DEC Open Data Policy

Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation
## Document Control

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This document sets out the **Open Data and Publications Policy** for the Department of Education and Communities. It is a part of a set of planned documents related to Information Management (IM) available from the Centre of Education Statistics and Evaluation (CESE), as shown below:

The **DEC IM Framework** is informed by and aligned to the **NSW Government Information Management Framework** (published July 2013; see Appendix One).

For more details on these documents please contact the Director, Information Management, Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, info@cese.nsw.gov.au.
Introduction – Open Data in NSW

Open data supports the open government principles of transparency, participation, collaboration and innovation that are identified as priorities in the NSW Government ICT Strategy. The NSW Government Open Data Policy was published in September 2013. It applies to all NSW Government agencies including cluster agencies, Departments, Statutory Bodies and Shared Service Providers. The Policy’s scope accords with guidance provided to NSW cluster agencies on open government – Guidance for NSW Government cluster agencies on preparing an Open Government Plan. It also takes direction from Premier’s Memorandum M2012-10 - Open Government.

Establishing a culture of open data and open government, and applying the right policy settings from when data is first generated or collected, has been shown to deliver benefits to communities and economies, both in Australia and overseas.

The NSW DEC Open Data and Publications Policy describes DEC’s commitment to, and plan for implementation of the NSW Government Open Data Policy. The purpose, objectives and overarching principles for publication of DEC data and information are presented in this document.

This policy is part of the suite of materials underpinning an Information Management Framework for DEC, developed by the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (CESE) under the guidance of the Information Governance Group (IGG). The policy utilises the proactive release guidelines; as created by the DEC Information Access Unit in the Legal Services Directorate, to inform decisions made about data release.

The Policy is also consistent with Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW) (GIPAA). GIPAA creates new rights to information that are designed to meet community expectations of more open and transparent government. The Act encourages the routine and proactive release of government information.

The NSW DEC Open Data system will be the Datahub (www.data.cese.nsw.gov.au). The Datahub will be the source of education data for the NSW Government Open Data system, data.nsw. Data, subject to a staged roll-out plan for the Datahub, will be federated with the data.nsw site.

Over time, the Datahub will replace, contain or link to existing data publication sites, such as key statistics and reports currently published on the DEC website, ensuring there is a single source of education data and publications relating to data.

Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of the NSW DEC Open Data Policy is to:
• Align the agency to the NSW Government’s commitment to open data and open government
• Simplify and facilitate the release of appropriate data by NSW DEC
• Create a practical policy framework that enables datasets to be released to the public through the Datahub
• Help DEC directorates and staff to understand community and industry priorities for open data
• Support the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW) (GIPAA) and promote simple and efficient compliance with the requirements set out in that Act.

NSW DEC Open Data Objectives

➢ To create a single access point to DEC and education data, with appropriate safeguards to ensure privacy, confidentiality and integrity (the Datahub).
➢ To enable public access to DEC data to stimulate research, promote innovation and to support improvements in the delivery of education and training services in NSW.
➢ To facilitate access to information resources and to promote sharing of information that can support evidence-based decision-making.

NSW DEC Open Data Principles

Under the terms of this policy, DEC undertakes to:

• release as much data as possible
• make data accessible and searchable
• publish a timetable of data releases and the frequency of updates
• work with stakeholders to identify datasets and inform them of impending releases
• collaborate with data.NSW to federate DEC data on the NSW data portal
• publish data in formats that promote its re-use
• follow standards and guidelines relating to the release of data
• be mindful of privacy, confidentiality, copyright and other regulatory structures that are intended to promote responsible use of information

The DEC open data principles are aligned with the NSW Government open data policy which:

• Supports evidence-based policy making and policy research;
• Promotes open, transparent and accountable government;
• Contributes to the digital economy in NSW;
• Leads to better public services;
• Advances citizen engagement with government and with the work of government;
• Enables data sharing between government agencies in NSW and across jurisdictions;
• Embeds open data principles across the department;
• Facilitates greater understanding amongst DEC directorates of their own data and the potential of that data; and
• Applies appropriate safeguards to protect privacy and ensure confidentiality and security

**NSW DEC Open Data Best Practice**

Most efforts to list best practices for managing open data include the following.

In best practice, the data is:

1. **open by default**; that is, there is an expectation that data will be published
2. **discoverable**; that is, the data is easily discoverable and searchable, with good metadata
3. **usable**; that is, data should be in a format that is easy to use, transform and reuse.
4. **timely**; that is, data should be current and live with timestamps and other data to identify the currency of the dataset
5. **well managed, trusted and authoritative**; that is, data must be well managed to ensure its integrity and efficacy for users
6. **subject to public input**; that is, users are able to leave feedback to data.

The *DEC Open Data Policy* meets these best practice requirements for managing open data:

**Open by default**

DEC data is published unless there is a specific, overriding reason for data not to be released in accordance with GIPAA (such as in relation to the public interest test) or where the restrictions outlined in the *DEC Data Governance Framework* are applied.

**Discoverable**

DEC data will be published through the Datahub (www.data.cese.nsw.gov.au). Where appropriate data will be made available at permanent web addresses (permalink) so it can be referred to/linked to.

**Usable**

The Datahub will ensure that published data is compliant with commonly accepted open data standards such as those proposed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). Data quality statements will support the user to determine if the data is suitable for required use.

**Timely**

Data in the Datahub will be current, with timestamps to identify the currency of the dataset. A schedule for publishing updates to datasets will be available.

**Well managed, trusted and authoritative**

Data will be well managed according to the DEC Data Governance and Information Management principles, to ensure its integrity and efficacy for users.
Subject to public input

The Datahub provides a portal for users to leave feedback and it clearly identifies data owners, should users need to contact them.

**Governance for the NSW DEC Open Data and Publications Policy**

Governance is important for effective information management. As an outcome of a review of information management and governance in 2012, the Information Governance Group (IGG) was established. The IGG champions the value and use of information across the Department. It has the responsibility for overseeing information management and business intelligence for DEC.

The IGG ensures that IM/BI projects and initiatives are prioritised across the Department, and that projects are resourced (for example, through a business case). It has an investment in ensuring and maintaining the quality of data and it ensures that best practice standards are adhered to so that DEC is able to grow a robust IM capability over time.

The tasks of the IGG include:
- Defining, communicating, and monitoring IM Strategy, roadmap and policies
- Reviewing, approving, and monitoring IM standards, transparency and architecture
- Identifying, defining, resolving or escalating major strategic IM issues and priorities
- Sponsoring and overseeing IM projects
- Promoting and building awareness, understanding and appreciation of IM.

The IGG will provide governance to the development and implementation of the *NSW DEC Open Data and Publications Policy*.

**NSW DEC Open Data and the DEC Data Governance Framework**

This policy will align with the DEC Data Governance Framework which is in development. It will clarify alignment in following areas:
- Roles and responsibilities
- Terms and conditions of use
- Disclaimers
- Metadata standards
- Copyright licence tools

Restrictions on the release of data may include:
- Privacy
- Public interest test
- Legal privilege
- Security
- Confidentiality
- Public safety
**NSW DEC Open Data Implementation**

A full implementation plan has been developed to accompany this policy. The Implementation Plan consists of two elements: the DEC Open Data Approach and the DEC Open Data Inventory. The Plan outlines a phased approach which is designed to align with the *NSW Government Open Data Policy*. The three phases are outlined at Appendix Three.
Appendix 1: NSW Government Information Management Framework
Appendix 2: Relevant legislative and administrative instruments

Legislation

- State Records Act 1998 (NSW)
- Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW) (GIPAA)
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)
- Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW) – not sure if relevant
- Copyright Act 1968 (Cth)

Memoranda, circulars

- M1999-19 Applicability of Memoranda and Circulars to State Owned Corporations
- DFS Guidance for NSW Government cluster agencies on preparing an Open Government Plan
- M2012-10 Open Government
- DFS C2013-1 OpenGov NSW
- C2002-69 Labelling Sensitive Information

Principles, policies and frameworks

- Principles on Open Public Sector Information (Cth) (OAIC, May 2011)
- Publishing Public Sector Information Web Guide (Cth) (DFD, Feb 2012)
- Confidentiality Information Series (Cth) (NSS)
- ABS Data Quality Framework Cth (2009)
- Information Security Management Guidelines – Australian Government Security
- Classification System (Cth) (July 2011)
- NSW Data and Information Custodianship Policy
- Guidelines for Agencies using Data NSW
- NSW Digital Information Security Policy
- NSW Government ICT Strategy
Appendix 3: Implementation – three phases

Phase 1 (Q2 2014)

In this phase:

- The NSW DEC Open Data system, the Datahub, is developed, using the Socrata Inc open data platform
- Current publicly available datasets are identified for publishing on the CESE Datahub (data.cese.nsw.gov.au)
- The use of NSW DEC data is made easier through increasing use of open access licensing (using the Creative Commons (CC BY AU) licensing framework)
- The CESE Datahub is launched

Phase 2 (Q3-Q4 2015)

In this phase:

- Further datasets are identified and uploaded to the Datahub by CESE
- A new template is devised to increase useability, data categories are updated
- A style guide is implemented, applied to all existing data sets and all new data sets
- A publication process is developed that clearly states the publication process and responsibilities of administrators and publishers on the Datahub
- Other NSW DEC directorates are identified as providers of publicly available data
- Key staff within each directorate are identified and trained as publishers on the Datahub
- Other NSW directorates start uploading datasets to the Datahub (with CESE as the final sign-off to make the datasets publicly available)

Phase 3 (2016 and beyond)

In this phase:

- Data on the Datahub is federated with NSW.Data
- The NSW DEC Open Data and Publications Policy is broadly embedded as a business as usual activity
- NSW DEC participates in open data events and forums with Data.NSW to encourage innovative re-use of government data.