass the General Aptitude Test, and is also recognised for university entrance in countries such as Canada.

As children of the first wave of post-1989 Mainland immigrants moved through school, there was an increase in Advanced L2 Chinese enrolments at the rate of some 12 per cent over 3 years to 2006, and the current level is likely to remain for a time, although without significant expansion.

Second Language Chinese in Victoria increased enrolments at the rate of about 3 per cent over the same 3 years.

Over the past five years there has also been growth in schools offering IB, especially although not exclusively, among independent schools. Languages, including Chinese, are one of the most popular IB subjects for Australians, and IB candidates in Chinese at L1 and L2 levels continue to increase annually (exact numbers are not available).

4 Teachers

4.1 Origin

Some 90 per cent of teachers of Chinese in Australia are native Chinese speakers (L1), most by far coming from the Mainland, but there are also some from Taiwan and Southeast Asia. Approximately 60 per cent of the teachers are female. Many are not fully employed teaching Chinese.

It has not been possible to gather the number of new graduating Chinese teachers per year from all States, but in South Australia the number is around 18 per year, while in Victoria it has fallen from a similar number to fewer than 12, of whom, on average, a maximum of 4 are likely to have been L2 learners themselves. The majority are from Mainland China, however 25–30 per cent are from Taiwan, most of whom will have attended 3–4 years of high school in Australia. These figures do not include native speaking teachers in Ethnic Schools and Saturday programs who are given methodology training although they may not meet normal registration requirements.

4.2 Staffing

The availability of qualified teachers is the primary concern of principals considering starting a Chinese program, and in all sectors in Tasmania and Western Australia, for example, the lack of supply has constrained development. This is especially because at least in its first few years a Chinese program will not support a full-time position, which makes it hard to find applicants in the first place, and also hard to hold any who are appointed. The staffing problem increases in country areas.

In Victoria, however, the picture is reversed, with employers estimating they receive anything up to 40 applications from trained teachers for an advertised Chinese position, 99 per cent of whom are native speakers. Many are rejected as unsuitable, however, especially by independent schools, due to poor self-presentation socially and linguistically, and to doubts about their ability to relate well to Australian children and manage a local classroom.

4.3 Preparation

In several States/Territories, as noted above, the local jurisdictions fund Chinese teacher education places in university methodology programs for those approved to teach Chinese who do not have formal language teaching qualifications. The candidates are almost all native speaking teachers, many with overseas teacher qualifications and experience. They are typically teachers in the Saturday School of Languages programs and registered Ethnic Schools, but do also include some who teach in hard to staff locations, especially in government and catholic primary schools.

After-hours programs for native-speaking teachers are often delivered in Chinese, and the focus of the course is on the specifics of teaching Chinese. In all other language teacher education programs in Australia, pre-service teachers of Chinese attend class with teacher candidates of up to a dozen other languages. Of necessity, the work is on what they have in common rather than the challenges of their particular language. As a result, unless they are lucky enough to do a practicum at the right time, intending teachers of Chinese get no training in how to teach tones, characters and the special grammatical features of Chinese.

4.4 Quality

While there are individuals who are splendid exceptions, administrators in all three school sectors throughout the country raise intercultural difficulties as a significant problem in the quality of program delivery by L1 teachers whom they do

employ, citing especially their not knowing how to relate to Australian school learners, colleagues and parents. The teachers, themselves, recount the same problems. Especially in rural areas, native speakers, who are often not comfortable with local social practices, may find themselves extremely isolated and lonely and feel even casual work in the city is preferable.

L2 teachers of Chinese are often critical of L1 teachers' pedagogical practices, especially their reliance on character teaching in primary at the expense of oral work, their inability to assist L2 learners with tone, and insistence on native-like accuracy with little regard for developing the communication strategies and modes of intercultural expression suitable for an Australian bilingual.

L2 teachers are keenly sought after by schools. However, their language proficiency level in almost all areas is often not at the desired level in phonological aspects, grammatical correctness and extent of vocabulary and characters. This is not good for second language learners and can be a source of embarrassment and friction when, as is often the case, the class includes first language speakers whose language proficiency is superior to the teacher's. L2 teachers' weaknesses in the language are often a source of exasperation, even antagonism, from L1 teacher colleagues, especially those educated overseas whose own success in English language learning demanded accuracy in linguistic systems as the key criterion, and personal diligence the only path to achieving it.

There has been no discernible improvement in the level of language proficiency of L2 speakers of Chinese presenting for teacher education in Australia since a leap in quality in Victoria nearly a decade ago following the lift in entry requirement to teacher training from two to three years of language study at university on top of a pass at Year 12. The leap was due not only to the fact that subsequent teacher candidates had taken a further year of study, but it meant that virtually without exception they had also managed to spend time in China, an experience that radically improved their linguistic competence, cultural understanding, social knowledge, and confidence. In other States the language standard for teachers is three years of university, which may have been *ab initio* or post-Year 12. In New South Wales, only two years university study are required for teachers of senior years, and even one is sufficient to teach to Year 8. Such standards can also be found in practice elsewhere, especially in hard to staff locations. Designated language teachers in primary, however, are nationally expected to have three years of university study in the language.

Mandating a uniform number of years of study for teacher candidates would solve very little, however, because, as a 2008 survey for the University of Melbourne has revealed, there is no graduating standard in languages in Australian universities. As a result, across all States and Territories even those who have completed three years may have *widely* varying proficiency in using the language they propose to teach and very differing understandings of the societies and cultures related to the language. Moreover, the only requirement is 'a pass', which makes no distinction between those who achieved an average of 90 per cent and those who achieved an average of 50 per cent.

Native speakers of Chinese who have achieved a Year 12 certificate in Australia, or have met the IELTS requirements for international students, likewise, will have widely differing levels of actual proficiency in all aspects of using English. Only in Queensland is there testing of language proficiency for intending teachers, in both English and the target language. The test lasts at least 100 minutes, is conducted by two people, one of whom is a native speaker, and a satisfactory assessment is essential for entering teacher education. The Commonwealth Government is currently funding development of standards for language teachers with the aim of improving on this state of affairs.

4.5 Teacher Aides

In addition to being teachers, there are Chinese native speakers – a number of whom are qualified teachers in Australia – employed as teacher aides in many government and non-government schools. Their actual duties vary enormously, some working co-operatively with the classroom teacher, others minding or even actively teaching more advanced background speaker students in second language

classrooms, or helping second language learners along where the class norm tilts toward the first language speaker. Little is done to assist classroom teacher and aide to develop a relationship in which the native speaker presence is used effectively. As a result, successful partnerships are an accident of circumstance, and quite often both sides are dissatisfied with their situation.

In China, postgraduate programs in Chinese as a Second Language for students who have graduated as majors in English have begun to spring up and the Hanban has become the agency for brokering practicums for these students to work as Chinese language teacher aides in various parts of Australia. In the Western Sydney Region of the NSW Department of Education, such an arrangement has been brokered directly between the Regional director and his counterpart in the large coastal port city of Ningbo just south of Shanghai. It involves seven (to become ten) students taking a Masters degree at the University of Western Sydney while also being available as a native speaker resource to the region's schools. Not long into its first iteration, the project is being hailed as hugely successful in the eyes of those involved, and another benefit has been the enormously positive collaboration it has engendered between all involved in the schools, the Regional Office, the university and the very outgoing Chinese participants themselves.

The participants were the seven successful applicants for the program whom the Ningbo Municipal Bureau of Education whittled down from 100 aspirants – all with the required $36,000 available as required by Australian immigration regulations.

4.6 Professional Development

4.6.1 Sectors

In all States/Territories the various sectors run professional development activities for Chinese teachers, sometimes specifically on matters of Chinese, but more often directed towards all language teachers, or towards a whole school or school cluster in a district. Although all sectors have their own programs, as in other learning areas, language teacher sessions are quite commonly open across sectors, and sometimes even co-operatively organised. The degree to which the sectors collaborate over professional development with the Chinese language teacher association groups or Confucius Institutes varies widely across the country.

4.6.2 Teacher Associations

The Chinese Language Teachers Federation of Australia (CLTFA) was established in 1994 by the three State-based associations then in existence (WA, SA, Vic), which later increased to six (NSW, QLD, ACT). Funded on a capitation basis by the State organisations, the CLTFA produces a national newsletter, holds an annual conference in rotating capital cities, and organises a national speaking competition for students.

State associations vary considerably in size, with some 400 members in Victoria but fewer than 100 in New South Wales. State associations run regular meetings and in-service sessions and also publish newsletters. They are funded through subscription and receive a Commonwealth government grant distributed by State governments for use in funding professional development and maintaining a website. In 2008 in Victoria, for example, the grant amounted to $12,000, which was used to pay country teachers' costs for attending association meetings held once a term, and as a subsidy for members to attend the national conference in Canberra.

The last 15 years have seen considerable curriculum development throughout Australia in all learning areas including languages. A great deal of association work has involved the writing and sharing of study units in accordance with new guidelines and the development of assessment processes in the senior years. In both South Australia and Victoria some dissatisfaction with the perceived narrowness of focus of the State association has led to establishment of a second professional group of Chinese teachers, in both cases with the aim to focus more directly on curriculum design and pedagogy, especially in the middle years. In some cases, also, primary teachers of Chinese meet separately on an informal network basis.

4.6.3 Language and Methodology Programs

The Australian Government's National Endeavour Fellowships program sponsors a 3-week language upgrade course in China during January for in-service teachers and newly graduated teacher candidates. Typically some 30 from all over Australia participate, half of whom may be background speakers.

The Hanban has sponsored mid-year Chinese language upgrade programs in China for teachers, which include introductions to its own methodology and teaching materials. In Victoria in 2007 such a program ran successfully, but in 2008 the teacher language program was cancelled due to insufficient applicants.

The Hanban has also offered in-service programs taught by their own teacher educators brought to Australia especially for the program, and by local language educators.

4.7 Summary

The teaching of Chinese in Australia is very small-scale compared to other languages commonly taught in schools.

While Year 7 numbers have increased at a rate of about 3 per cent over the past three years, close to 94 per cent of students learning Chinese at school give up once it is no longer compulsory.

By senior secondary school, the teaching and learning of Chinese in Australia is overwhelmingly a matter of Chinese teaching Chinese to Chinese.

5 Discussion

5.1 Goal – What Is Realistic?

84,000 first language (L1), background speakers (BS) and classroom second language (L2) students combined are learning Chinese in Australia in 2008, but fewer than 4,600 of them are in Year 12. Assuming Year 11 has an equivalent number to Year 12, **there is an evident attrition rate of some 94 per cent of learners before the senior years.**

As noted, almost all L1 and BS students begin the study of their home language at an early age, and then persevere with Chinese studies until the end of their schooling. This means that **the quite massive drop out numbers are entirely made up of classroom second language learners.**

While L1 and BS numbers seem likely to be maintained in the next decade, there is no reason to predict a significant increase. This means that only an increase in the number of L2 classroom learners taking Year 12 Chinese as a Second Language can lead to a substantial increase in the number of Australian candidates taking Year 12 Chinese.

There are two ways that number can be increased: greater retention of existing students, and more starters. Given the national total of 84,000 students taking Chinese, and doubling the Year 12 total of 4,600 to account for Year 11 students, leaves 74,800 learners taking Chinese in the years Prep–Year 10. A maximum 8,000 of these may be expected to be L1 (L1 numbers increase dramatically in Year 11 due to incoming international students), and some 23,000 of them will be BS. This leaves some 43,800 L2 students learning Chinese up to Year 9, an average *equivalent* to 4,380 per year level. This figure is equivalent to the current shortfall of 4,300 from the target of 8,000 in Year 12. If they were all retained, the 2020 goal would be reached in 2009 and every year thereafter.

There is no suggestion that a 100 per cent level of retention might be feasible, nor that no new starters would be desirable. But the estimates do provide a rough formula for gauging how many new students need to keep starting in established Chinese programs and, depending on their retention rate, how many are needed to start in new Chinese programs, if the total of 8,000 is to be achieved.

5.2 The Situation – What Would Be Different This Time?

The drop out from L2 Chinese once it is no longer mandatory is usually after 2–3 years of study. Still more quit after a further elective year at Year 10, despite their clear investment in the language. This situation is the fundamental challenge to plans to retain greater numbers or to increase starters. It is all the more troubling in light of the government initiated drive two decades ago to produce 'Asia literate' graduates from Australia's schools by the year 2000, among whom there were to be solid groups linguistically proficient in Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian and Korean, to serve the country's economic interests. In the early and mid-1990s, numerous projects were funded to promote and assist all aspects of Chinese teaching and learning at every level and in a variety of modes. Compared to the situation for the languages before that movement, there were great and lasting improvements made, notably in curriculum design, assessment procedures, and textbooks for school learners, and in the spread of Chinese programs offered.

The Asia literacy drive, however, faltered mid-decade and was all but dead by turn of the century. When the shift back to the goal of Asia-literacy arose recently, school sector administrators were fundamentally cool. While appreciating the growing significance of China in Australian life, their primary instinct was that Chinese, in particular, had proven *too hard*. 'What would be different this time?' they asked in interviews. 'Just more of the same's not going to work.'

To have any hope of doing more that is significantly better, it is essential to understand the causes of the current huge losses and to consider options for how the situation could be improved.

It is, likewise, imperative to understand this before any campaign is mounted to increase the number of students beginning Chinese, so as to know how to prevent any new programs from being similarly short-term only.

On investigation three primary causes of classroom second language learners of Chinese discontinuing their studies can be identified, all of them potentially remedial:

1. The deterrent of being in class with, and competing unsuccessfully in examinations with, students who speak Chinese at home.
2. The generally poor level of proficiency achieved by most classroom learners.
3. The commonly poor support for their study from schools, parents and the community.

These factors are addressed in turn in the section below.

5.3 The Deterrent

In much of the recent discussion of Asia literacy, the topic centres on the teaching and learning of Asian languages. Yet only at the most generic level of planning is this a common entity.

The difference in the nature of the task of learning any one of the four is substantial, and the task of learning Chinese in today's Australian schools is unique for a complex of reasons which, combined, make it both quite *different* from any other language taught in schools, and much *harder* to succeed at. Any planning that does not recognise these two factors is doomed.

The first difference that needs to be recognised is that the three groups, L1, BS and L2 students, constitute three separate entities of learners of Chinese, which by secondary school are as different as 5-year-olds, 12-year-olds, and 17-year-olds. Yet BS and even L1 students are often a solid component of an L2 learner's class group, and BS students are everywhere a crushing presence in L2 Year 12 assessment. Classroom learners of Chinese who are still there in Year 12 are told to work hard but 'just do it for the love of it, don't expect a high score'. No one would suggest this to students of mathematics or chemistry.

In a recent study of language learners who opted to continue beyond the compulsory years (Curnow & Kohler, 2007), students dutifully ticked all the boxes on how useful a language might be in the future and what economic benefits would accrue to Australia from a bilingual workforce, and then one disclosed: 'I know languages are important, but that's not why I'm doing one.' A further probe revealed that this was a common view, which became the key finding of the study. What actually keeps them going, they said, are the rewards of the present: primarily, that it is something they can do well in; and, secondly, something they enjoy doing with their classmates and teacher. It is a view which matches research in motivation over decades (e.g. Dornyei, 2001). **The possibility of success needs to be provided for all learners of Chinese if there is to be any hope that they will continue.**

A second qualitative difference about Chinese is the solid numbers involved at each level. Although all three groups are also represented in the other Asian languages, and cause similar problems, there are only 77 taking the VCE Advanced L2 Japanese assessment, while 1,194 take L2 Japanese, and the numbers are similar in Indonesian. There are also L1 and BS students taking VCE in European languages, who are all assessed with the L2 learners. As in Chinese and the other Asian languages, virtually all L1 and BS students presenting in European languages do obtain A+. But in all languages except Chinese the small number involved means there are still places left in the top bracket for classroom L2 learners.

An even more significant difference in this matter is that 500 hours of secondary school study of a European language can bring a diligent, reasonably bright beginner in Year 7 inside the proficiency range of an educated BS/L1 student by Year 12: they *can* compete. All the more so in Romance languages, where they can expand their vocabulary by converting a great deal of their formal English using patterns of change they are familiar with by then. By Year 12 the

same diligent, reasonably bright L2 student has the Chinese characters of a Grade 1 student in China: they *can't* compete.

5.4 Transforming the Deterrent

Most students of Chinese in Australia find themselves in classes shared with at least one other group than their own, and often all three levels are in together. In practice, the class standard tends to tilt towards the majority group, whichever it might be. In government schools, in particular, there will often be large numbers of background and native speakers, and as a result genuine classroom learners in government schools rarely persevere. Only some independent schools may have the numbers and the means to provide separate streams from early on, or at least to employ a teacher's aide to allow the teacher to give direct attention to one group and then the other.

BS students have proficiency in exactly those areas of most difficulty to classroom L2 learners – grammatical accuracy, vocabulary size, and phonological authenticity – and thus they start from owning a standard in Chinese few of the L2 group will ever be able to match. Nonetheless, background speakers have considerable language learning needs of their own. They range in proficiency right across the spectrum, and those whose home language is either dialect or has not been maintained particularly solidly may, themselves, feel defeated by the dazzling proficiency of standard speakers who have had years in a Chinese school. And even the most proficient local native speakers can be outdone in secondary examinations by those just off the plane from China or, indeed, still in China but sitting the same exam.

It is neither desirable nor fair to either group to have the 12-year-olds playing Drop the Hanky with the 5-year-olds, and it is no more desirable or fair to have them on the football field with the 17-year-olds. If students are accepted into Chinese classes in the school system, they have the right to be taught what they do not know and what is within their capability. And in assessment, if a learning area is offered on the school curriculum, a good student who has worked diligently has the right to aspire realistically to obtaining a top grade. Competing with background speakers, however, means effectively no classroom L2 learner will have these conditions or these results. While a local 5-year-old BS student will be reasonably equal to a 5-year-old L1 student in a Chinese society, as L1 students continue their growing up in the Chinese society and go through schooling in a Chinese medium, they open up a huge lead over those first language users living in Australia, especially in their literacy level. Thus by secondary school, the local BS student has a problem if s/he is put in with L1 students similar to that experienced by the L2s with BS students. While separating them is obviously administratively complex and costly to provide, from the perspective of learning, there is useful work for each of the three groups to develop their Chinese and it is in the interests of the country that they all be enabled to do so.

While separate classes for groups working at separate levels is the goal, it is certainly possible and even beneficial to have mixed levels together at times – so long as they are collaborating on something of use to each, and one is not crushing the other.

BS students need to be recognised as a very valuable group: they are local graduates who will form the base of a bilingual, bicultural professional pool. Proficient in Chinese and personally familiar with and competent in the Australian education system, the 2,100 BS students currently graduating in Year 12 are the obvious best recruitment target for future teachers of Chinese.

The lack of a clear BS curriculum and assessment level in secondary robs Australia of the thousands of would-be classroom L2 learners who every year quit, discouraged by excessive competition, and leaves those who already have a starting proficiency often going nowhere in developing their language in ways they and the country would most benefit from.

It is of critical importance to develop an essential learnings framework and senior years study guide for BS Chinese which could be adopted nationally. Solid expertise and resources for BS Chinese already exist in Saturday programs and Ethnic Schools and could be drawn on in doing this.

5.5 Managing Allocation to Level

While there has been considerable care paid to finding legally sustainable criteria for deciding who is LS, BS and L1, linguists can provide no clear lines to apply (e.g. Treloar, 2003). What they can say is that (i) normal children speak their first language well by the age of three; (ii) continuing socialisation with family and other adults and children, with or without a base of formal education in play groups and kindergartens, means that a 5-year-old is a formidably proficient language user with respect to a beginning learner in a society where it is not the major language; (iii) due to this experience and the continuing use of the language at home that develops the background speaker's expertise, **BS students are inappropriate classmates for the classroom L2 learner from the moment they enter schooling at five**; and, (iv) like native speaker children anywhere, this still means BS students have a lot of language development needs of their own.

Those who speak Chinese may be directed to the government subsidised Ethnic Schools Chinese programs taught after hours. While some parents do protest this situation, it is more often on the grounds that their children should be catered for at day school than that they should be allowed to go to class with beginner learners of the language. The University of Technology Sydney divides in-coming students along the same lines, regardless of which assessment they took at Year 12 or what score they achieved. Division is on the basis of a short oral test and, as in Queensland, students may appeal decisions if they can show evidence to the contrary. Students are also directly advised they may be moved in or out, up or down, if their actual proficiency proves to be different from the level first decided on.

Being able to get A+ in Year 12 would do much for retention of L2 students. The challenge would be to show BS students and their parents that they, too, can still get A+ working at a level that stretches them, *and* that there is value in working at a level that allows growth. The experience of the New South Wales Year 12 Extension Unit is pertinent here, as it gives clear evidence students can be interested in risking to work at a higher level just for sheer prestige and pleasure.

The practice of awarding bonus points for Year 12 language students appears to be effective as an incentive, so a 3-point bonus for doing more advanced Chinese could add practical value to the choice to do BS level. (Waiving HECS fees seems to have been less effective.) This could also apply to L1 students, to discourage them from attempting to be allocated to what may be a narrower or easier BS assessment level.

A third incentive for all students to continue to Year 12 Chinese should be the chance to continue developing their Chinese in appropriately tailored streams of study at university. At present, students who have passed Chinese at Year 12 enter a continuing stream at university or one comprising L1 and BS students (and a third beginner stream is also available). However, by second year in many universities the levels have collapsed into two or even one. This again often leads to dropout, in part from blocks to success at the top for even the excellent L2 student, but also from their sense of futility because the scaffolding they need to master the very high level of proficiency is not made available. That is to say, they are often no longer being taught, but left to make it at the L1 level any way they can. Some do make it, but many of those who continue graduate only half knowing a lot.

There is no end point in language study and use, so a tertiary program needs to permit students who enter from all three Year 12 levels to find up to four years of worthwhile study available to them. The point would be to nurture their development appropriately, while aiming for them to be taking classes together as soon as they are able.

In such a program, L1 students would find eight semesters of study anticipating their level of proficiency: a pool of subjects across the range of humanities and social sciences; BS students would have a first year tailored to bringing them up to L1 standard, especially in literacy – though any who were ready to join L1 level from the start would do so. L2 learners would continue to be developed and gradually move to taking classes at the L1 level. *Ab initio* students would move to L2 courses in their second year and finally to L1 level in their fourth – with individuals moving earlier if they were able.

Table B: Tertiary Paths at Four Levels

Level	Each column represents one semester in a 4-year course and each square shows the level of study for the group as a whole for that semester. Thus all begin study in their first year, but at different levels. Tailoring for individuals to move towards Advanced more quickly is also possible. Semester content may include more than one course and cross-level grouping for certain courses could occur. The criterion would be that all accepted can continue to develop and the reasonably bright and diligent might realistically expect to do well.							
Ab Initio	BEG. 1	BEG. 2	L2 1	L2 2	L2 3	L2 4	ADV	ADV
L2	L2 1	L2 2	L2 3	L2 4	ADV	ADV	ADV	ADV
BS	BS 1	BS 2	ADV	ADV	ADV	ADV	ADV	ADV
L1	ADV	ADV	ADV	ADV	ADV	ADV	ADV	ADV

While many Australian universities have a structure not dissimilar to that in Table B, there is rarely the tracking of groups and individuals which would ensure the quality of development the country is seeking.

The above sets out a basic school-based framework for retaining and developing students at all three levels of proficiency. There are other activities which can help to speed up and expand proficiency, especially for L2 learners. These are discussed in the section below as part of the issues concerning pedagogy.

5.6 Pedagogical Challenges and Proficiency

Surrounded by competent users who provide the language in constant and undemanding interaction, virtually all babies naturally learn their mother tongue well and without apparent distress.

By contrast, language learning in a school classroom is highly artificial: there may be only one person available with competence in the new language; the students (and teacher) already share a common language in which they are competent, should they wish to interact; and at best the learners spend on average a total of six hours a week, inside and outside class, engaged with the language – often less – while they are using English in rich and diverse ways for hours every day, and maybe another language at home as well. These circumstances in which language learning takes place pose considerable pedagogical challenges. In addition to these difficulties which it shares with other languages taught at school, Chinese as a second language poses some very particular learning difficulties for speakers of English.

The result of these environmental and linguistic factors is that even among those who persevere with their Chinese studies, many students do not achieve a high proficiency in the language. This, too, is a major deterrent which needs to be understood and addressed if the number of students learning Chinese in Australian schools is to increase, and the quality of their learning, and the proficiency level they achieve, are to be raised. These difficulties are examined in the section below, beginning with those which are fundamental to the language, and concluding with those which derive from the learning situation.

5.7 Intrinsic Language Difficulties

All languages present learners with some difficulties, areas which seem particularly expensive to acquire, and they usually have some bargains to offer as well. Chinese is no exception. The word order in a Chinese sentence is close to that of English, there are no gender divisions for nouns, nor declension endings to mark case; the verb has one form for all occasions – whereas each French verb, for example, has 72 forms. However, Chinese has four challenges for the English speaking learner: tones, homophones, characters, and the system of particles and verb complements. They are very particular challenges, the first three peculiar to Chinese among languages taught in Australian schools, and the result is that the average competent learner will take 3.5 times longer to master Chinese than s/he would take to master a European language.

5.7.1 Tone

Tone makes a difference to the meaning of a syllable, for example, *ma*, in the same way that a vowel makes a difference in meaning of English words like *pan* and *pen*. Unused to tonal variation as marker of such a difference, English learners have a great deal of difficulty hearing, for example, *má* as different from *mà*, unless it is isolated and exaggerated. While babies are able to pick up the sound system of whatever language is in their environment, the ability to hear distinctions that do not occur in one's own language becomes reduced once childhood is passed. However, there are no few English speakers who have learned to hear and speak very good, tonal Chinese after the age of 15, so success is a real possibility. Four factors can make the difference: realising what tone means for comprehension; accepting the need to attend to tone; opportunity to hear a lot of spoken Chinese in relaxed circumstances; certain physical exercises which re-educate the whole body to the rhythm and melody of Chinese, including tone.

To understand English a competent user must be able to hear the word 'home' as the same in both an incredulous 'You're going *hò-óme*?' and a curt command 'You're going *hòme*!'. It entails attending to the phonemes /h/ /oe/ /m/ and discounting the emotional changes of voice. To understand Chinese a competent user must attend first to the *tonal* character of the syllable /˝/ and only secondly to the phonemes /m/ /a/. Once learners understand that this is their task, they can fruitfully do exercises which have them identifying just the tone of syllables. These, combined with frequent guided listening opportunities which focus on tone and tonal flows, not the pronunciation of words, as well as production exercises using kinesic support, can all lead the average learner to a much greater perception of tone and a capacity to produce tonal flows that are at least highly comprehensible to native speakers, and often close to native speech.

While textbooks and teachers all describe the sounds of the Chinese language with its four tones, it is generally a vain search to find anything from either source about *how to learn them* beyond 'listen and repeat'. Just as English speakers are rarely able to suggest anything to Spanish speakers who cannot distinguish between *pan* and *pen*, Chinese teachers are often mystified by their students' difficulty hearing something so clear to their ears as the difference between *mà* and *má*. While some do introduce kinesic support using hand movements in practice, most just let go unremarked students continually asking, for example, 'What tone is *ma*?', a question which shows the student still using English habits, focusing on the phonemes and separating tone from them. If they are ever to become tonal, students need to learn to ask the question: 'Is this *má* or *mà*?' If they do not learn to hear and use tone, they are left permanently parked on a siding, with no hope of developing in the language. Furthermore, they know it. Like being asked to sing the words of a poem without knowing the melody, language learners are highly conscious of not knowing how to sound right and become embarrassed and resistant to opening their mouth.

5.7.2 Homophones

Standard Chinese syllables – most words in their own right – consist of a vowel, a consonant + vowel or either of these + /n/ or /ng/. In total there are only 400 syllables that can be made of these combinations, and only some 75 per cent of possibilities are actualised in the language when these are multiplied by tone variation, which leaves Chinese made up of only some 1,200 different syllables. One result of this is a very large number of homophones. There may be more than 20 words all pronounced exactly the same, and half a dozen common words for many of the most commonly encountered syllables, two or three of which might be real possibilities in an utterance. Scanning in relation to context and other syllables helps to eliminate all but the one possibility. To do this means English speakers need to adjust their first language listening habits, and if they are not to get lost scanning possibilities ['Which *shí* might that be?'] too slowly to keep up with speech delivered at normal spoken speed, they need a great deal of focused listening practice.

5.7.3 Characters

Even syllables which sound the same in Chinese are written with a separate character. The connection between the two is arbitrary, in the same way as sounds are attached to numerals: there is no /t/ in 2. However, about two fifths of characters do have some phonic connection between one element and sound, thus an element pronounced 'ching' may recur in several characters all pronounced 'ching'. There are some 48,000 known characters used since antiquity. A scholar might know about 8,000 characters, while only some 4,000 are needed to read a modern Mainland newspaper. Australian classroom learners in Year 12 have learned 500. Characters are not conceptually difficult for students, but they are laborious to learn and confusingly alike.

After initiation into the sign-sound combinations of an alphabetical writing system, most words heard can be written and most written words can be pronounced, and this facility leaves the learners generally able to write whatever they can say and facing only the task of vocabulary accumulation. In Chinese, however, the strokes that make up the written form of a character, plus the sound (pronunciation) of the character, plus its meaning, are three independent elements all needing to be learned. It is quite possible to be able to look at and understand written Chinese without being able to make a sound for any of the characters on the page; just as it is possible to read characters aloud quite correctly and not know what they mean; and one can know how to say a word and understand its meaning, but not be able to write it as a character.

Characters are an esoteric, exotic code that most learners in school find attractive to work on. However, learning to control the pen to produce regular, unchildish characters takes considerable practice. Many prefer to use word processing which makes their writing look good. There is doubt that this visually based writing of characters will allow them to be internalised to the same degree as those embedded kinesically by handwriting.

As reading and writing only in characters limits their range of expression and pace of output considerably, entry to Chinese writing for learners is via the Mainland orthodox romanisation system known as Pinyin. This is an almost phonetic alphabet based on European writing and allows students to note how to pronounce characters as well as to write more fully than their character store may permit. Much debate has raged in Australia over whether school students should be permitted to write only in Pinyin, or at least mostly in this form. Throughout Chinese history great store has been set by literacy in characters, and calligraphy is venerated as art. In this frame, many Chinese teachers tend to scorn romanisation – although they understand its necessity for students – and are keen for students to learn characters. Others, Chinese or not, point out that the Chinese use characters so the students' task is learn them, and the sooner they make a start the better.

It has only been in the last few years that serious attention has been paid to the fact that a literate foreign learner's task in entering and acquiring characters as a writing system will be quite different from the task of a young Chinese person learning to read and write, who already has the spoken language to work from. Re-classification of characters in this light has been undertaken in China and in Australia so as to provide learners with entry to the code as a system, and thus to enable them to make certain efficiencies. But even then, only an hour a week on characters will not produce literacy. Computer games which provide high frequency encounter with characters are of great benefit in the task, although most also rely only on visual recognition of the character as a whole, and this may not be sufficient to learn how to write the same character from scratch by hand.

5.7.4 Particles

There is no system of tenses in Chinese and aspects of completedness of actions are indicated by particles. Particles are also used to indicate mood, turning commands into suggestions, and indicating the speaker's sense of certainty about propositions, etc. Made of single syllables such as *le* and *ne*, they are often not perceived by English hearers and considerable practice in *noticing* is needed to develop sensitivity to their inclusion or omission, and to recognising what this is meant to convey.

5.8 External Factors

The third powerful deterrent to learner success in Chinese in Australian schools is that, like other school language learning, it takes place in an environment which often provides very low support. Within the curriculum, languages are often seen as a 'second tier' Key Learning Area (e.g. Yule, 2007), and at school, home and on the street, becoming proficient in a new language is most often either deemed unnecessary given the spread of English in the world, or seen as an exotic private pursuit beyond the ability of most people. As a result, for example, there are gasps at the Prime Minister's proficiency in two languages which thousands of children and adults in Australia can match. The business community pays almost no attention to language skills, even where these might better protect its interests.

To recognise bilingualism as an advance over English-only competence requires a cognitive and emotional change. Despite having as good an educational rationale as mathematics, language study lacks the political clout of mathematics, largely due to being diffused across more than a dozen languages, many of which find themselves in competition with one another inside schools. Problems in continuity from primary to secondary study often necessitate switching language or the boredom of repeating everything from scratch. This leaves parents and students questioning the utility of language study, and for school administrators, finding and holding language staff is a constant worry that lessens their appeal.

The positive regard of family, school and community is a recognised spur to learner motivation and the undermining attitude common in Australia is a known deterrent for learners. Any move to improve matters for Chinese would need to address these attitudinal disincentives.
It would also need to offer help to principals and other staff who would like to support the teaching and learning of Chinese, but do not know how best to, especially given short resources and often no second language skills themselves. Parents, likewise, could be assisted to become more aware of their own role in encouraging or discouraging their children's progress. As it stands, they tend to hover at one or other extreme, either declaring constantly 'In our family we are no good at languages', or expecting their children to be able to read classical poems on the walls of Chinese restaurants after just one term of study. Members of the Chinese community could also be helped to deal with second language learners' efforts, not simply shifting to English, out of 'kindness'.

5.9 Implications

The nature of the linguistic challenges of Chinese for an English learner is daunting. Yet student teachers of Chinese, and even in-service teachers of Chinese, are almost never taught the learning demands of tones, homophones, characters, or particles and complements.

In addition to better, more focused teaching, learners are starved of sufficient chances to hear whole flows of spoken Chinese – many hear only one or two sentences at a time and that is usually accompanied by demands to respond. Without a global sense of how they should sound, it is virtually impossible for learners to develop oral skills. There is also a huge deficiency in the scaffolded practice material available for both oral and reading and writing competence to develop. Modern technology might be harnessed to assist with this, but it takes time to develop and to learn how to use effectively, and time is a commodity most teachers are extremely short of.

Australia has developed significant human and learning resources for teaching Chinese and teacher meetings and conferences are passionate sessions where techniques are swapped and ideas circulated. But there is little coherence in the group's conception and development of their task, and rarely any research into the actual effectiveness of what is introduced beyond the teacher's own classroom. The state of pedagogy, combined with unequal competition from first language users, provide reason enough to understand why so few of those who begin develop proficiency and want to continue.

To say present results are unsatisfactory is not to blame the people involved, nor to deny the very real successes that are achieved. It is rather to recognise the impossibility of the task of developing large numbers of proficient learners in the time permitted each week, with the relatively few and often old resources available, and the inadequacy of teacher preparation for the job, and often of teachers' language proficiency (English or Chinese) for the job asked, and the intercultural differences involved for many in teaching in an education system very different from that of their own education.

Any hope of changing the success rate will require the provision of sound pedagogical planning and resources, sound, well supported teaching practice, rich scaffolded opportunities for learners to use the language, and sufficient time on task. And all of these need to be provided at once, along with development in the external situation in which the learning takes place.

6 Plans for Change

6.1 Goal

There is growing recognition that China is now highly significant to Australia's future and that this poses challenges for Education in the area of language learning and studies of China. Not least among the challenges is the constant reminder that multiple previous attempts to increase numbers in both have failed. What will allow this time to be different is that the causes of earlier failure are understood, and the means to do a great deal better are available.

The main obstacles to success in earlier attempts were:

i Short-term vision – seeking the quick fix, with a lack of appreciation of what it takes to change curriculum.

ii Insufficient attention to the multifaceted nature of the problem, and the inter-relatedness of the various factors involved.

iii Lack of deep knowledge of the field – developments just aimed to 'do more of same', without regard for the evidence that what was happening was inadequate in learning outcomes and numbers.

The new conditions that could allow avoiding the same fate are:

i The Government and Business community have made a move.

ii There are some very effective new approaches to bring to Chinese teaching.

iii There are some excellent teachers around and many more would do well if helped.

iv There is a large pool of Chinese people and resources in Australia + access to China.

v The Hanban are eager to see progress.

vi The Asia Education Foundation support for languages and studies has created a base.

vii There seems now to be political will, coupled with strong examples of similar concern in the US and EU, and a role model in the Prime Minister which has been shown to be significant.

7 Recommendations

7.1 Administrative Action

1 In consultation with the Chinese community and the Schools of Languages and Ethnic Schools Association, and working from wherever they are with respect to levels, State and Territory departments need to create three levels of Chinese learner that are officially recognised nationally and included in provision of Chinese language education. Tasks will include:

i Establishing criteria for defining group eligibility.

ii Accepting Chinese spoken as the home language to the age of three (assuming it is continued) as the basis on which a Background Speaker is distinguished from a classroom second language learner.

iii Accepting Primary education in a Chinese medium school as the basis for distinguishing a first language learner from a Background Speaker.

iv Developing curriculum and assessment for three distinct though overlapping levels.

Work on this project needs to be part of work already being undertaken by the ACACA Reference Group on the subject of level definition.

2 Time on task needs to be increased for learners of Chinese in recognition of the very uneven field they are asked to play on with respect to other languages.

In collaboration with members of the Chinese community, including Ethnic Chinese Schools, examination needs to be made of the great deal more time on Chinese that could be provided for L2 learners through community environments where the language can be heard and used productively, such as shops, restaurants, cinemas, excursions, day and overnight language camps.

3 Decisions need to be made about the provision of Chinese classes at Primary level. While good programs are quite evidently successful by a number of counts including language proficiency development, for a number of reasons certain schools may not be able to run a good program. The evidence seems equally clear that a bad experience learning a language in Primary can put a child off languages, and especially the particular language, for the rest of their school days, which is a very expensive cost for failure. Some schools may do better offering something like the Queensland 'Intercultural Investigations' program, or not starting until upper Primary levels. In any case, it seems likely that there will not be one norm that suits all.

In Tasmania and some other places, new programs have often been trialled at lunchtime or after school and only when their success seems clear have they been formally installed in the regular curriculum.

Decisions about primary also need to be taken that ensure learners will be able to continue.

4 In preference to just more of the same, innovative programs should be initiated which permit concentrated periods of time close together to be spent on the language. Queensland's late years primary program or bilingual programs in Melbourne and Sydney may serve as a model or catalyst, as may Brisbane's secondary immersion program.

5 Working with the Hanban and others in the Australian education community, standards of language proficiency and pedagogy for teachers of Chinese should be developed.

6 A survey of how many teachers are available at present and how many might be expected to graduate in the future needs to be undertaken in order to lay the base for recruitment planning.

7.2 Project Support

A national centre for Chinese language education should be established with the objective to lead, protect and support developments in:

1 Advocacy:

- i Argue the value and feasibility of knowing Chinese, using all media
- ii Prepare material for Principals, parents, teachers and community
- iii Open dialogue with various relevant sectors through attending meetings, writing
- iv Lobby government, school systems, business.

2 Teacher education for the range of teachers and aides:

- i Produce and deliver pre-service pedagogy modules using ICT, targeting the teaching of tones, homophones, characters, particles, basic grammar and discourse variety in writing; the language and knowledge for competent intercultural communication and relationships at school; classroom management; + teaching language proficiency development (Chinese/English).
- ii Produce and deliver in-service pedagogy modules using ICT targeting known gaps: use of electronic whiteboards (basic pedagogical aid), wikis (for inter-teacher contact), MP3 technology – phones/iPods (practice); link to demands of essential learnings; strengthen classroom management; + teaching language proficiency development (Chinese/English).
- iii For both sets, introduce innovative methods: extensive, graded listening practice; gesture-based oral development; new view character learning; scaffolded reading; intensive/content-based programs; real-life use experiences.

3 Targeted resources:

- i Work with the Chinese Language Teachers Federation of Australia to collect/produce, edit, publish on website, modules and units that will become modules, consonant with Australian curriculum standards and a fundamental theory of language and culture.
- ii Work with the Hanban on the production of useful practice resources that meet the same criteria.
- iii Invite submission of/purchase products made by individual practitioners.

4 Innovative practice (see Appendix 3 for examples):

- i Fund Action Research projects which are aimed at Project priorities – e.g. scholarships for credited projects that are innovative and pedagogically sound.
- ii Provide basic research training and supervision for uncredited projects.
- iii Disseminate findings of research, innovation – run competitions, hold conferences, presentations, publish, etc.
- iv Collect and disseminate models of best practice.
- v Collaborate with Chinese scholars on studying second language learner needs and development.

The Centre would initiate, influence, and disseminate activities and products across and within the above four fields which are:

- theoretically sound and coherently integrated
- national in scope
- future oriented
- achieved through high use of ICT (for pedagogical benefits; and ease of storage, national dissemination, and revision)
- act as a catalyst for new practice.

Key Words:

L2/BS/L1
gradual
protracted
informed
leading
innovative
catalytic

8 Conclusion

The view of China's significance to future Australia set out at the beginning of this report is gradually being perceived by the Australian public. While members of the Government and a few community leaders such as the CEO of BHP Billiton and the Chairman of ANZ have been calling for an Asia-literate workforce with high Chinese language and intercultural competence, to make a substantial, successful development in language programs, and to sustain it over more than a few years, will require constant advocacy with government, school systems, parents and employers, and a public campaign to combat the idea that, unlike everyone else in the world, only the rare Australian can expect to learn a second language.

There is considerable scope to support and develop existing Chinese language programs in Australia's schools. The basis for wide provision exists and administrators of all three sectors and staff at every level are keen to participate in planning to introduce such development, provided they can see that it will result in quality teaching, strong programs, and higher proficiency outcomes for all students. Furthermore, outside the school, there is excellent support for the learning of Chinese, with rich Chinese history and vibrant contemporary Chinese cultural, social and commercial life in all major urban centres and many rural ones as well.

Beyond maintenance and support for regular programs, there is a clear need for innovative language programs which offer deep sequential experience to be established and monitored. Research is needed to build knowledge of best practice in terms of program type and time allocation models, experiential activities, and central aspects of pedagogical practice such as tones and characters, as well as cultural factors. Differences in the learner needs of background speakers and classroom beginners, and of L1 and L2 teachers, who, themselves, have been educated in very different systems, educational cultures and societies, and the teachers' separate language needs, for better English or better Chinese, are all still very poorly understood and begging to be investigated.

Teacher support in the form of methodology programs for pre- and in-service teachers are needed, as is support for them to be able to exchange knowledge electronically on a daily basis. A large store of up-to-date resources, including new textbooks and supplementary practice material, needs to be built and made available for borrowing. The key to the success of such a service is personnel with deep classroom experience, an ability to relate to those in the field, the constant monitoring of new material in all forms, and a mindset which can appreciate innovation combined with the knowledge to assess its value.

Although each State and Territory has developed at different times and with particular attributes that need to be taken account of, the issues involved in improving the teaching and learning of Chinese in Australia are fundamentally similar in all of them. The amount and nature of the work needed to bring about and sustain development means it would be most economical in terms of time, money and energy if it were conducted collaboratively on a national scale. Participants in several recent national Forums and projects show that administrators, teachers and educators around Australia are willing to consider participating in such a joint venture.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Statistical Data

Australian Capital Territory

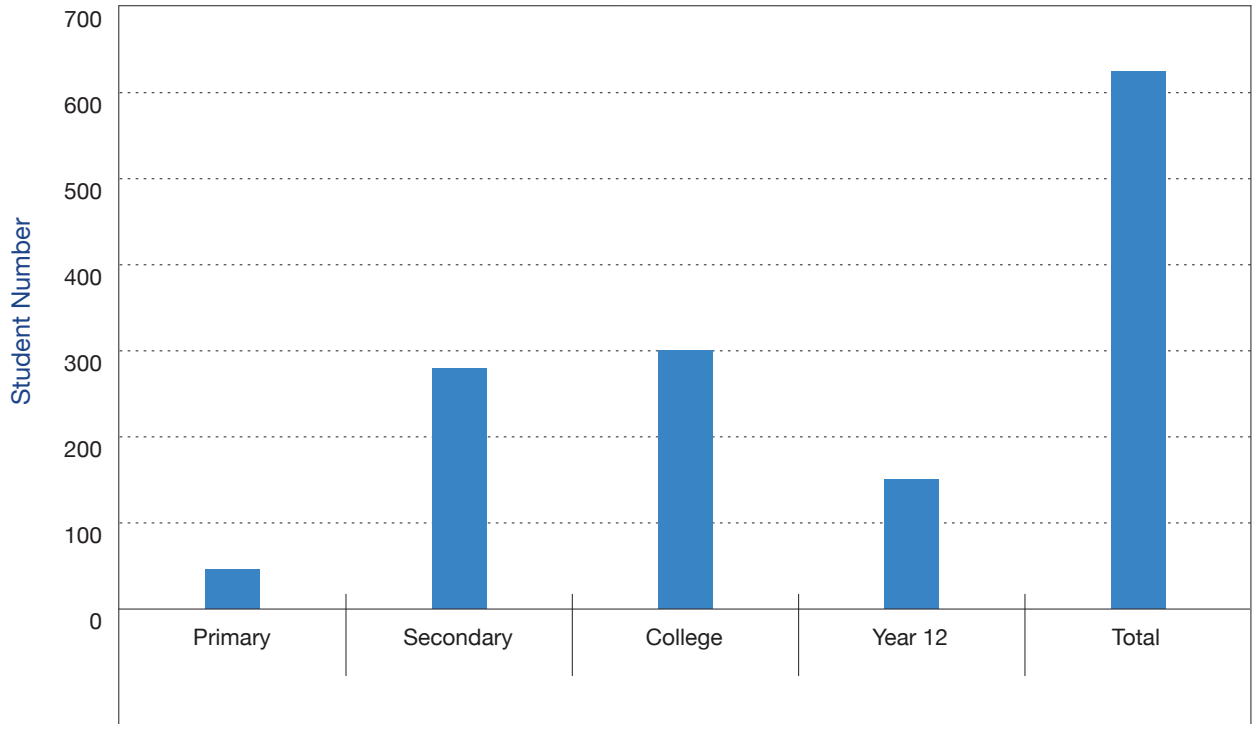
Table 1: Number of Australian Capital Territory Schools Offering Chinese 2008

	Primary	Secondary	College	Total
ACT-DET	1	3	8	12
ACT-AIS	1		No data	No data
ACT-CEO	No data	No data	No data	No data

Table 2: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Australian Capital Territory Schools 2008

	Primary	Secondary (Years 8–10)	College (All)	Year 12	Total
ACT-DET	46	279	300	150	625
ACT-AIS	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data
ACT-CEO	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data

Graph 1: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Australian Capital Territory Government Schools 2008



New South Wales

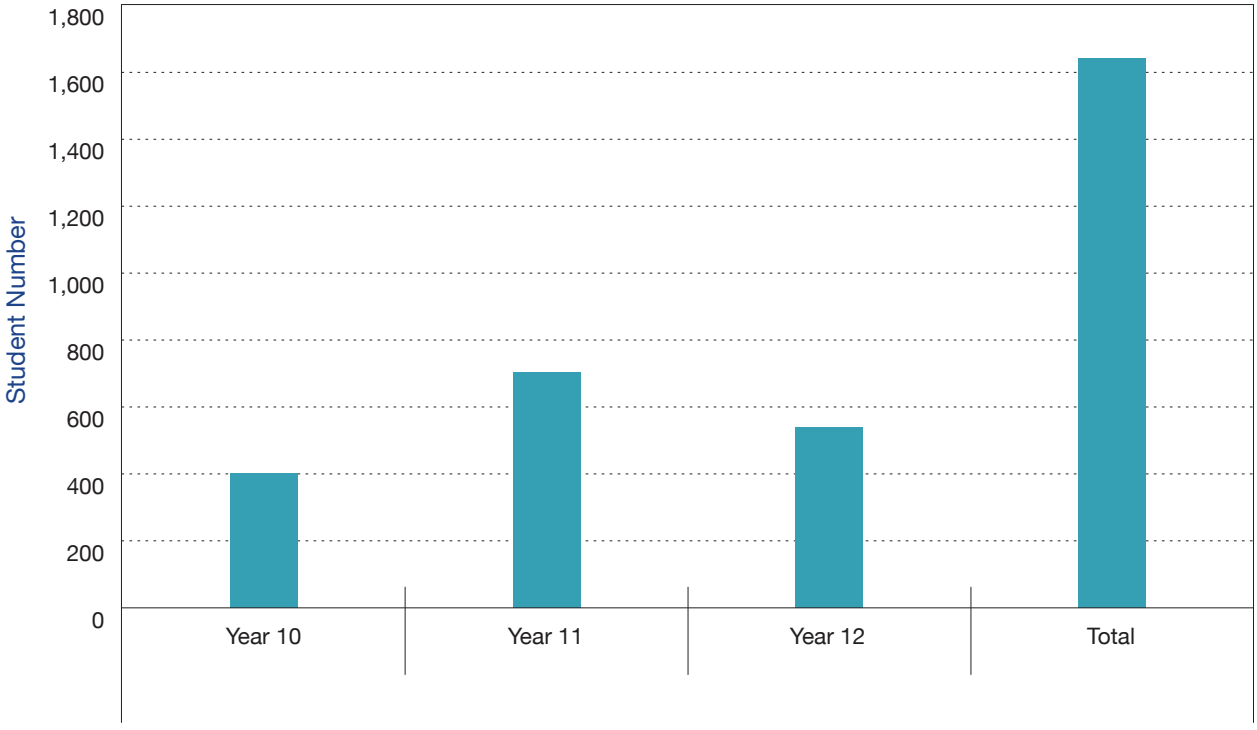
Table 3: Number of New South Wales Schools Offering Chinese 2008

	Primary	Secondary	Total
NSW-DET	No data	No data	No data
NSW-AIS	No data	No data	15
NSW-CEO	No data	No data	No data

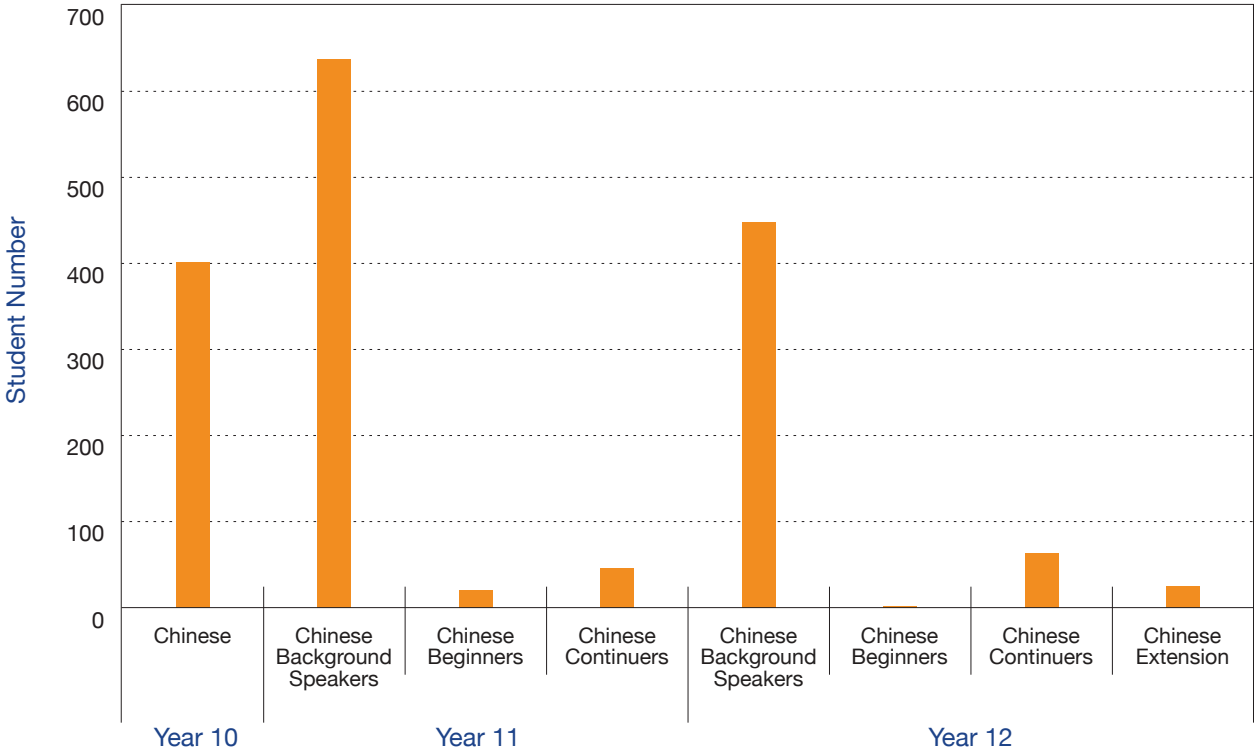
Table 4: Number of Students Taking Chinese in New South Wales Schools

	Primary	Secondary	Year 12	Total
NSW-DET	14,445 (2005)	4,087 (2005)	538 (2007) 799 (2005)	18,532 (2005)
NSW-AIS	2,752 (2008)	1,527 (2008)	75 (2008)	4,279 (2008)
NSW-CEO	No data	No data	No data	1,325 (2007)

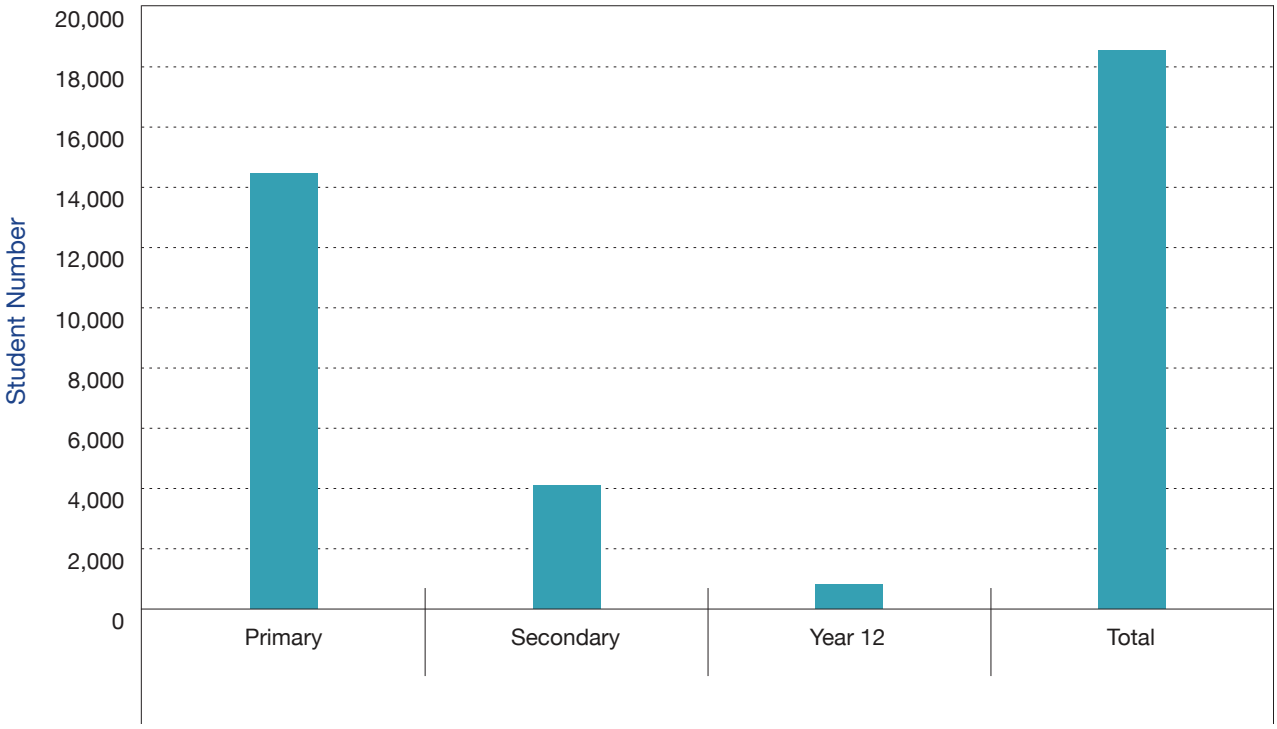
Graph 2: Number of Students (Years 10–12) Taking Chinese in New South Wales Government Schools 2007



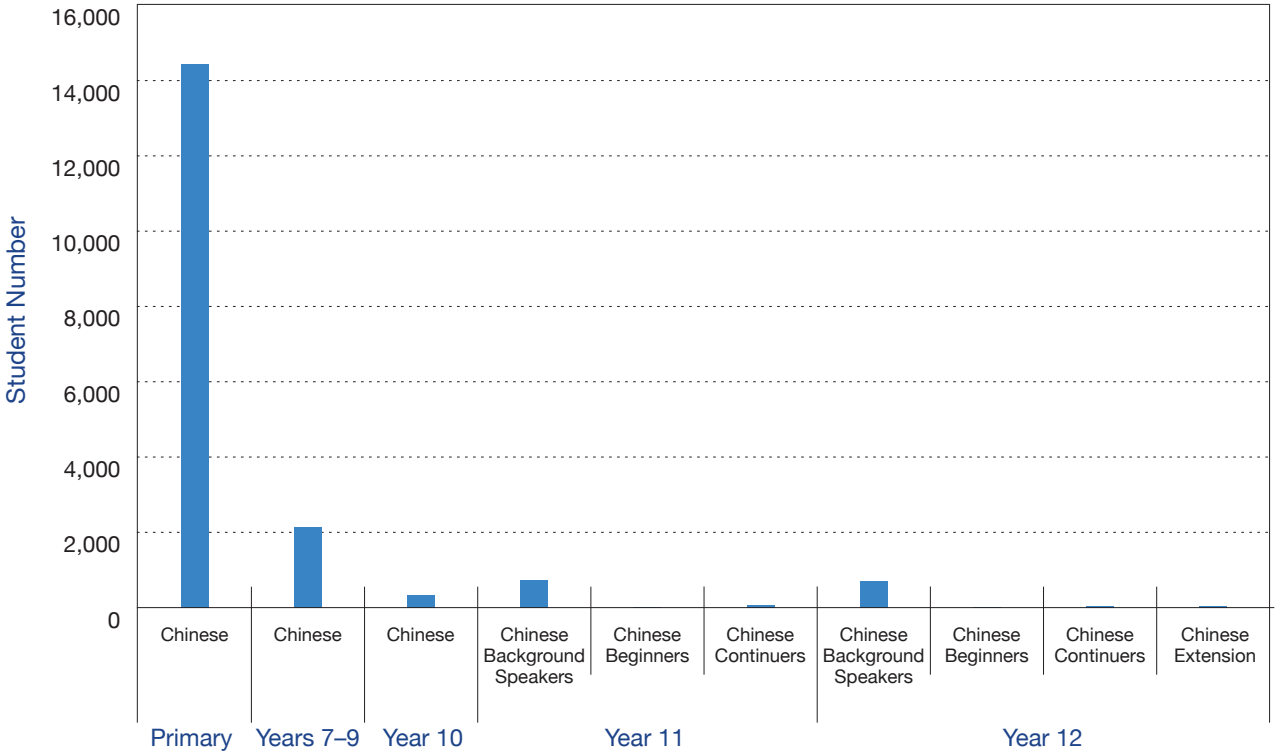
Graph 3: Number of Students (Years 10–12) Taking Chinese in New South Wales Government Schools by Language Level 2007



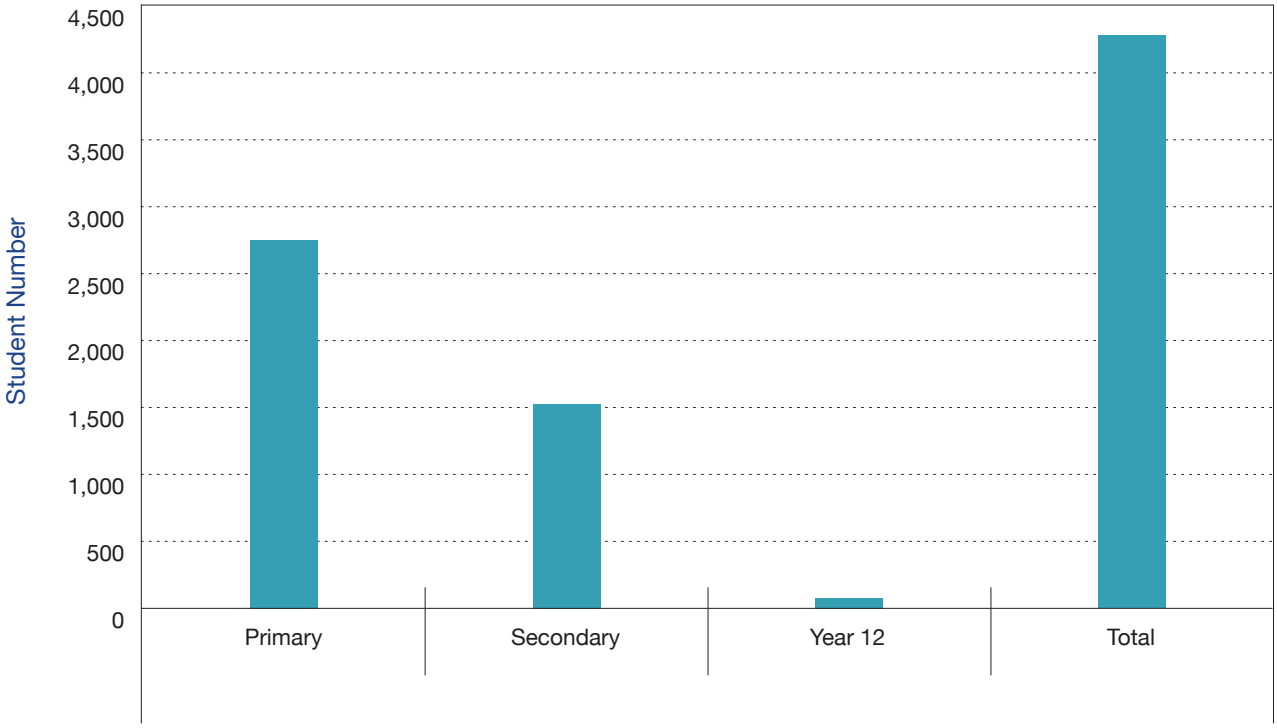
Graph 4: Number of Students Taking Chinese in New South Wales Government Schools 2005



Graph 5: Number of Students Taking Chinese in New South Wales Government Schools by Language Level 2005



Graph 6: Number of Students Taking Chinese in New South Wales Independent Schools 2008



Northern Territory

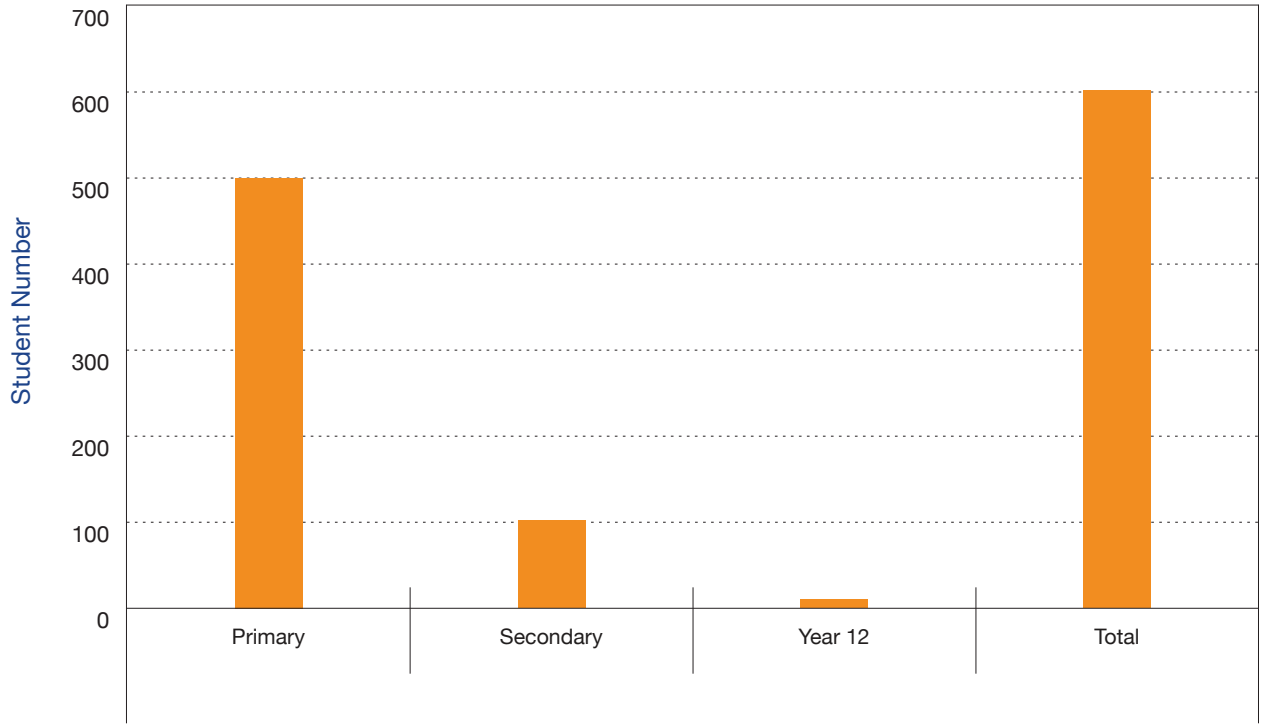
Table 5: Number of Northern Territory Schools Offering Chinese 2008

	Primary	Secondary	Total
NT-DET	N/A Central Provision	1	1 (Darwin only)
NT-AIS	0	0	0
NT-CEO	0	0	0

Table 6: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Northern Territory Schools 2008

	Primary	Secondary (All)	Year 12	Total
NT-DET	300 KLA Program + 200 'Cultural Program'	102	10	602
NT-AIS	0	0	0	0
NT-CEO	0	0	0	0

Graph 7: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Northern Territory Independent Schools 2008



Queensland

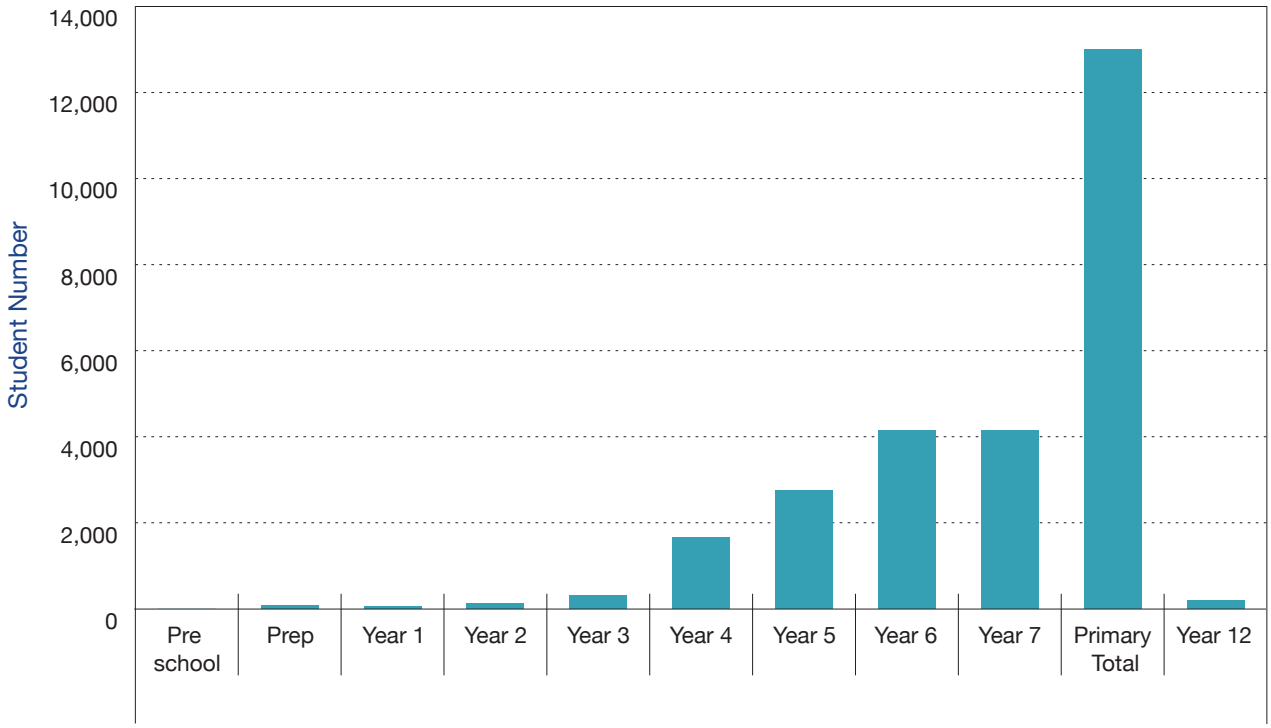
Table 7: Number of Queensland Schools Offering Chinese

	Primary	Secondary	Total
QLD-DET	No data	No data	No data
QLD-AIS	17 (2007)	23 (2007)	41 (2007)
QLD-CEO (Brisbane Diocese)	6 (2008)	5 (2008)	11 (2008)

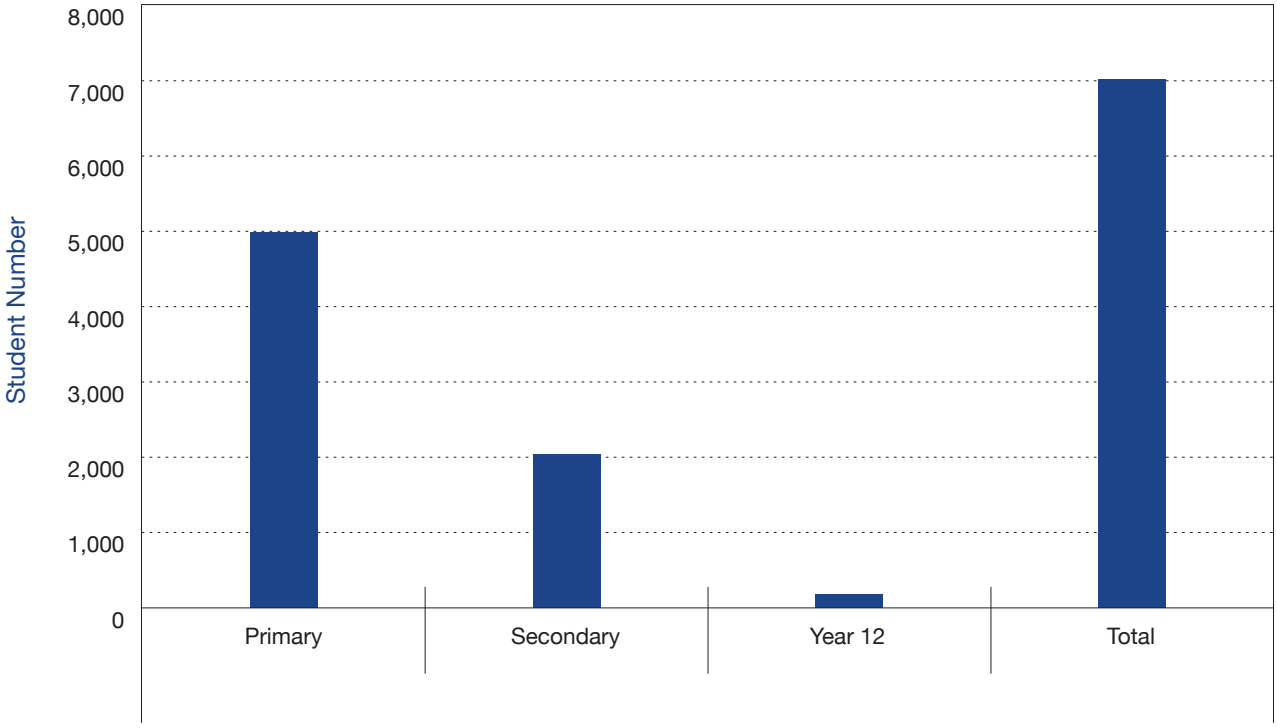
Table 8: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Queensland Schools

	Primary	Secondary (All)	Year 12	Total
QLD-DET	13,287 (2008)	No data	194 (2008)	No data
QLD-AIS	4,988 (2007)	2,033 (2007)	176 (2007)	7,021 (2007)
QLD-CEO (Brisbane Diocese)	1,052 (2008)	942 (2008)	41 (2008)	1,994 (2008)

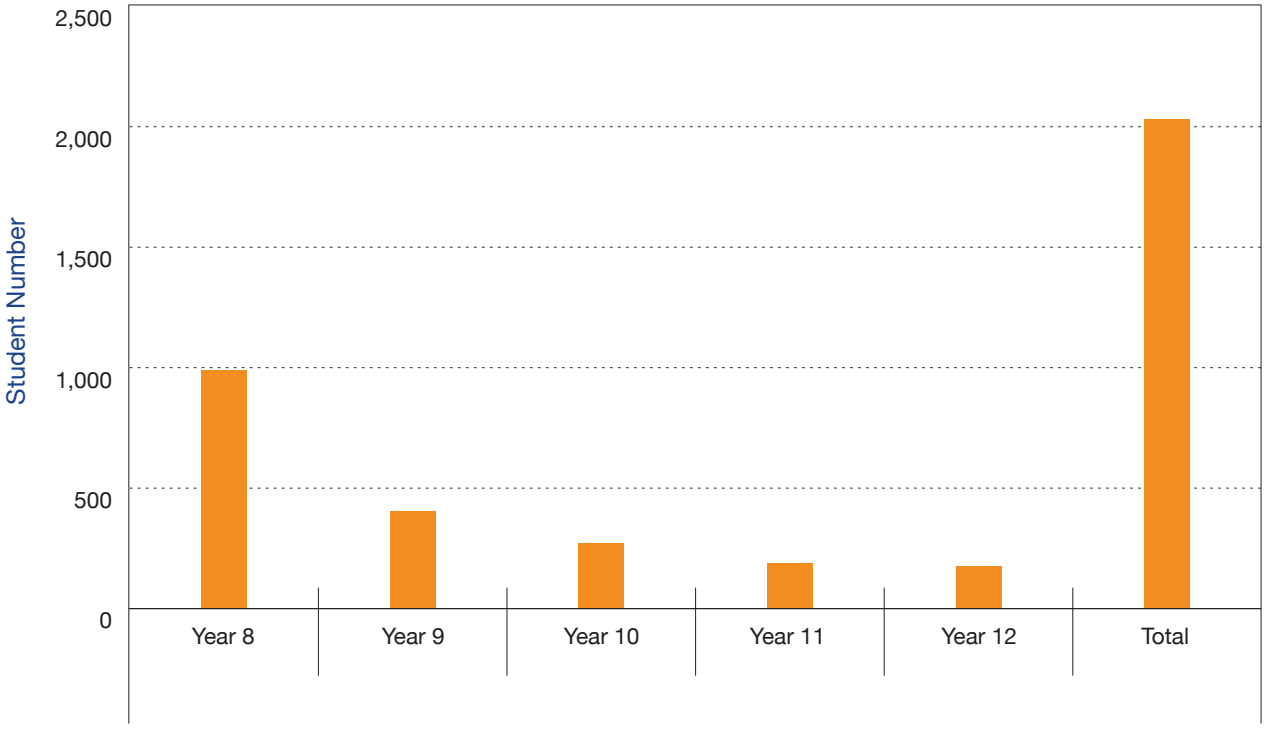
Graph 8: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Queensland Government Schools 2008



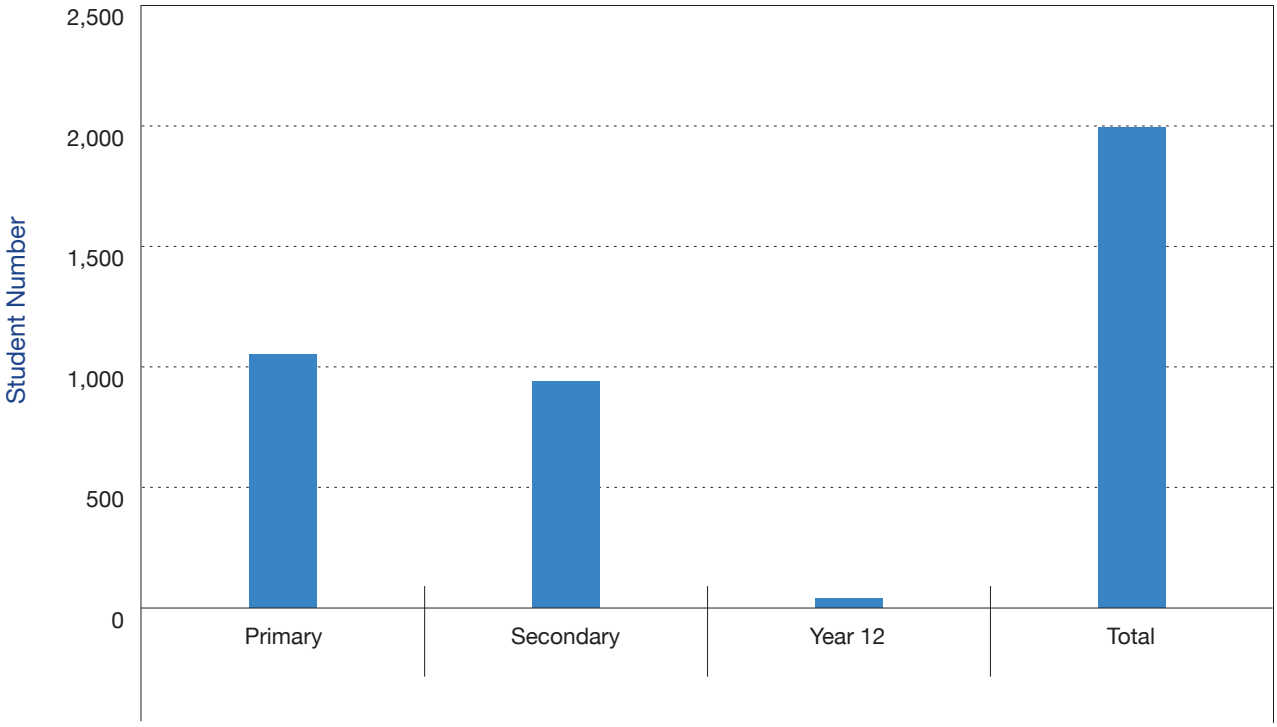
Graph 9: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Queensland Independent Schools 2007



Graph 10: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Queensland Independent Schools (Secondary Year Level 8–12) 2007



Graph 11: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Queensland Catholic Schools 2008



South Australia

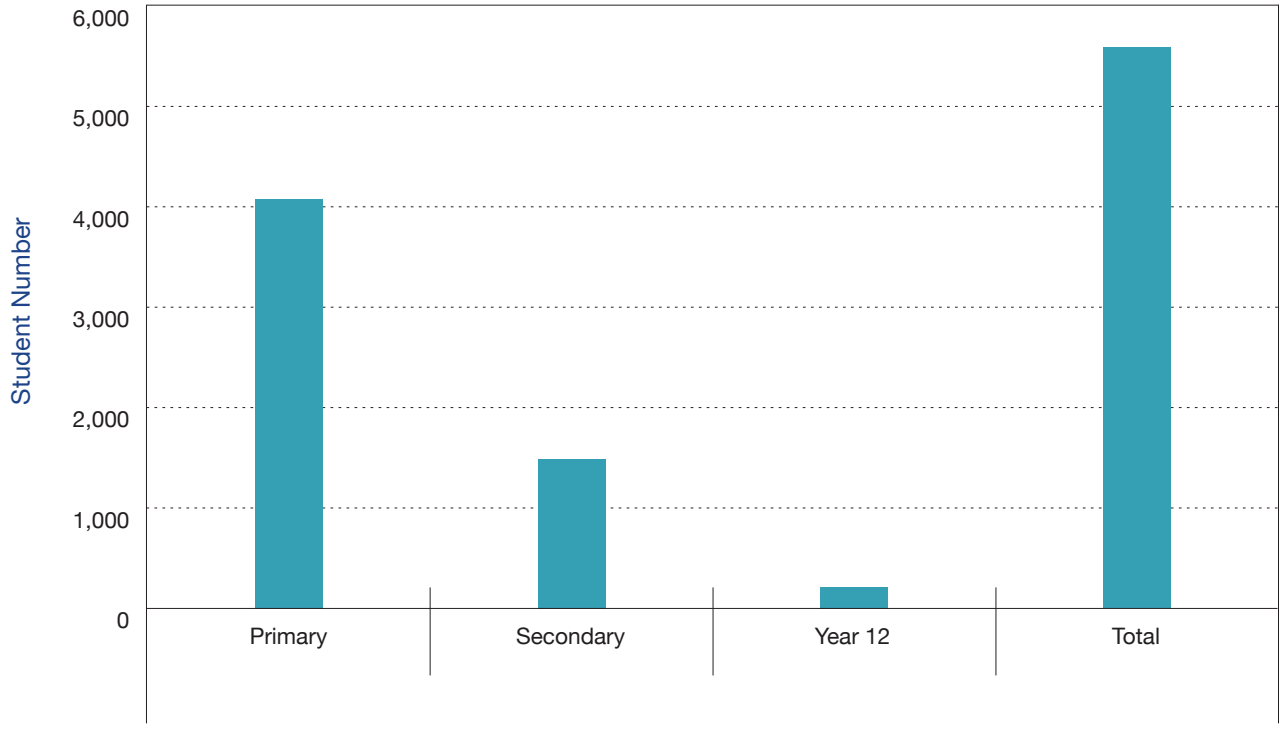
Table 9: Number of South Australian Schools Offering Chinese

	Primary	Secondary	P–12 School	Total
SA-DET	21 (2007)	14 (2007)	3 (2007)	38 (2007)
SA-AIS	No data	5 (2008)	No data	22 (2008)
SA-CEO	1 (2006)	0 (2006)	5 (2006)	6 (2006)

Table 10: Number of Students Taking Chinese in South Australian Schools

	Primary	Secondary (All)	Year 12	Total
SA-DET	4,097 (2007)	1,489 (2007)	211 (2007)	5,586 (2007)
SA-AIS	No data	No data	90 (2008)	3,547 (2008)
SA-CEO	No data	No data	62 (2007)	No data

Graph 12: Number of Students Taking Chinese in South Australian Government Schools 2007



Tasmania

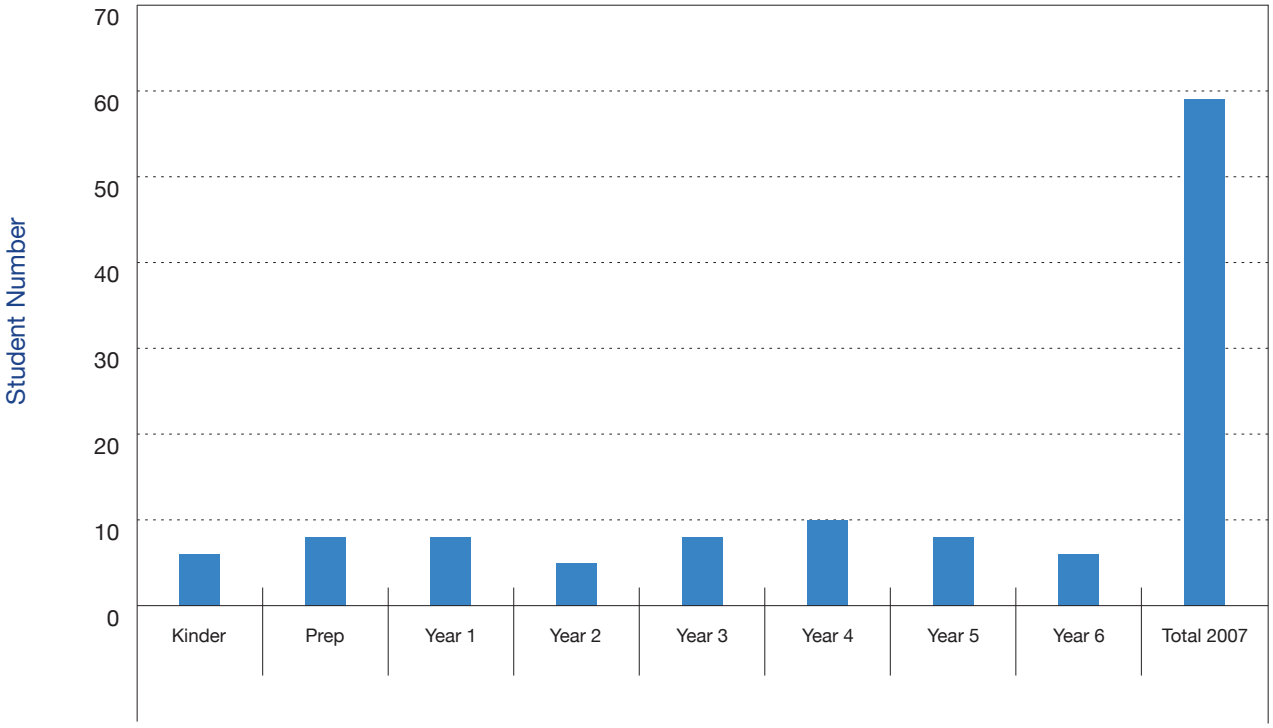
Table 11: Number of Tasmanian Schools Offering Chinese

	Primary	Secondary	Total
TAS-DET	2 (2007)	2 (sec) 7 (other) (2007)	11 (2007)
TAS-AIS	0 (2008)	1 (2008)	1 (2008)
TAS-CEO	0 (2008)	0 (2008)	0 (2008)

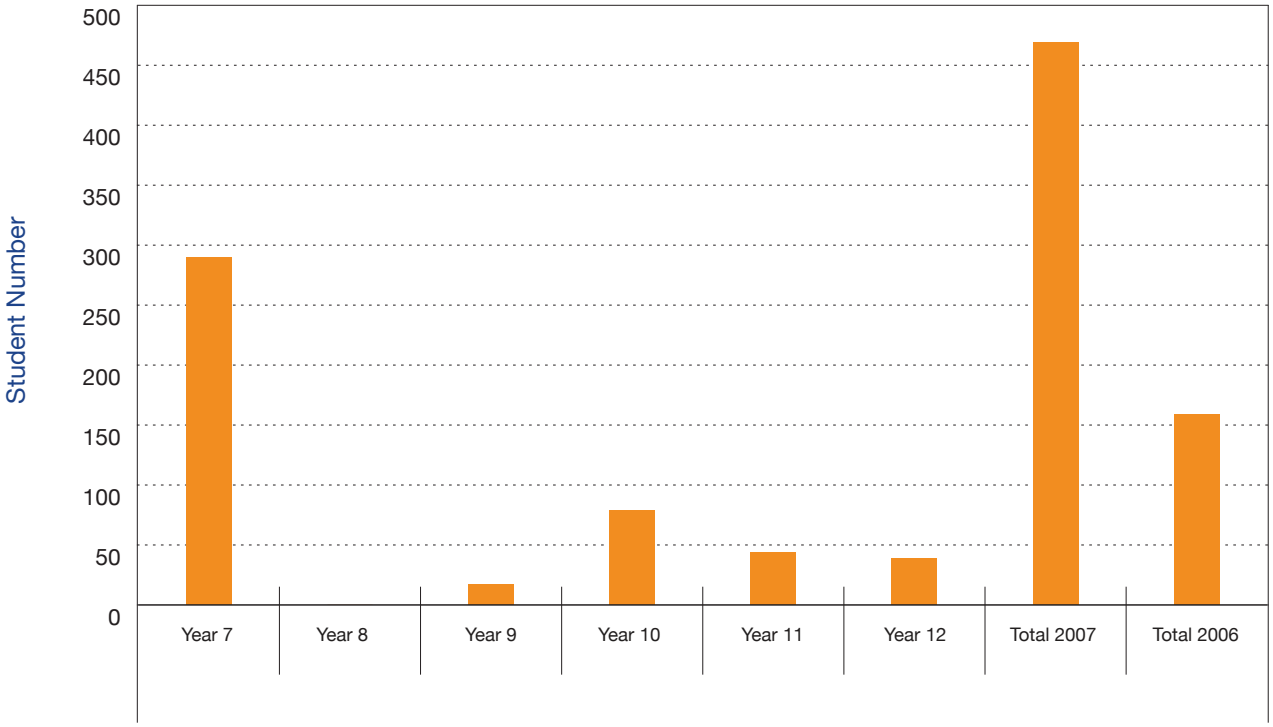
Table 12: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Tasmanian Schools

	Primary	Secondary (All)	Year 12	Total
TAS-DET	59 (2007) N/A (2006)	469 (2007) 159 (2006)	39 (2007)	528 (2007)
TAS-AIS	No data	No data	No data	No data
TAS-CEO	0 (2008)	0 (2008)	0 (2008)	0 (2008)

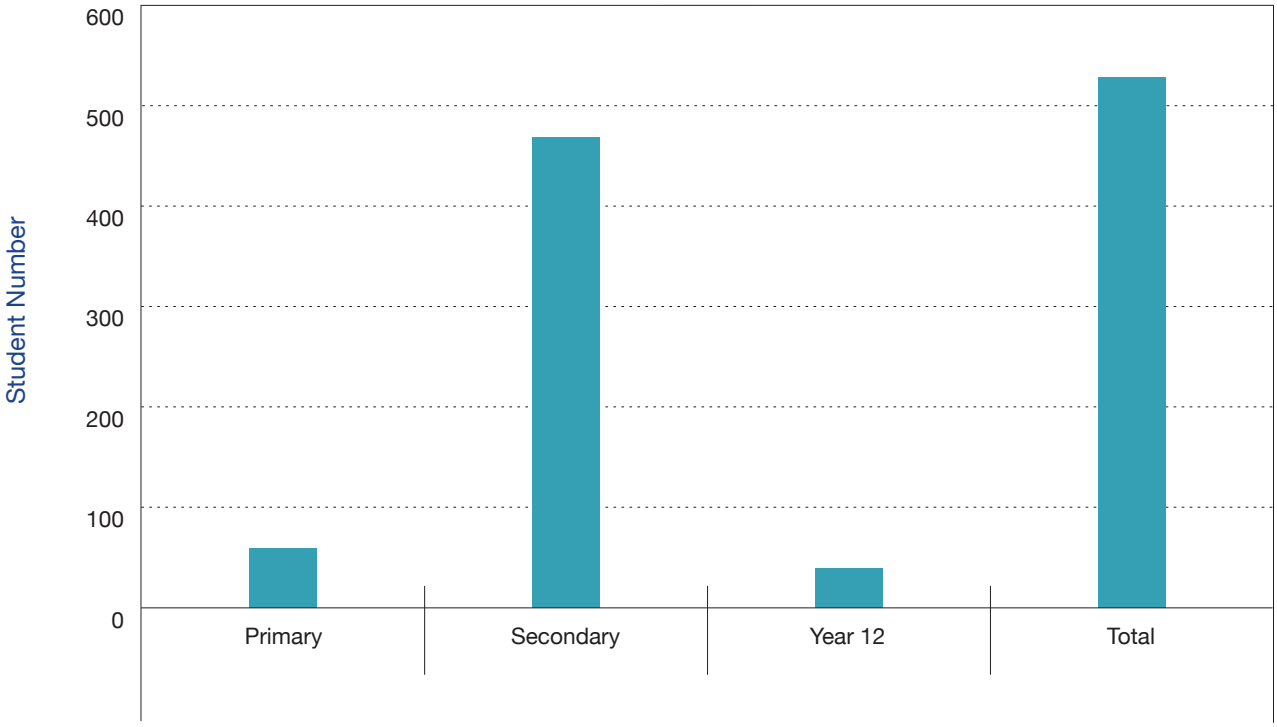
Graph 13: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Tasmanian Government Schools (Primary Year Level P–6) 2007



Graph 14: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Tasmanian Government Schools (Secondary Year Level 7–12) 2007



Graph 15: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Tasmanian Schools 2007



Victoria

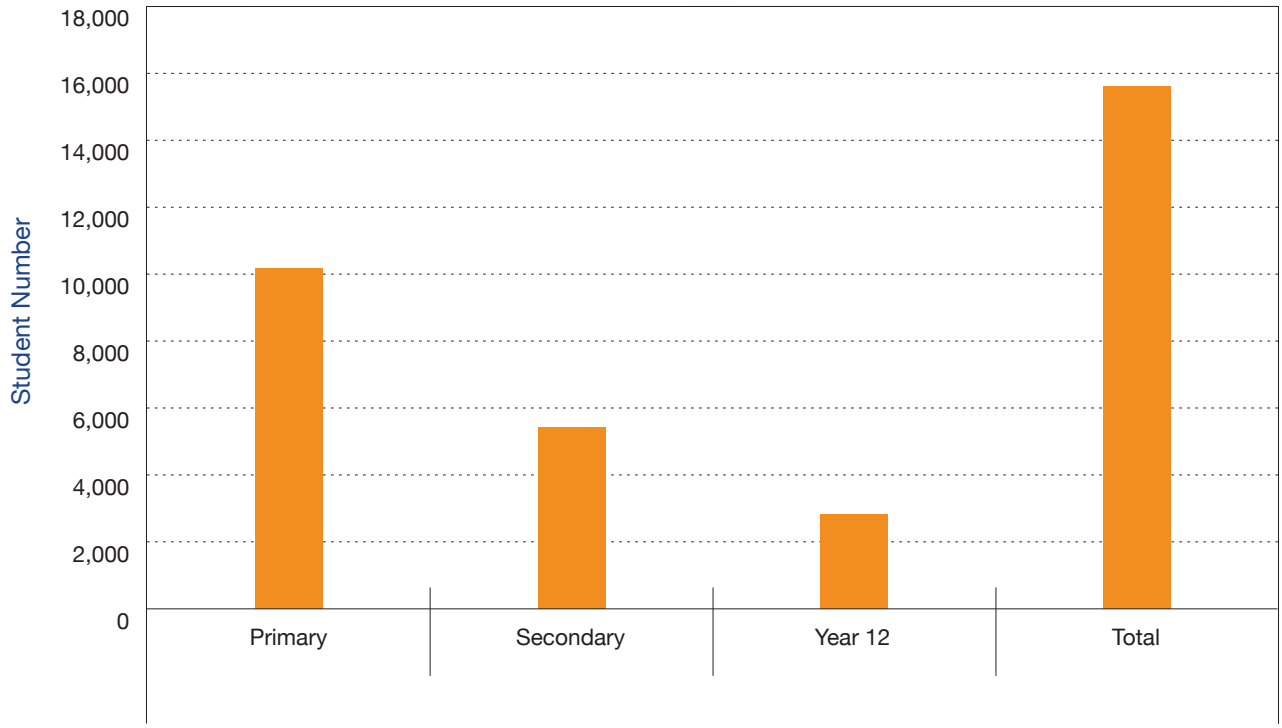
Table 13: Number of Victorian Schools Offering Chinese

	Primary	Secondary	Total
VIC-DET	44 (2006)	36 (2006)	80 (2006)
VIC-AIS	No data	No data	42 (2008)
VIC-CEO	13 (2007)	13 (2007)	26 (2007)

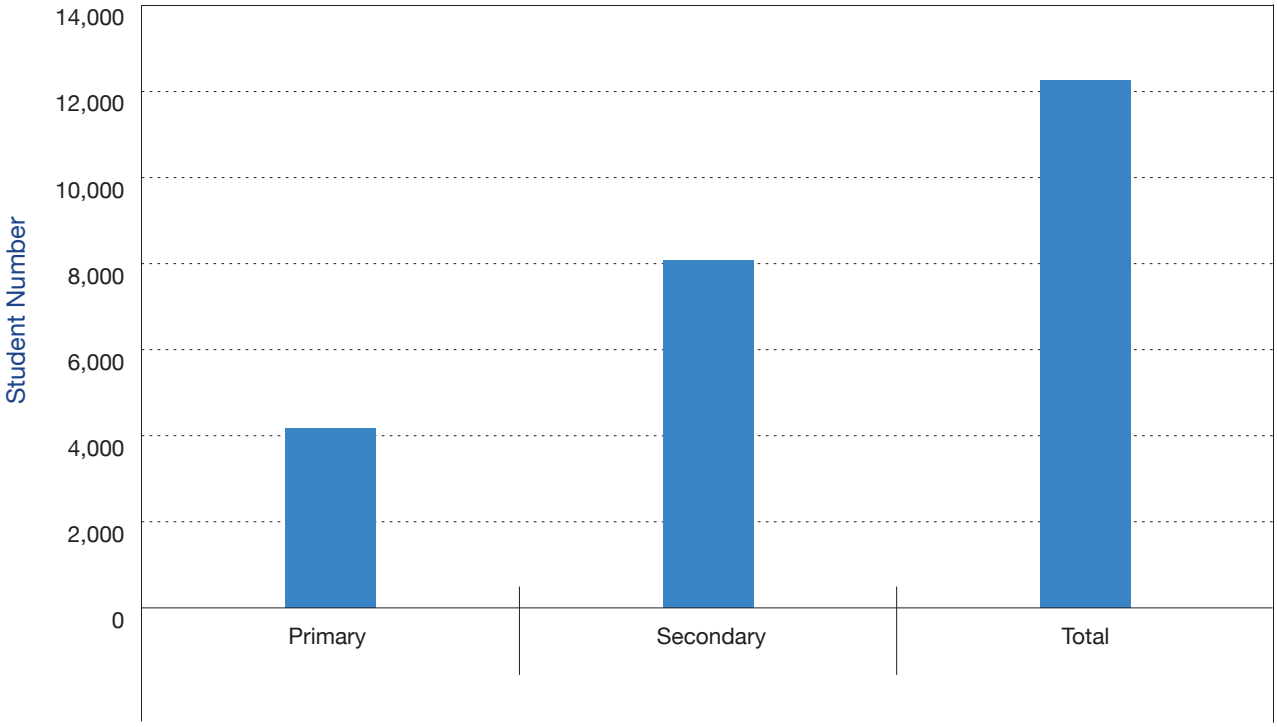
Table 14: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Victorian Schools

	Primary	Secondary (All)	Year 12	Total
VIC-DET	10,166 (2006)	5,437 (2006)	2,823 (2006)	15,603 (2006)
VIC-AIS	4,169 (2008)	8,082 (2008)	No data	12,251 (2008)
VIC-CEO	2,513 (2007)	2,729 (2007)	54 (2007)	5,242 (2007)

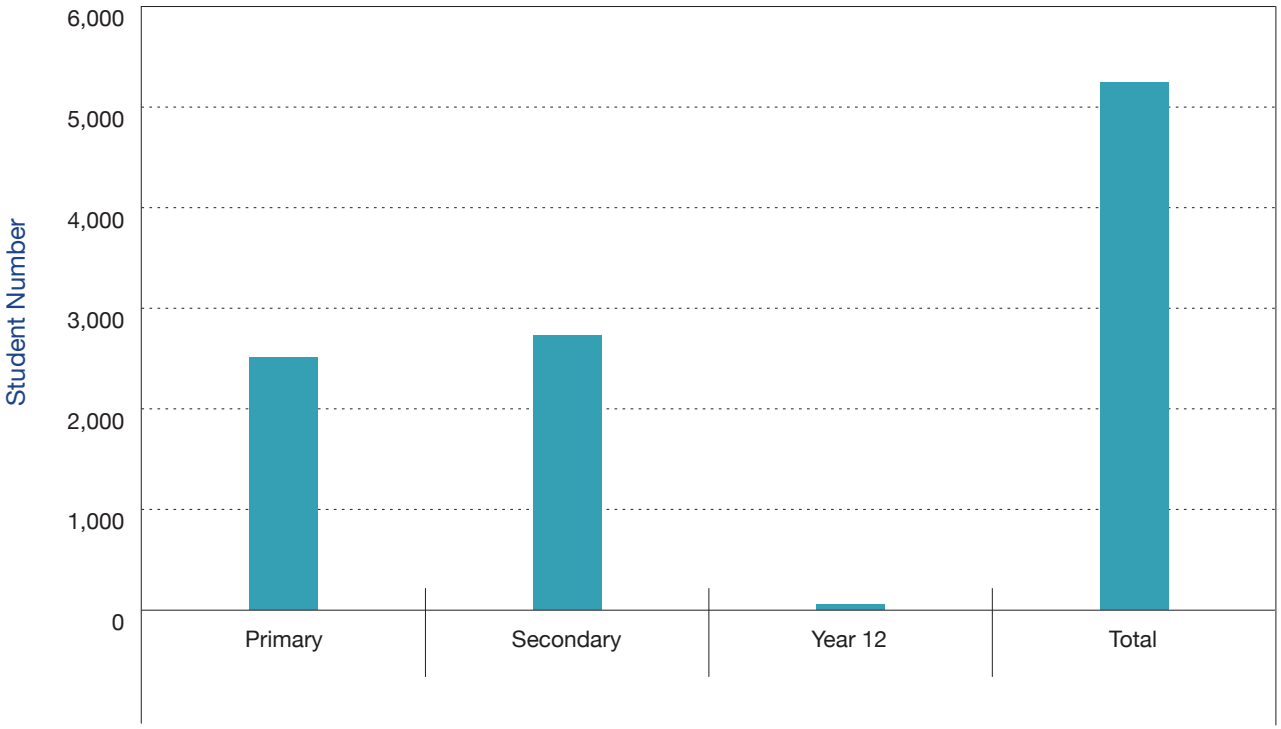
Graph 16: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Victorian Government Schools 2006



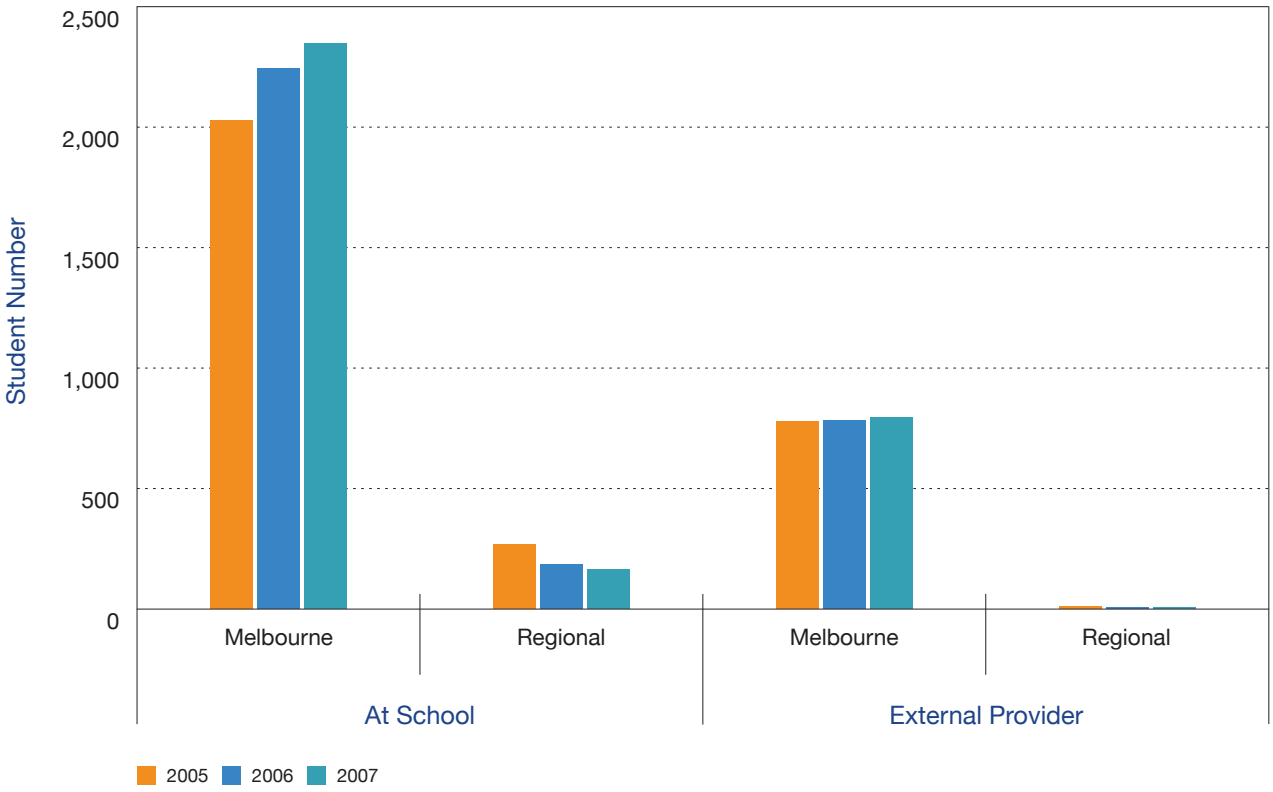
Graph 17: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Victorian Independent Schools 2008



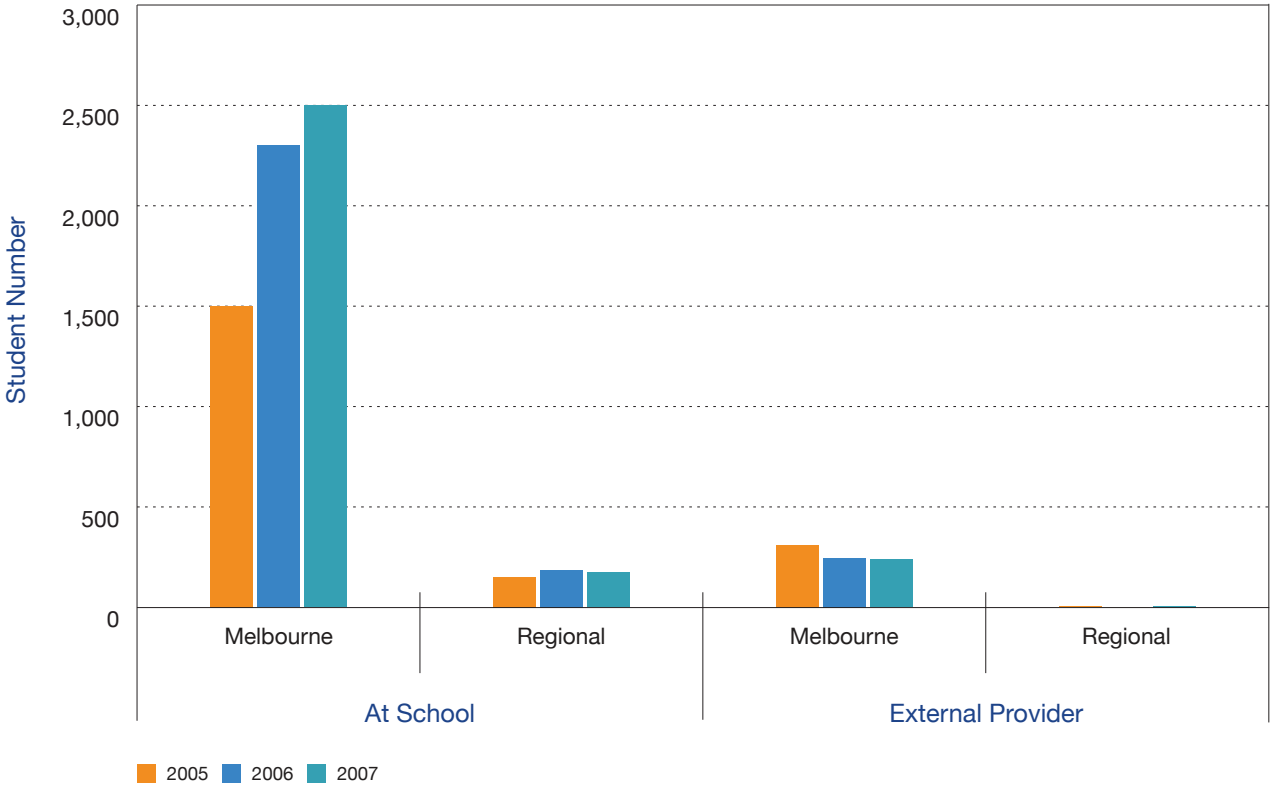
Graph 18: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Victorian Catholic Schools 2007



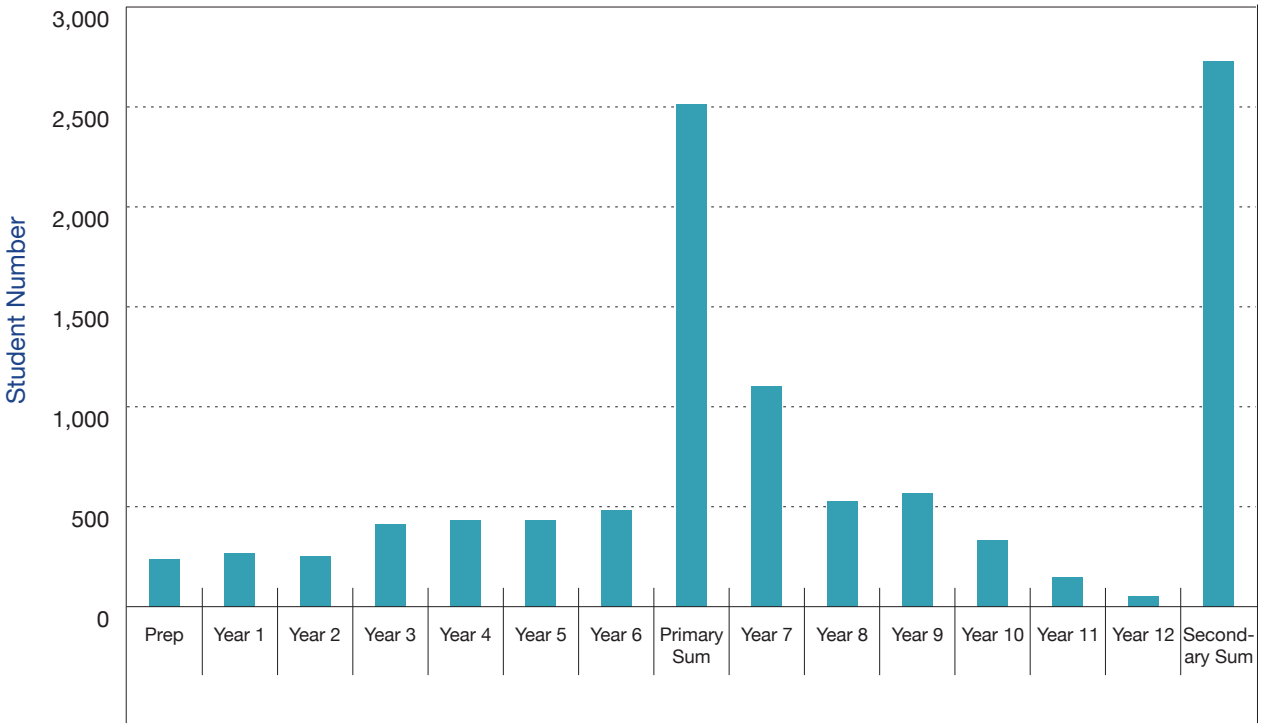
Graph 19: Number of Students (Primary) Taking Chinese in Victorian Catholic Schools 2005–2007 by Provider Type and Region



Graph 20: Number of Students (Secondary) Taking Chinese in Victorian Catholic Schools 2005–2007 by Provider Type and Region



Graph 21: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Victorian Catholic Schools by Year Level 2007



Western Australia

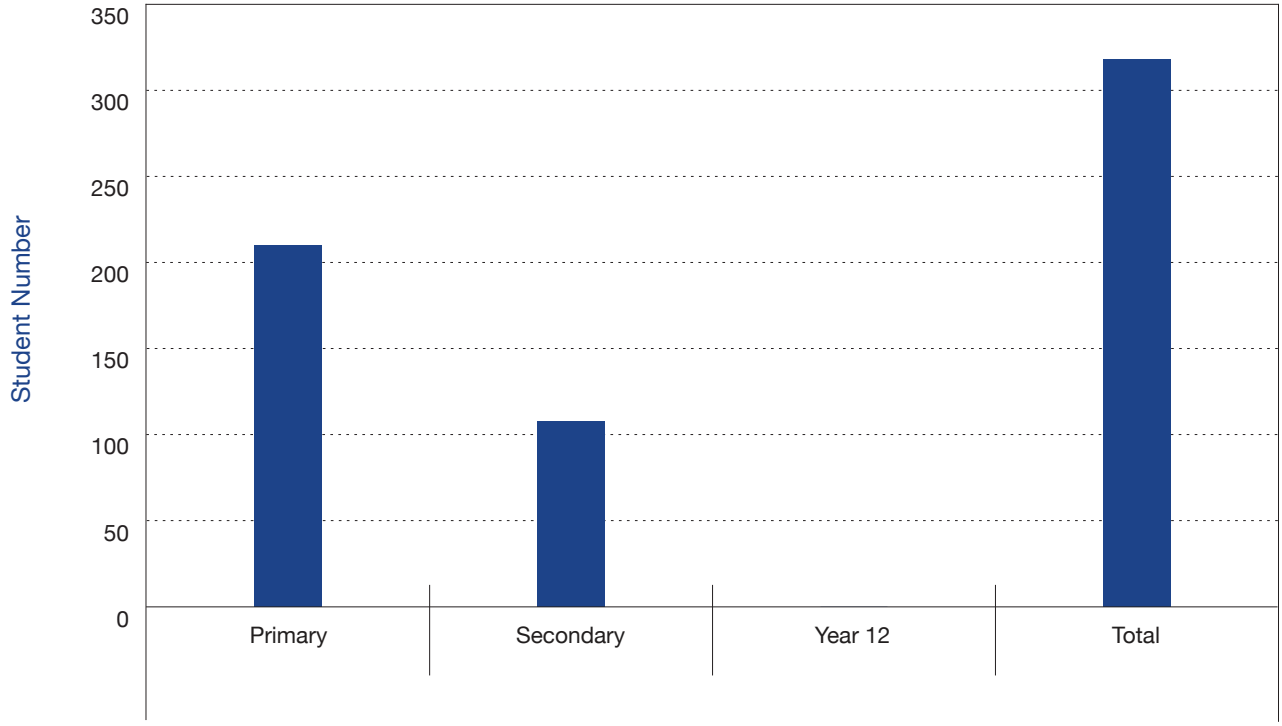
Table 15: Number of Western Australian Schools Offering Chinese 2008

	Primary	Secondary	Total
WA-DET	6	6	12
WA-AIS	No data	No data	No data
WA-CEO	0	0	0

Table 16: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Western Australian Schools 2008

	Primary	Secondary (All)	Year 12	Total
WA-DET	No data	No data	71	No data
WA-AIS (Guildford Grammar School Only)	210	108	0	318
WA-CEO	0	0	0	0

Graph 22: Number of Students Taking Chinese in Western Australian Independent Schools (One School Only) 2008



Appendix 2: VCAA Memorandum to Schools no: 125/2005

Chinese Second Language (CSL) and Chinese Second Language Advanced (CSLA) 2006 Eligibility Requirements

19 October 2005

Further to memorandums 116/2005, 121/2005 and 124/2005 schools are advised that the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) has completed the review of the eligibility requirements for Chinese Second Language (CSL) and Chinese Second Language Advanced (CSLA).

Schools are advised that the eligibility criteria for Chinese Second Language (CSL) and Chinese Second Language Advanced (CSLA) have been revised and that for 2006 and beyond the eligibility criteria will be based on the period of formal education and the period of residence in one of the VCAA nominated countries.

As the formal education commencement age for a Victorian student is 5 years of age, then all applicants will be deemed to have commenced formal education by the end of their 5th year of age, regardless of the setting.

For the purposes of determining eligibility for CSL or CSLA, a school is defined as any setting where formal instruction takes place, and for this purpose may include kindergartens and pre-schools.

For 2006 and beyond, the eligibility criteria will be:

Chinese Second Language

A student is NOT eligible for Chinese Second Language if they have had either:

- 12 months or more education in a school where Chinese is the medium of instruction, or
- 3 years (36 months) or more residence in any of the VCAA nominated countries or regions.

The nominated countries and regions are China, Taiwan, Hong Kong or Macau.

Chinese Second Language Advanced

A student is eligible for Chinese Second Language Advanced if:

- they have had no more than 7 years of education in a school where Chinese is the medium of instruction, and
- the highest level of education attained in a school where Chinese is the medium of instruction is no greater than the equivalent of Year 7 in a Victorian school.

The time periods referred to in these criteria will be counted cumulatively since the time of the student's birth.

The application form for Chinese Second Language (CSL) and Chinese Second Language Advanced (CSLA) is available in VCE Forms.

Applications are due at the VCAA by 18 November 2005.

Applications will be processed as they arrive with the eligibility of individual students visible to schools on VASS within 5 working days of receipt. Eligibility will be determined from the information and evidence provided. If a student is deemed ineligible based on the available evidence, the application will only be reviewed if the home school provides additional supporting documentation, relevant to the deficiencies in the original application.

Exceptional Circumstances

If the Principal of the home school considers that a student, apparently ineligible for the second language for which they have applied, has exceptional circumstances that the VCAA should consider, then this should be communicated with the original application. An exceptional circumstance case requires an explanatory letter from the Principal and supporting evidence that can be verified by the VCAA.

Interim Arrangements for Students Enrolled in CSL Units 3 and 4 in 2006

Due to the timing of the notification of the 2006 eligibility criteria for Chinese Second Language (CSL) units 3 and 4, students who are eligible for CSL in 2006 will have their study scores calculated according to whether they are eligible under the 2005 criteria or the 2006 criteria.

Any enquiries about applications for CSL and CSLA should be directed to:

Student Records and Results Unit

Phone: (03) 9651 4402 (metropolitan callers) or 1800 653 045 (non-metropolitan callers)

Any enquiries about the eligibility criteria for CSL and CSLA should be directed to:

VCAA Curriculum LOTE team
Phone: (03) 9651 4339 or (03) 9651 4620

Appendix 3: Case Studies

Four cases are presented below of interesting new paths in providing and teaching Chinese. What they show is an appreciation of the value of Chinese language, and how engaging with Chinese can become a viable enterprise for the students in their particular program.

Jump-starting the Teaching of Chinese in Regional New South Wales

The Director of the Western Sydney region of the Department of Education and Training, New South Wales, negotiated an agreement with the Ningbo Education Bureau (NEB) in 2007 in which 50 teacher graduates from Zhejiang University would support regional teachers in jump-starting the teaching of Chinese, taking the number of schools offering the language from 12 to 25 in the first year. At the same time, the volunteers would do a Master of Education (Honours) degree at the University of Western Sydney, and the link with studies back into the classroom would be supported by Languages Method staff.

One great strength of the program is that it is a realisation of the very sort of close Australian–Chinese engagement that it advocates for others. NEB put in the care and time necessary to whittle 100 applicants down to just seven candidates in the first year of the program. The NEB together with the NSW Department of Education and the University of Western Sydney have contributed to the costs of having the volunteers. Staff in the recipient schools have given extra time and provided a taxi service from school to school. It is a genuinely communal effort that springs from a common aim and strengthens this aim as it proceeds.

Chinese Immersion Program at Varsity College, Queensland

The Chinese immersion program at Varsity College is the first of its kind in Queensland and in Australia. In Years 6–7, students start with a pre-immersion program, in which there is one hour of intensive language study per day. In Year 8, they can enter the immersion program, where 50 per cent of the curriculum is taught in Chinese. There are already over 100 students in the program.

Preparing for immersion meant recasting 50–60 per cent of all curricula into Chinese. This is a steep learning curve and not at all the same as just translating it from the English. The teaching is in Chinese, and students do the same curriculum, sit identical tests, and are assessed against the same criteria as other students in the school. This is despite the additional complexity of doing half of it in their second language, including writing in characters. Success demands native speaker teachers who can relate to Australian learners and understand the curriculum; and school administrators who embrace, support and believe in the value of immersion learning and Chinese.

Four years on and the evidence of success in all terms is irrefutable. Of the original 29 students, 24 are still enrolled. They are regular kids who take part in all the mainstream school activities. They were a significant 60 points above the school mean in the national literacy and numeracy tests, and well above national means. As a bonus, they are also competent in Chinese.

ICT in Chinese Language Learning in Remote Victoria

Hawkesdale College is in a remote part of southwestern Victoria. Most students live on farms and are bused to school every day. Modern technology, however, has enabled the Hawkesdale students to be visually and audibly in touch with the world. For example, through wikis and collaboratively built websites, the Little Language Experts project has seen one primary class paired with a class in New Zealand. The Australians offered Chinese lessons, and in return the New Zealand students gave lessons in Maori. In the Lunch Box project, using wikis, middle primary students took photos of what they had for lunch and then showed and discussed this with students in their sister-school in China, and also with a class in Turkey, each using their second language Chinese or English.

In these interchanges, phone calls are brought to life by using Skype on an interactive whiteboard. In other uses of ICT, the teacher records lessons for students to listen to on an iPod and the children use mobile phones to make little videos of their life to send to their fellow students overseas, or back to their teacher. ICT has the potential to provide authentic interaction in Chinese, and to be the mediating path between students and attractive activities, which also build language competence into the future.

Mandarin Language Learning in a Sydney Playgroup

From the moment a child walks off the street into the Mandarin Stars playgroup room, he or she will hear and speak only in Chinese – though most do not come from a Chinese-speaking home. Under the guidance of a group of young, active, Chinese-trained kindergarten teachers, the children sing songs, engage in motor-skill activities, eat a snack and do small group work. These structured learning activities – in a play environment with welcoming teachers and classmates – are naturally appealing to children. As joining in is mediated by understanding and using Chinese, they are motivated to attend to and grasp what they need. Supported by rhythm and visual aids, the children pick up songs very quickly. Through listening and doing, they can follow instructions and all have the confidence to begin to use distinct Chinese language themselves within seven or eight weeks.

Appendix 4: Consultation List

Organisation	Position	Name
Australian Capital Territory		
Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations	Manager, Curriculum Branch	Rob Mason
Department of Education and Training	Manager of Curriculum Support	Dr Michael Kindler
Department of Education and Training	Curriculum Officer, Languages	Elizabeth Courtois
The Association of Independent Schools of Australian Capital Territory	LOTE Officer	Jeremy Irvine
New South Wales		
Department of Education and Training	Senior Curriculum Adviser, Asian Languages Curriculum K–12 Directorate	David Jaffray
Department of Education and Training	Chinese consultant	Evelyn Man
Department of Education and Training	Regional Director Western Sydney	Lindsay Wasson
The Association of Independent Schools of New South Wales	Education Consultant, Languages K–12	Ghislaine Barbe
Catholic Education Office, Sydney	Education Officer: Commonwealth Targeted Programs K–12	Mary Karras
Queensland		
Queensland LOTE Centre Curriculum Division The Department of Education, Training and the Arts	Manager, LOTE Education	Tamara Romans
The Association of Independent Schools of Queensland Spring Hill Queensland	LOTE Curriculum Officer	May Kwan
Catholic Education Office (Brisbane Diocese)	Education Officer: Languages and Cultures	Olga Duque
Northern Territory		
Department of Education and Training	Manager of Languages Education NT	Melissa Kosciuk-Fogarty
South Australia		
Department of Education and Children's Services	Curriculum Director, Literacy and Languages	Mark Williams
Department of Education and Children's Services	Curriculum Director, Literacy and Languages	Lia Tedesco

Organisation	Position	Name
Department of Education and Children's Services	Curriculum Manager, Asian Languages, Secondary	Philip Wilson
Department of Education and Children's Services	Program Manager, Languages Education	Maribel Coffey
Association of Independent Schools of South Australia	Assistant Director, Educational Services	Deb Dalwood
Catholic Education South Australia	Senior Education Adviser	Kevin Comber
Catholic Education South Australia	Languages Consultant	Gabrielle Marafioti
Tasmania		
Tasmanian Department of Education	Principal Education Officer (LOTE)	Sue Tolbert
Victoria		
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	Assistant General Manager, Targeted Programs Branch	Carol Kelly
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	Manager LOTE Programs	Connie Andreana
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	Senior Project Officer LOTE Unit	Carole Egan
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	Chinese Language Advisor LOTE Unit	Wei Hongxia
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	Emerging Technologies Unit	Matthew McMahon
Victorian School of Languages	Principal	Frank Merlino
Gippsland Region, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	Director	Michonne van Rees
Gippsland Region, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	LOTE Project Officer	Robyn Young
Grampians Region, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	Director Multicultural Programs LOTE	Peter Shaw-Truex
Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority	Manager LOTE Unit	Maree Dellora
Association of Independent Schools of Victoria	Assistant Director School Improvement	Sharyne Rankine
Catholic Education Office Melbourne	Senior Education Officer Languages	Pina Puddu
Western Australia		
Department of Education and Training	Senior Schooling	Clare Buising
Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia	Education Consultant	Claire Leong
Western Australia Catholic Education Office	Education Consultant – Languages	Patricia Jackson

Organisation	Position	Name
Associations		
Australian Federation of Modern Languages Teacher Associations	President	Lia Tedesco
Community Languages Australia	Executive Director	Stefan Romaniw
Australian Secondary School Principals' Association	President	Andrew Blair
Australian Federation of Chinese Language Teachers	President	James Wu
Independent Schools Council of Australia	Executive Director	Bill Daniels
Independent Schools Council of Australia	Overseas Students Officer	Caroline Winter
Modern Language Teachers Association of Victoria	President	Andrew Ferguson
Chinese Language Teachers Association of Victoria	President	Ha Wei
Chinese Teachers' Professional Learning Association of Victoria	President	Lee Yanqing
Primary Teachers of Chinese Network	Key member	Feng Xixi
University and School Staff		
The University of Melbourne	Deputy Principal, Information Services	Dr Angela Bridgland
The University of Melbourne	Director of Collections, Information Services	Jock Murphy
The University of Melbourne	Asian Studies Librarian	Bick-har Yeung
Matheson Library Clayton Campus Monash University	Senior Asian Studies Librarian	Dr Aline Scott-Maxwell
The University of Melbourne	Head of School of Languages	Prof. Gillian Wigglesworth
The University of Melbourne	Honorary Professorial Fellow, RUMACCC	Prof. Michael Clyne
The University of Melbourne	Honorary Professorial Fellow, School of Languages	Prof. Colin Nettelbeck
The University of Melbourne	Chair Language & Literacy Education	Prof. Joseph Lo Bianco
Melbourne Graduate School of Education	Chinese culture studies	Dr Trevor Hay
La Trobe University	Senior Lecturer in Chinese	Dr Xu Yuzeng
Deakin University	Senior Lecturer in Chinese	Dr Liu Guoqiang
Victoria University	Lecturer in Methodology of teaching Chinese	Lee Yanqing

Organisation	Position	Name
Australian National University	China Centre	Prof. John Minford
University of Technology Sydney	Deputy Vice Chancellor (International)	Prof. David Goodman
Faculty of Education Queensland University of Technology	Assistant Dean (International and Engagement)	A/Prof. Bob Elliott
Research Centre for Languages & Cultures, University of South Australia	Lecturer	Andrew Scrimgeour
Brisbane Grammar School	Head of Asian Languages	Greg Dabelstein
Melbourne Grammar School	House Master, Chinese teacher Former Head of Chinese (35 years experience teaching Chinese in Vic, 10 in Primary P–6, 20 in secondary)	Paul Carolan
Hawkesdale P–12 Government School	Chinese teacher 2008 – Teacher accompanying 20 Year 10 students to China for collaborative work on environment	Jess McCulloch
Penleigh & Essendon Grammar School	Head of Chinese	James Wu
Camberwell Grammar School	Teacher of Chinese, 15 years	Andrew Beale
Loreto College	Beginning Chinese teacher new Chinese program	Sandy McLeod
Independent Girls' School	Chinese Teacher's Aide	anonymous
Government Primary School	Chinese Teacher's Aide	anonymous
Consultants		
Asialink	CEO	Jenny Mcgregor
Asia Education Foundation	Executive Director	Kathe Kirby
Melbourne Centre for Japanese Language Education	Director	Anne De Kretser
mLanguage Learning	Director	June Gassin
Kormilda College Darwin	Principal architect Caulfield Grammar's Nanjing Program and Nanjing Campus Head for 8 years	Malcolm Pritchard

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