

**University of Sydney to support Australia's first Digital Technologies curriculum**

**Wednesday 26 July 2017**

The University of Sydney is excited to announce today its leading role in supporting schools to implement Australia’s Digital Technologies curriculum.

At a launch event at Artarmon Public School today, Australian Government Minister for Education and Training, Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, commended The University of Sydney’s [Australian Computing Academy](https://aca.edu.au/) (ACA) for its role in delivering the *Australian Digital Technologies Challenges for Years 5 and 7* project.

“The *Australian Digital Technologies Challenges* will help give the next generation of coders not only the technical the skills they need to thrive in tomorrow’s economy but valuable life-skills such as critical analysis, creative thinking and problem solving,” he said.

The ACA, which is based in the University’s [Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies](http://sydney.edu.au/engineering/), has been awarded $10 million over the next four years to provide Australian teachers with educational resources and professional development necessary to deliver the new Australian Curriculum: *Digital Technologies* and enable students to excel in the digital economy.

The ACA will deliver the *Australian Digital Technologies Challenges for Years 5 and 7* on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Education and Training until December 2020, with support from Grok Learning and Monash University.

The Challenges area series of free, self-paced, online classroom activities linked to the Digital Technologies curriculum for all Australian Year 5 and 7 students. These activities include:

* interactive course notes, videos and unplugged activities;
* engaging, real-world coding problems with intelligent automated feedback;
* lesson plans and other resources for teachers.

In addition, the Academy will provide email, phone and online support for schools participating in the Challenges to deliver the new curriculum.

Speaking at the launch event, Vice-Chancellor and Principal Dr Michael Spence said the ACA’s important role supporting the new curriculum demonstrated the University’s leadership in the digital space.

“By leading the ACA, the University builds upon its long-term commitment to computing education in schools through our annual National Computer Science School and innovative online computing activities,” he said.

ACA Academic Director Associate Professor James Curran, one of three authors of the *Australian Curriculum: Digital Technologies* and a co-founder of Grok Learning, said the *Australian Digital Technologies Challenges* represented a significant investment in Australia’s digital future.

“The introduction of Digital Technologies is an important addition to the Australian Curriculum. We are delighted to work with the Australian Government in providing resources and support for teachers as they learn and teach the Digital Technologies curriculum,” he said.

“Through the new curriculum, every Australian child has the opportunity to develop the coding, data analysis and collaboration skills that will enable them to be the master of their digital future.”

The project is funded under the [*Inspiring All Australians in Digital Literacy and STEM*](https://www.education.gov.au/inspiring-all-australians-digital-literacy-and-stem) element of the [National Innovation and Science Agenda](https://www.innovation.gov.au/page/agenda).

***Note to editors: Associate Professor James Curran is available for interviews upon request. High-resolution images are available to download*** [***here***](https://cloudstor.aarnet.edu.au/plus/index.php/s/hCzOI5OkCwZHS1g)***.***

**Media enquiries and interview requests:** Jennifer Peterson-Ward – (02) 9351 0240, 0434 561 056, [jennifer.peterson-ward@sydney.edu.au](mailto:jennifer.peterson-ward@sydney.edu.au)

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