



Structure of the Australian Curriculum

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The Australian Curriculum sets out what all young Australians are to be taught, and the expected standards of achievement as they progress through schooling.

You can view the Foundation to Year 10 Australian Curriculum at www.australiancurriculum.edu.au

What are the elements of the curriculum?

The overall structure of the curriculum is consistent across learning areas and includes the following elements:

- A **rationale** that explains the place and purpose of the learning area in the school curriculum
- **Aims** that identify the major learning that students will be able to demonstrate as a result of learning from the curriculum
- An **organisation** section that provides an overview of how the curriculum in the learning area will be organised from Foundation to Year 12
- **Content descriptions** that specify what teachers are expected to teach. These are accompanied by **elaborations** that illustrate the content descriptions
- **Achievement standards** that describe what students are typically able to understand and able to do, and which are accompanied by **work samples** that illustrate the achievement standards through annotated student work
- **General capabilities** that describe a set of skills, behaviours and dispositions that apply across subject-based content
- **Cross-curriculum priorities** that ensure the Australian Curriculum is relevant to the lives of students and addresses the contemporary issues they face.

On the website, the 'organisation' tab under each learning area provides further information on the structure including a description of strands and sub-strands.

What are the content descriptions?

The **content descriptions** specify what teachers are expected to teach. They include the knowledge, skills and understanding for each learning area as students progress through schooling. The content descriptions provide a well-researched scope and sequence of teaching, within which teachers determine how best to cater for individual students' learning needs and interests.

Examples that illustrate content descriptions can be found in **elaborations**. These assist teachers in developing a common understanding of content descriptions.

What are the achievement standards?

An **achievement standard** describes what students are typically able to understand and able to do as they progress through schooling. An achievement standard comprises a written description with illustrative student **work samples**.

The sequence of achievement standards across the Foundation to Year 10 Australian Curriculum describes and illustrates progress in the learning area. This assists teachers to plan for and monitor learning and to make judgements about their teaching to support student learning. The achievement standards can support formative and summative assessment practices and provide a basis for consistency of assessment and reporting.

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Work samples play a key role in establishing and communicating expectations described in the achievement standards. The examples of student work include the task and a student's response, with annotations about the learning evident in that response in relation to relevant parts of the achievement standard.

What are the general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities?

The Australian Curriculum pays explicit attention to how seven general capabilities and three cross curriculum priorities contribute to, and can be developed through, teaching in each learning area.

The seven **general capabilities** are:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Information and communication technology competence
- Critical and creative thinking
- Ethical behaviour
- Personal and social competence
- Intercultural understanding.

The three **cross-curriculum priorities** are:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures
- Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia
- Sustainability.

Further detail is available in the general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities information sheets.

How is the Australian Curriculum presented online?

The Australian Curriculum is an online curriculum that provides flexibility in how the curriculum can be accessed and organised.

For example, users can view, download and print the curriculum for a particular learning area at one year level or across multiple year levels or multiple learning areas. They can also view, download and print content with a focus on one or more of the general capabilities or cross-curriculum priorities. A scope and sequence chart can be printed for each learning area.

To view the Australian Curriculum, visit www.australiancurriculum.edu.au.