

Curriculum Development Process

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Amendment History

Date	Version	Comment
19 February	1.0	Approved version following February Board meeting
8 May	2.0	Updated to take account of Board decisions and planning for writing.
11 August	3.0	Updated to take account of ACARA Board decisions regarding development of key issues position paper and meetings of panels to discussion senior years curriculum

Curriculum Development Process

Purpose

1. This paper describes the curriculum development process that will be used to develop the national curriculum. It also describes the structure of writing teams and consultation groups that will be involved in the national curriculum development.

Background

2. The Board is committed to a process of curriculum development in each learning area that:
 - provides opportunities for consultation
 - establishes achievable timelines
 - ensures high quality curriculum documents.
3. The proposed process involves four phases:
 - I. Curriculum shaping
 - II. Curriculum writing
 - III. Implementation
 - IV. Curriculum evaluation and review
4. Major features of the process are as follows.
 - Advice is sought at key points from teachers, professional associations and curriculum experts as well as from the broader educational community.
 - The curriculum documents are benchmarked against existing state and territory curriculum as well as international examples.
 - Project managers and project officers manage the curriculum development process in each subject, including establishing consultative networks, managing consultation, and managing the work of the writers appointed to draft and revise curriculum documents.
 - Board appointed Curriculum Advisory Panels will contribute to the monitoring and quality assurance role. These panels will provide advice to the writing teams on the quality of the material during the writing process and contribute to the integrity of the curriculum development process.
 - The Board and its Curriculum Committee will review and approve curriculum documents at key stages of development.

Curriculum

5. The process will produce a curriculum that will include the following elements:
 - Curriculum content, which details what teachers are expected to teach and each student is expected to learn
 - Achievement standards, accompanied by annotated student work samples and advice on reporting frameworks.

Curriculum development process

6. Project plans, based on the approved curriculum development process, will be prepared for each curriculum activity.

Curriculum shaping

7. The **curriculum shaping** phase will produce a broad outline of the curriculum K–12 for each learning area. This outline is known as the *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: < Area>*. This paper provides advice on curriculum design and will guide writers. It will also provide a reference for judging the quality of the final curriculum documents.

The shaping phase will typically involve three steps:

Step One – Identification of key issues and development of position paper

The development of a paper that identifies and responds to key issues that need to be resolved before the commencement of writing the shape paper. This step will include the following actions.

- Identification of key issues to be resolved by the Board
- Establishment of a reference group to provide advice on options and preferred position on each issue
- Environmental scan, analysis and review of existing policy and practice, nationally and internationally
- Collation and consideration of existing state, territory and international examples of curriculum for the area
- Preparation of position paper for submission to the ACARA Board
- Endorsement of the position paper by the Board

Step Two – Preparation of initial shape paper

The development of an initial shape paper outlining a proposal for <learning area> to be the subject of national consultation. Lead writer(s) will prepare the paper in response to the following questions.

- What is the rationale or purpose for the learning area?
- What are the broad aims for learning?
- What are the 'big ideas' that need to be understood, both by the teacher in delivering the curriculum and by learners?
- What is the nature of knowledge, understanding and skill in the subject area?
- How might learning in this area aid development of the general capabilities?
- How will the content (knowledge, skills and understanding) best be organised K-10? i.e. What will the key content organisers or structures look like?
- What will the senior years curriculum look like in terms of the course structure i.e. the purpose and focus for each course
- How might teaching and learning in this area aid development of the general capabilities of literacy, numeracy, ICT, creativity and thinking skills?
- Which of the other general capabilities can be naturally and explicitly represented in the content and achievement standards of the learning area? How?

- What are the key considerations that would make this Australian curriculum a world class curriculum?
- What are the implications of a 'futures-orientation' or more 'contemporary orientation' for the learning area curriculum?
- Conduct of a national forum to consider and respond to the initial shape paper
- Consultation on the initial shape paper with curriculum authorities, professional associations and other curriculum experts

Step Three – Preparation and publication of Shape Paper

The preparation and publication of a *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: <Area>*, that will guide the curriculum writing phase. This step will involve the following actions.

- Development by the lead writer(s) of a draft *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: <Area>*
- Endorsement by the Board for widespread consultation on the draft shape paper, involving teachers and key stakeholder groups, including professional associations, curriculum experts and school authorities. Preparation of a consultation report that identifies issues and proposes action to be taken in response to those issues
- Modification of the draft shape paper in response to consultation feedback, which may involve further liaison with key stakeholder groups to discuss particular issues raised during consultation and how they might best be addressed
- Consideration of the amended draft shape paper by the Curriculum Committee for recommendation to the Board
- Submission of the draft shape paper and consultation report to the Board for endorsement to publish as the *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: <Area>*
- Briefing report to federal, state and territory ministers, and curriculum and school authorities, which will highlight the broad directions set for the new curriculum and issues that may need to be considered as school authorities prepare for implementation
- Publication of the *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: <Area>* and consultation report on the ACARA website (including technical specifications) that will guide the subsequent phase of development, along with timelines for the next phase.

Curriculum writing

8. The **curriculum writing** phase will produce a curriculum ready for use by school authorities and teachers in all states and territories.

This phase will typically involve a two-step development of a draft curriculum according to the directions developed in the curriculum shaping phase.

- As a first step, the development of a content scope and sequence, by years of schooling, of what is to be taught to students, including consideration of how cross-curriculum requirements will be addressed. Consultation on the scope and sequence document with advisory panels, professional associations and curriculum experts.
- As a second step, writing the detail of what is to be taught to students, and articulation of achievement standards
- Widespread public consultation on the draft curriculum, involving teachers and key stakeholder groups including professional associations, curriculum and school authorities:
- Collection of work samples to illustrate achievement standards

- Benchmarking against international curriculum
- ‘Trialling’¹ of the draft package by a sample of schools across the country
- Preparation of a report that identifies issues emerging from the consultation and the action to be taken in response to those issues
- Modification of the draft curriculum in response to consultation feedback, which may involve liaison with key stakeholder groups to discuss particular issues raised during consultation and how they might best be addressed
- Consideration of the draft curriculum by the Curriculum Committee for recommendation to the Board
- Submission of the draft curriculum and consultation report to the Board for endorsement
- Briefing report to federal, state and territory ministers and curriculum and school authorities, which will highlight issues that will need to be considered in preparation for and during implementation
- Publication of the consultation report on the Board’s website
- Publication of the *Australian Curriculum <Area>* (print and internet).

Implementation

9. The **implementation** phase will involve delivery of the curriculum to school authorities and to schools in time for school authorities, schools and teachers to prepare for implementation. Implementation and implementation support is the responsibility of school authorities, although the Board will monitor the use of the national curriculum, to determine whether the intentions of the curriculum are being achieved.

This phase will typically involve:

- briefing sessions on the curriculum, by the Board, to reinforce key directions and intentions and to support school authorities to prepare for implementation
- school authorities determining their implementation schedules, taking account of external requirements and local curriculum renewal cycles
- school authorities and other bodies providing curriculum support materials and teacher professional learning opportunities for teachers to assist with preparation for implementation and during implementation
- augmentation of the initial set of work samples published, to illustrate curriculum intentions and achievement standards
- collection, collation and analysis of data on the use of the curriculum
- routine reports to the Board
- identification and recording of issues that need to be taken into account in subsequent curriculum revision.

Curriculum evaluation and review

10. The **curriculum evaluation and review** phase will involve periodic review of the data on curriculum implementation and issues raised to determine whether a curriculum (or part thereof) warrants revision.

This phase will typically involve:

1 A key focus of trialling will be to have teachers and schools judge the feasibility of the draft curriculum being taught.

- periodic consultation with teachers and key groups regarding the existing curriculum to identify issues that warrant further investigation
- regular review of literature and international practice to compare current practice against practice elsewhere
- regular reports to the Board's Curriculum Committee on relevant options for addressing the issues.

11. The following table provides an outline and indicative timeframe for the first two phases of the Board's curriculum development process.

12.

Phase	Activity	# weeks (cumulative)
Curriculum shaping	Identify issues to be resolved before commencement of shape paper.	2 weeks (2)
	Establish reference group to provide advice on key issues; reference group meets to guide development of position paper.	4 weeks (6)
	Position on key issues approved by the Board	4 weeks (10)
	Select lead writer and advisory group (including EOI and selection process)	4 weeks (14)
	Initial draft of shape paper prepared, including initial meeting with advisory group	4 weeks (18)
	Initial draft of shape paper approved for consultation	2 weeks (20)
	National Forum – consultation on draft shape paper	2 weeks (22)
	Write shaping paper	6 weeks (28)
	Shaping paper approved for consultation	2 weeks (30)
	Consultation on shaping paper	10 weeks (40)
	Consultation report and directions for redrafting prepared and considered by Curriculum Committee	2 weeks (42)
	Shaping paper amended and submitted for approval by the Board	3 weeks (45)
	Amended shaping paper and consultation report approved by Board	2 week (47)
Briefing submitted to ministers and school and curriculum authorities Approved shaping paper and consultation report published on internet	2 weeks (49)	
Curriculum development	Select writing team, advisory group(s) and teacher panel(s)	4 weeks (4)
	Conduct induction/briefing workshop (2-3 days) with writing	1 week (5)

Phase	Activity	# weeks (cumulative)
	team and advisory groups	
	Develop broad outline of curriculum document	10 weeks (15)
	Consultation on broad outline of curriculum document, including conduct of a forum; consultation report prepared for writers and for Board	4 weeks (19)
	Endorsement of broad outline (by Curriculum Committee and Board)	2 weeks (21)
	Develop detailed draft of curriculum	10 weeks (31)
	Consultation draft approved for consultation	2 weeks (33)
	Consultation on draft curriculum document – to include trialling	10 weeks (43)
	Consultation report and directions for redrafting prepared and considered by Curriculum Committee	2 weeks (45)
	Curriculum document amended and submitted for approval by the Board	4 weeks (49)
	Amended curriculum document and consultation report approved by Board	2 weeks (51)
	Briefing submitted to Ministers and school and curriculum authorities	6 weeks (57)
	Approved curriculum document published (print and internet) and consultation report published on internet	

Writing teams, advisory panels and consultation groups

13. The development of national curriculum will involve writing teams, curriculum advisory panels and key groups targeted during consultation.
14. The **writing team** for the first and second phases of the curriculum development process will be approved by the Board. For the curriculum shaping phase, one writer will be appointed. For the curriculum writing phase, a small team of writers will be appointed (two to four for each stage of schooling), with co-ordination being undertaken by the project manager. The lead writer/s from the shaping phase could have a significant coaching/mentoring role for the writers and as a support for the project manager.

Writers will be selected from a register of expressions of interest and/or may be nominated by Board members. Selection will take account of subject/learning area expertise, curriculum development expertise and teaching or related experience. A selection process will be conducted to rank potential writers.

15. Writing teams will be assisted in the curriculum development process by advisory panels which will provide advice on draft materials at key stages in the development process. Advisory panels will be of two types – subject/learning area experts and those with expertise in stages of schooling, equity and diversity. While the members of advisory panels may physically meet during the curriculum development process, it is envisaged that most of their work will be done electronically or through tele/video conferencing.
16. **Subject/learning area advisory** panels will comprise subject learning experts (from universities, industry, curriculum authorities and professional associations) and classroom teachers, selected on the basis of expertise. These panels may number up to 20 members, depending on the scope and coverage of the curriculum being developed. Nominations will be sought from curriculum and school authorities and professional bodies, but the panels will not be formed to be representative.
17. The **stages of schooling and equity and diversity advisory panels** will include members with expertise in particular stages of schooling, equity, indigenous education etc. Where more than one curriculum area is being developed at the same time, these panels may work across several curriculum development projects. Nominations will be sought from curriculum and school authorities and professional bodies, but the panels will not be formed to be representative.
18. For senior years curriculum development a **panel of curriculum experts** nominated by state and territory curriculum authorities will meet early in the curriculum writing stage to provide advice on the broad outline of courses to be developed in each subject area. The panels of curriculum experts will be convened for each course.
19. The Board's **consultation** process provides opportunities for anyone with an interest in a particular aspect of the curriculum to consider and respond to draft documents. In addition, state and territory curriculum bodies, school authorities and other bodies will engage in consultation activities. However, the Board will, for phase two curriculum development:
 - establish a national teacher consultation panel, consisting of a representative sample of teachers from across the nation, to provide formal feedback on draft curriculum documents
 - engage international curriculum personnel to review and provide feedback on draft curriculum documents
 - identify a representative group of schools to undertake trialling of aspects of the draft curriculum documents.