



Submission cover sheet

Inquiry into E-PET-077-25: Access to 11-12 ATAR language courses in 2026

Submission number: 22

Submitter: Canberra Tamil School

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From: [REDACTED]
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The Committee Secretary,
Standing Committee on Social Policy.

As the Principal Coordinator of the **Canberra Tamil School**, I welcome this inquiry into **E-Petition 077-25**. Our school serves the ACT community by providing Tamil language and cultural education to students from **Pre-school through to Year 10** for over 35 years.

I speak from deep personal experience; I was part of the inaugural cohort to take Tamil for the **VCE in Victoria in 1997/1998**. Having benefited from a state-supported language pathway myself, it is distressing to see that 28 years later, students in the ACT are facing the removal of these very same opportunities.

The Current Barrier:

The Canberra Tamil School is ready and willing to support senior secondary education, but we are currently restricted by the lack of an administrative framework in the ACT.

- **Qualified Staffing:** We have a team of talented educators, including **TQI-registered teachers**. We have the professional expertise to deliver Year 11 and 12 curricula today.
- **Infrastructure Gap:** Despite having qualified staff, we cannot offer ATAR-accredited classes because there is no centralised Directorate-led system to moderate and recognise this learning.

A Proven Solution:

The petition's request to move these courses into the Education Directorate aligns the ACT with a **proven national standard** that has existed for over 25 years. Successful models include:

- **Victoria & NSW:** The *Victorian School of Languages (VSL)* and the *NSW Saturday School of Community Languages* have long partnered with community organisations to ensure heritage languages are accredited for the VCE and HSC.
- **South Australia:** The **SA School of Languages** is a dedicated government school that offers 23+ languages after hours to ensure students from all sectors can access ATAR-level language study.
- **Queensland:** The Department of Education actively supports a **Senior External Examination** model specifically designed to help community language students gain Year 12 certification and ATAR points in languages like Tamil.

The ACT is currently an outlier. While other states treat community languages as a strategic asset, the current decision to cease enrolments at CIT treats them as a burden to be removed.

The Academic "Cliff-Edge"

Students at our school often study Tamil for 10 consecutive years. Under the 2026 plan:

