



# Submission cover sheet

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

Submission number: 001

Submitter: Federation of Chinese Associations of the

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**THE FEDERATION OF THE CHINESE ASSOCIATIONS OF  
THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY (FCA-ACT)**

Incorporated in 2001

ABN 76 018 103 380

**澳大利亚首都华人社团联合会**

Address: FECCA HOUSE, 1/4 Phipps Close, Deakin, ACT 2600

**Submission to the Standing Committee on Social Policy  
Inquiry into E-PET-077-25: Access to 11-12 ATAR Language Courses in 2026**

Date: 9th March 2026

Submitted by: Federation of Chinese Associations of the ACT (FCA-ACT)  
Contact: Andrew Ng, Secretary

### **Introduction**

The Federation of Chinese Associations of the ACT (FCA-ACT) is the peak body representing the diverse Chinese community in the Australian Capital Territory. Established in 2001, we unite numerous Chinese associations, community groups, businesses, students, academics, and young professionals to promote Chinese culture, support multicultural harmony, and advocate for the educational and social interests of our community.

We welcome the opportunity to make this submission to the inquiry into E-PET-077-25. The cessation of centralised Year 11-12 ATAR language courses by CIT from 2026 creates a significant gap in educational provision, particularly affecting students from non-English-speaking backgrounds who wish to continue studying their heritage or community languages at senior secondary level.

### **Key Concerns**

Chinese is one of the most widely spoken community languages in the ACT, with a large and growing cohort of heritage learners who begin studying Mandarin in primary and secondary schools. For many students, local colleges do not offer Chinese at ATAR level due to low enrolments in individual schools or resource constraints.

The previous centralised programs (via CAL from 2017-2023 and CIT Solutions in 2024-2025) provided an essential pathway for these students to complete ATAR majors, contributing to:

- Preservation and promotion of Chinese language and culture in a multicultural society.
- Educational equity for students from Chinese-Australian families, who often maintain strong home language exposure but need formal ATAR accreditation for university pathways.
- Alignment with ACT Government commitments to multiculturalism, language education, and the National Languages Policy directions, which emphasise reversing attrition in community languages.



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Without a replicated program in 2026, many Year 11 students will face forced discontinuation of their language studies, leading to lost opportunities in tertiary entrance scores, cognitive and cultural benefits, and long-term community vitality. This disproportionately impacts heritage language learners, including those in the Chinese community, exacerbating inequities in access to high-quality education.

### **Recommendations**

FCA-ACT strongly supports the petition's request and urges the ACT Government and Education Directorate to:

1. Immediately commit to replicating the Year 11-12 ATAR language courses within the ACT Education Directorate, commencing in February 2026 for new Year 11 enrolments (and supporting continuing Year 12 students).
2. Prioritise inclusion of high-demand community languages such as Chinese (Mandarin), alongside others like Japanese, Korean, and European languages previously offered.
3. Utilise cost-effective models, such as centralised after-school or shared-venue delivery, with estimated annual costs under \$250,000 based on prior program data.
4. Engage community stakeholders, including FCA-ACT and language teacher associations, in planning to ensure culturally responsive and sustainable delivery.
5. Develop long-term strategies to embed senior secondary language provision systemically, preventing future disruptions.

### **Conclusion**

Access to ATAR language courses is vital for educational equity, cultural maintenance, and the multicultural fabric of the ACT. For the Chinese community, continued provision of Chinese language at senior levels supports identity, intergenerational transmission, and contribution to Australia's linguistic diversity. We stand ready to collaborate with the committee, government, and education authorities to achieve a positive outcome.

Thank you for considering this submission. We are available to provide further information or appear at hearings if required.

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**Signed on behalf of FCA-ACT**

Andrew Ng, Secretary

Federation of Chinese Associations of the ACT