

Jointly funded by the Department of the Senate and the Department of the House of Representatives, the Parliamentary Education Office (PEO) delivers parliamentary education services to teachers, students and others across Australia. To date, over 2 million students have expanded their knowledge of the Australian Parliament through participating in a PEO program.

In addition to operational management from both departments, the PEO is guided by the PEO Advisory Committee. The committee is comprised of interested members and senators, meets twice a year and reports to the Presiding Officers.

## Education programs: on site, digital and outreach

The PEO delivers education programs on site at Parliament House, in classrooms across Australia, through our outreach program, and digitally through video conferencing.

The PEO's immersive learning program at Parliament House is regarded as a highly effective method of parliamentary education. The program continued to run at capacity, with 93,225 students from 1,677 schools across Australia participating in 2018-19. These figures represent a 4.4 per cent increase on 2017-18 student participation rates.

The PEO also delivered tailored programs, including 'Rotary Adventures in Citizenship', a week-long program for 36 Year 11 students from around Australia and the National Youth Science Forum for 280 Year 12 students.

In 2018-19, the PEO delivered outreach to 2,952 participants in four states: Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales. Additional outreach is planned for the 2019 calendar year to Queensland.

The PEO continues to increase the number of students and teachers who take part in a video conferencing program, with 1296 participants in the financial year. This relatively new method of program delivery is facilitating excellent engagement with students unable to travel to Canberra and provides another avenue for the PEO to deliver teacher professional learning.

## Content: online and print

The PEO's websites continued to perform strongly. These websites provide information about parliament and curriculum-aligned teaching resources for all Australian teachers and students. A total of 1, 227, 935 users (representing 2.81 million unique page views) were recorded over the past year, representing an increase of 22 per cent on 2017-18 users.

The PEO produced and distributed a range of publications during the reporting period, including the redeveloped *Teaching Civics and Citizenship: a classroom guide*; *Australian Constitution pocket edition*, produced in partnership with the Australian Government Solicitor; and *Get Parliament*, an easy-to-understand booklet that explores Australia's system of government.

## Services for members and senators

The PEO provides dedicated support to encourage and assist members and senators to engage with schools and students. Members and senators are offered a complimentary annual allocation of education and information materials for students, teachers and others in their communities. Senators and members can also request a tailored brochure *Representing You* - to assist them when explaining their work as an elected representative. In 2018-19, 134 parliamentarians requested their allocation.

## Outlook

In late 2019 the renewed PEO website will be launched, and this, along with the PEO video conferencing program, will provide support for students and teachers unable to visit Canberra.

As another strategy to extend reach, the PEO will also continue to increase engagement with the education profession, actively looking for opportunities to deliver teacher professional learning face-to-face, offsite and via digital platforms.

With advance bookings for learning programs at Parliament House likely to remain high, the PEO will continue to operate at capacity and will continue to explore strategies to effectively meet demand while ensuring program quality in 2019-20.