The Design and Technology Teachers Association of South Australia (DATTA – SA) welcome this opportunity to comment on the *Draft National Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*.

Our association represents a diverse group of educators whose capacities include classroom practitioners, curriculum developers and writers, policy and program implementers for educational systems, tertiary educators, researchers and writers in Design and Technology education.

We want to express and convey our deep concern and absolute astonishment at the diminished position of Design and Technology/Technology Education as a recognized and powerful Learning area in this review of the Adelaide Declaration of 1999.

Under the proposed *Draft National Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*, seven learning areas are identified, failing to include the learning area of Technology. Along with this disastrous omission, there was no justification or explanation for this viewpoint

 Design and Technology has been the largest growing field in general education across the world over the last 20 years. The international phenomenon was documented in 1994 by UNESCO (Layton, 1994), and in 1996 by the OECD (Black and Atkin,1996). Australia was, and continues to be, part of this international phenomenon. The significance and importance in South Australian education of Design and Technology ,is that the learning area is afforded the status within the *South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability* Framework SACSA as a mandated Learning Area from the Early years of schooling to the Senior years .This fact establishes the key and important role

that learning in Design and Technology brings to not only students lives but ultimately to the future of design and technological practices of the nation.

.To dilute and omit Design and Technology as a recognised Learning Area in the *Draft National Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* reflects an either an ignorance or misunderstanding of the content of Design and Technology education or reflects the use of a process of convenience with little or no educational value or reasoning.

Australians face challenges for their futures, making choices regarding new and diverse lifestyles, making choices between environmental and economic opportunities. Being a part of our complex democracy demands knowledge and experience of both the processes and the products of technology. Increasingly citizens are asked to make decisions on matters dependent on technological knowledge and intuition such as water use, forms of power generation and energy use and carbon trading.

With this comes an increasing demand to commit to an education that fosters new knowledge, capabilities and dispositions. Examples of these include responding positively to rapid change, thinking in new ways that cross traditional boundaries like culture or subject disciplines, developing critical awareness, embracing technological understanding and imagining many futures. Education that nurtures and promotes these qualities in individuals is a national priority.

Those who do not gain this knowledge in school will be without power in exercising their right to vote on many issues. They will be deceived and exploited by those who misuse our democratic processes through the peddling of misinformation and fear. They will be unable to participate fully in a highly technological society.

Design and Technology education seeks to provide the new learning needed to engage in a rapidly changing, knowledge economy. We face new and diverse

lifestyles, environmental and economic challenges and opportunities. With this cones an increasing demand to commit to an education that fosters new knowledge, capabilities and dispositions. Thinking in new ways that cross traditional boundaries like culture or subject discipline, developing critical awareness, embracing technological understanding and imaging many futures.

Design and Technology is education for an increasingly global and culturally diverse community where ideas, innovation and enterprise are central to the design and development of sustainable, socially responsible, preferred futures

Design and Technology education not only supports this notion "of improving pathways for all young Australians to engage in further education, training and /or employment" but is the vehicles that links this ideal with school, business and enterprise VET, TAFE and Universities.

Design and Technology is the consolidation of skill, knowledge and dispositions necessary to support Federal and State Government "initiates that promote School to work" strategies including the future SA Certificate of education and trade Schools for the Future programmes "

We believe that Design and Technology empowers and inspires the community. Teacher and learners to:-
- Recognise and create opportunities for innovation in diverse and rapid-change settings
- Foster creativity and the power of ideas
- Design , develop and communicate holistic solutions
- Enhance practical knowledge and capabilities
- Critique past, present and emerging technologies
- Apply new, different and appropriate technologies and mental tools
- Evaluate and embed values to promote environmental and social sustainability

Therefore the role of Design and Technology education in Australian schools is vital and a necessary Learning Area.

For too long technology education and in particular Design and technology education has been misunderstood. Science, Mathematics and Literacy have been long branded as the most important links with the future of Australia. Little attention has focussed on design and Technology education as the cornerstone, the integrator, and the means that makes these other learning areas and skills more relevant.

By not including Design and Technology/technology education as a recognised learning area/discipline ignores and negates a whole area of knowledge and capabilities related to our built, constructed and manufactured world. Issues relating to sustainability, design, planning, communication of ideas (literally, visually, graphically), innovation, practical skills and techniques, creating/making and evaluating have been demeaned and taken for granted; yet we interact with these issues and make decisions on a daily basis. Which clothes to wear? Which foods to buy, cook and eat? Which homes to build or buy? How to maintain and repair these constructions? How do we make our homes more sustainable? What materials should we use? What resources do we have?

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As literacy and numeracy are recognized as fundamentals of all educational systems, so should Technological literacy .The competencies that focus on

- the operational, learning how to use technology e.g. tools, equipment, materials, artefacts, processes, systems.
- the cultural, learning through technology e.g. the interdependence of technology with people at home, at work, at play. People apply their technological learning in practical ways to realise designs & solve problems.

- the critical, learning to be with technology e.g. people make judgements about the worth of the intentions & consequences of the technological products, processes & systems on themselves & others.

It is more important now than it ever has been to have Design and Technology/Technology education as a core component of the school curriculum and as a core of an*y National Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*

Yours sincerely
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