

The structure and development of the Australian Curriculum

Q: What process has been followed to develop the Australian Curriculum?

A: In June 2008, the interim National Curriculum Board (iNCB) published the National Curriculum Development Paper and held national and state and territory forums. Using feedback from those forums, the Board recruited a lead curriculum writer for each of the four learning areas in its charter:

- English
- mathematics
- science
- history.

With the assistance of small expert advisory groups, each writer prepared a concise initial advice paper providing a rationale for the learning area, and a broad scope and sequence of material for K–12. In October 2008, four national forums were held with teachers and curriculum experts to discuss these advice papers.

From this point, development of the Australian Curriculum entered into the formal four stage process of:

1. curriculum shaping
2. curriculum writing
3. curriculum implementation
4. review and evaluation.

Shaping the curriculum

Feedback from the October forums was used by the four lead writers, in conjunction with advice from advisory groups, to develop a framing paper for each learning area. The four Framing Papers were published in November 2008 and were available for public consultation until the end of February 2009. More than 900 submissions and survey responses were received.

During the consultation period, large scale forums were held with teachers and curriculum experts on themes of equity and diversity, stages of schooling and learning for the 21st century.

Analysis of the Framing Paper consultation feedback led to a revision and the publication in May 2009 of *The Shape of the Australian Curriculum* and the four companion papers, *The Shape of the Australian Curriculum: English, Mathematics, Science and History*. These documents were the blueprint for writing the Australian Curriculum. [Visit the ACARA website](#) to view these papers.

Writing the curriculum

In May 2009, expert curriculum writers and learning area advisory panels were recruited and inducted. In addition, panels were formed to provide advice on issues relating to equity and diversity and the different stages of schooling.

In June and July 2009, ACARA conducted briefing sessions to large scale cross-sector education groups in each state and territory, outlining progress and directions for the writing of the curriculum. More than 1000 educators participated in these sessions.

In September 2009, ACARA held eight national curriculum development workshops to obtain feedback on draft curriculum in each learning area for both K–10 and senior years from nominated expert academics and teachers.

In addition, there were specially convened forums to address literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology, and the cross-curriculum dimensions of Indigenous history and culture, sustainability and Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia.

The writers and advisory panels continued their work into February 2010 when the draft Australian Curriculum K–10 for English, mathematics, science and history was published online for trialing and public consultation until the end of May 2010.

Consultation feedback will be analysed and incorporated into the revision of the draft

curriculum. The final Australian Curriculum for English, mathematics, science and history will be published online in the third quarter of 2010.

Q: How will the Australian Curriculum be published?

A: Both the draft and final form of the Australian Curriculum will be published online at www.australiancurriculum.edu.au and will enable multiple views and access. An online curriculum will allow teachers flexibility in how they read and organise the curriculum.

For example, teachers could view, download and print the curriculum for a particular learning area at one year level or across multiple year levels. They could also view, download and print content with a focus on one or more of the three cross-curriculum dimensions or 10 general capabilities.

In addition, online publication of the curriculum will provide transparency as teachers and others in the broader education community are able to review and provide feedback online.

During consultation, all state and territory education authorities will be provided with PDF versions of the curriculum and word document versions of the online survey to distribute to those schools which may experience difficulty in accessing the Australian Curriculum consultation portal.