



**PRESS RELEASE**

**K - 12  
A NATIONAL SCIENCE CURRICULUM**

The AGM of the Australian Council of Deans of Science (ACDS) today expressed support for a holistic K-12 approach to the development of national science curriculum. 'The ACDS encourages change in science curriculum and is supporting a number of national initiatives to bring vibrant and exciting science to students.' said President, Professor Rob Norris, Dean of Science at Monash University.

However, the ACDS is concerned that the proposal to combine biology, chemistry and physics up to year ten and to structure science around a set of 'big ideas' seems well beyond the capability of the current education system to deliver. 'You need to understand a lot about science to re-organise it like this and keep it real. You need experience of real world applications and careers. The proposal seems quite unrealistic unless it is accompanied by a sea-change in the quantum and nature of teacher professional development.'

The ACDS' commissioned reports (see <http://www.acds.edu.au/>) have revealed that many of those teaching science have quite limited exposure to science. To attempt to roll out a change without addressing this problem could easily result in significant degradation of the science that is actually delivered, and further alienate students from science at a time when Australia can certainly use those skills to maintain its global competitive position.

'The recent changes in HECS, for which the Government is to be congratulated, means that now is a good time for students to take up the study of science so that they can access the careers that it provides, particularly science teaching.' said Norris. 'There are already indications that science enrolments are on the rise.'

'We need a science curriculum that will reinforce and promote that trend and the ACDS welcomes the opportunity to participate fully in the process of developing one.'

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