

Rising popularity of gaming in schools prompts esports research study

The Commissioner for Children and Young People, Helen Connolly and the Australian Esports Association (AESA) are collaborating with RMIT University to undertake research into the impact of esports in our schools.

Esports, as distinct from recreational gaming, refers to gaming practices that have the characteristics of organised competition, regular training, rules and regulation, record-keeping, and individual or team skill development coaching.

Currently, little research has been conducted on esports in Australia, which is rapidly expanding across education sectors.

The brief study, which will take the form of a national online survey, will be directed at parents, guardians, and educators with the aim of exploring how much is understood about esports within the secondary school setting.

The research will gather specific information about esports in the school setting and seeks to hear directly from parents and educators and others involved in organising esports gaming for secondary students. The aim is to capture the everyday experiences and observations on the practices of esports in Australian high schools as well as gather some information on how network speeds and technology impacts esports access in the home.

Several major esports tournaments have been operating for some years, including the Australian Esports League High School Cup, League of Legends High School League and Flaktest High School Esports Tournaments such as Overwatch, Rocket League, Dota2 and Counter Strike. The research study will also provide more reliable information about who esports players are.

The online survey (*Esports in the high school setting*) will be open from 6 March to 31 March and can be accessed via the AESA website: <https://www.aesa.org.au/sa-ccyp-esports-study/> Responses will be collected by RMIT University and treated as confidential.

Quotes to be attributed to Commissioner for Children and Young People Helen Connolly:

By gathering information around who, how and when esports is being played across our high schools, we will gain insight into this growing sector and the role government, schools and the community can play in developing the necessary policy, planning and wellbeing tools to ensure positive outcomes for all young people involved.

Quotes attributable to the Australian AESA President Darren Kwan:

Esports is growing rapidly and can provide the same positive social benefits to students as traditional sports without many of the typical barriers to entry. Understanding how youth are engaging with esports will help improve the overall governance, growth and environment of esports for both players and the community.

Background: The collaboration between the South Australian Commissioner for Children and Young People, the Australian Esports Association (AESA) and RMIT University is designed to support development of appropriate policy, planning, infrastructure and initiatives for esports in Australia.

AESA is a member of the International Esports Federation (IESF) as a national member representing Australia. Currently the IESF comprises over 47 nations and is a signatory to the World Anti-Doping Agency and actively working towards SportAccord and International Olympic Committee recognition. Additionally AESA is signatory to Ali Baba's World Esports Games (WESG); the World Cyber Arena (WCA), Global Esports Alliance, and the World Esports Consortium (WeSCO), each collaborating to grow esports across the world; and the International University Sports Federations (FISU) who are laying the ground work for global university cooperation in esports.

NOTE TO EDITORS

For enquiries about the study please contact RMIT University Research Officer, Emma Witkowski via email to emma.witkowski@rmit.edu.au

For more information about the work of the Commissioner for Children and Young People go to www.ccyp.com.au

For more information about the work of the Australian Esports Association go to www.aesa.org.au

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