

# MONASH Q PROJECT

## IMPROVING QUALITY USE OF RESEARCH EVIDENCE IN PRACTICE: INSIGHTS FROM CROSS-SECTOR CO-DESIGN

### SUMMARY

The Q Project is a 5-year partnership between Monash University and the Paul Ramsay Foundation to improve the use of research evidence in Australian schools. In 2021, the project hosted two series of co-design workshops with teachers, school leaders, and other education stakeholders across five jurisdictions. Forty-nine individuals' took part and shared their collective knowledge and expertise to identify ways to improve research use in Australian schools. This document is based on the ['Improving quality use of research evidence in practice: Insights from cross-sector co-design'](#) report and summarises the methodology, findings, and implications of these co-design activities.

### METHODOLOGY

The co-design process was informed by a [rapid review of research on professional learning](#), a cross-sector review on research use capacity building, and analysis of our [2020 school-based interviews](#). The co-design process then brought together 49 teachers, school leaders and system leaders for two workshops - the first focused on professional learning and the second focused on other ways to improve research use. Figure 1 provides an overview of the co-design inputs, processes, and outcomes.



Figure 1. Overview of co-design approach - inputs, processes, and outcomes.

### KEY FINDINGS

The co-design activities identified eight different ways to improve research use in Australian schools. Table 1 outlines each of the eight enabling factors, identifies the potential system stakeholders responsible for implementing them, along with the suggested role of the Q Project Team.

 "Academic research isn't really baked into our system." (Teacher, VIC)

 "Not every single teacher or leader in a school has to do the finding or reading of research, but everyone can engage in a research conversation and in fact, use research well." (System Leader, MACS)

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**Table 1: Enabling factors, potential implementers, and suggested role of Monash Q Project Team**

Enabling Factor	Focus	'Implementers'	Q Project's role
<b>1. Professional Learning program (s)</b>	Teacher & leader research use capability & confidence	Q team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development &amp; delivery</li> </ul>
<b>2. Coaching (&amp; mentoring)</b>	Teacher & leader research use capability & confidence	Q team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development &amp; delivery</li> </ul>
<b>3. Education system's processes &amp; artefacts</b>	Include requirements for evidence base & for evidence use in school improvement plans, teacher performance plans, etc.	Education jurisdictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations/policy brief</li> <li>Relevant resources developed for &amp; embedded in PL program</li> </ul>
<b>4. Financial support</b>	To buy teacher time to attend PL &/or engage with research evidence (e.g., CRTs)	Education jurisdictions, schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations/policy brief</li> </ul>
<b>5. Research-focused function in schools</b>	The function to promote, support & broker research evidence used is embedded into existing role (s) within schools (e.g., instructional leads, librarians)	Education jurisdictions, Principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe function with different case studies of how it manifests within schools currently</li> <li>Relevant resources developed for &amp; embedded in PL program (e.g., case illustrations)</li> </ul>
<b>6. Education networks &amp; associations</b>	Principal associations & professional organisations promote & support expanded research evidence use in schools	Networks & associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate &amp; participate in partnerships</li> <li>Relevant resources developed for &amp; embedded in PL program (e.g., case illustrations)</li> </ul>
<b>7. Access to, &amp; curation of, research evidence</b>	Educators are both provided access to primary studies/databases & engaged with relevant curated research synthesis	Professional organisations, education jurisdictions, ESA/AERO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations/policy brief</li> <li>Facilitates partnerships</li> </ul>
<b>8. School - university research partnerships</b>	Engage schools & teachers in research partnerships with universities that address context relevant issues, develop teachers as researchers, & increase research use capability	Universities/ schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe partnership characteristics that build teachers as researchers &amp; increase research use capability</li> <li>Implement example partnerships with this focus</li> <li>Relevant resources developed for &amp; embedded in PL program (e.g., case illustrations)</li> </ul>

### IMPLICATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

These recommendations, together with the research literature, our ongoing [empirical research in schools](#) and stakeholder engagement, provide the basis for evidence-informed approaches to improve research use in Australian schools. The key implications of these findings include the development of an integrated professional learning and coaching program, along with specific recommendations to other stakeholders through information/policy briefs.

### CONNECT WITH Q

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