

## Robo-Marking offline...for now

January 30, 2018

The Education Council has taken robo-marking of NAPLAN essays off the agenda but Federation President Maurie Mulheron urged teachers to be “alert” as edu-businesses would not easily give up on the idea.

The Chair of the Council of Australian Governments’ (COAG) Education Council, South Australian Education Minister Susan Close, released a statement last Thursday announcing that automated essay scoring would not be used in forthcoming NAPLAN tests.

“In December 2017, the Education Council determined that automated essay scoring will not be used for the marking of NAPLAN writing scripts,” Ms Close said.



“Any change to this position in the future will be informed by further research into automated essay scoring, and be made as a decision of the Education Council.”

Federation’s opposition to NAPLAN Online and robot marking of student writing has attracted support from parents, teachers and principals and generated extensive media coverage.

Mr Mulheron said teachers had indicated in a survey last September that the NSW public education system is far from being ready to offer NAPLAN testing online, and that plans to roll out a transitional ‘mixed-method’ delivery of NAPLAN was nonsensical.

“The plan to deliver multi-modal form of NAPLAN testing, with some students doing pen and paper exams and others doing the test online, immediately invalidates the data generated,” he said.

Teachers’ responses to Federation’s NAPLAN Hotline – detailed in the report [2017 NAPLAN Online Readiness Trial: The Response of the Teaching Profession](#) – provide extensive documentation of the deficiencies and inequities inherent in the attempt by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) to impose NAPLAN Online.

The union has a deep policy commitment to external assessment, to the enhancement of literacy and numeracy, to the appropriate use of modern, online learning and to the need for all school children to be digitally literate.