The politics of education policy

Evidence, expertise and influence

More than ever, Australian schooling policy makers, researchers and practitioners are being asked to defend the evidence they use, justify why the voices of some experts are given preference over others, and be critically aware of the networks of influence that determine what counts as evidence and expertise. A recent proposal by the Australian Productivity Commission to create a national ‘education evidence base’, is one of a number of signals that a new era of policy making is beginning, in which decisions will be guided by data infrastructures and hierarchies of evidence. These developments raise serious questions about what types of evidence will count in emerging evidence repositories, which experts and forms of expertise will gain most traction, and how developments might change the roles of state and national agencies in contributing to evidence production. In this public forum, two senior policy makers and two leading policy researchers will engage in a Q&A-style discussion about the politics of contemporary schooling reform. The panellists and audience will debate the shifting terrain of evidence, expertise and influence in Australian schooling, and what it might mean for future education policy.

Panellists

Adrian Piccoli is the director of the Gonski Institute for Education and a Fellow of the Australian Council for Educational Leaders. He was NSW Minister for Education from 2011–2017; led the political campaign to reform school funding; and has consistently championed the needs of disadvantaged students. He is a Professor of Practice in the School of Education at the University of NSW.

Robert Randall has been chief executive officer of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority since November 2012. He has 20-years’ experience working across curriculum, assessment and reporting in various stages, from program design to implementation. Mr Randall began his career as a mathematics teacher before holding a range of state and federal positions.

Jessica Gerrard is a senior lecturer in education, equity and politics at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education. She has a particular research interest in the relationship of education to politics and policy, work, social change and inequality. Her monograph Precarious Enterprise on the Margins: Homelessness, Poverty and Work in the City was published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2017.

Bob Lingard is Emeritus Professor at The University of Queensland and Professorial Research Fellow at the Australian Catholic University. He has an international research reputation in the sociology of education and education policy and has authored more than 100 journal articles in these fields. His most recent book is Globalizing Educational Accountabilities (Routledge, 2016).

Moderator

Glenn C Savage, researcher in education policy, politics and governance – especially equity, federalism, intergovernmental relations, policy mobilities, curriculum, school funding and standards-based reform – and senior lecturer in education policy and sociology at the University of WA.

When
4.30–7pm
6 November 2018

Where
Charles Perkins Centre auditorium and foyer
The University of Sydney

RSVP
by November 2 at https://stepn.eventbrite.com.au

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