AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING AUTHORITY

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ACARA's Response to the Consultation Feedback on the draft K-10 Australian Curriculum

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This document outlines the actions taken by ACARA in response to feedback received during consultation on the draft K-10 Australian Curriculum.

The document does not represent the significant positive feedback that was received during the consultation and review period.

The consultation feedback presented in this document has been drawn from

- the Insync commissioned *K-10 Consultation Report* (July 2010)
- the *K-10 Trial Schools Report* (July 2010).
- multilateral discussions and negotiations with states and territories during the final review and revision process (October - November 2010.)

Discussion of consultation feedback in this document focuses on the broader issues identified. It takes account of the more detailed feedback and suggestions received that sit as another layer of consultation data.

The discussion about consultation feedback and actions taken in response to the feedback is organised in the following sections:

1. Across the learning areas (English, mathematics, science, history)

1.1 Content heavy

The draft Australian Curriculum was considered content heavy. Consistent feedback highlighted overcrowding across the draft curriculum and that this may detract from the depth and quality of understanding achievable. (Insync Consultation Report)

The draft Australian Curriculum was regarded by trial school teachers of being 'unmanageable' in terms of the amount of content to be covered. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

1.1.1 Content in each learning area has been reviewed and appropriate opportunities have been identified to reduce volume without compromising the integrity of the content.

1.1.2 Content in each learning area has been reorganised by grouping related content using sub-strands. This has improved coherence and sequencing and has reduced some perception of overcrowding that had resulted from individual content descriptions being presented separately.

1.1.3 In English, in order to improve coherence, the content has been reorganised using the same organising principles across the strands and at the year levels. This reorganisation will assist with identifying similar content across strands. The content which was identified as being repetitive has either been deleted or drawn together.

1.1.4 In Mathematics, content has been reorganised into sub-strands which has enhanced the clarity of scope and sequence across Years K-10. The volume of knowledge content has been reduced to ensure greater manageability and less repetition. The amount of content related to statistics has been reduced but remains consistent with the *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Mathematics* paper's intent to emphasise its place within the curriculum. Some content that was considered to be more appropriate in other learning areas for example in geography, has been removed.

1.1.5 In History, greater attention has been given to the explicit representation of the concepts of historical understanding, to reduce the volume of knowledge content and to provide flexibility for teachers in delivering the curriculum. In Years K-6 the volume of content has been reduced to ensure that it is manageable. In Years 7-10, electives have been identified within a defined set of depth studies to provide a degree of flexibility for teachers in delivering the curriculum and to assist with the manageability of content.

1.1.6 In Science, content has been reduced, particularly in the science understanding strand. Content has been removed where it overlapped with other learning areas (particularly geography and health). Some geological content in relation to landforms and weather has been removed or reduced where it was considered to be not specifically scientific content. Where content is related to aspects of health education, for example human reproduction and disease, content descriptions have been revised to explicitly focus on science understanding.

1.1.7 *Science as a Human Endeavour* content has been revised to more closely align with the content of science understanding and science inquiry skills so that it does not add overall curriculum content.

1.2 Clearer achievement standards with stronger links to assessment

The need for clearer achievement standards that specify the depth of what students are expected to learn at each year level. The purpose of the achievement standards needs to be clearly articulated with stronger links to assessment and reporting. (Insync Consultation Report)

The number of work samples need to be increased to illustrate and exemplify the achievement standards (48% of trial school respondents were dissatisfied with the number of work samples – in the draft Australian Curriculum). (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

1.2.1 Across the four learning areas, achievement standards have been reviewed and revised to:
- enhance the quality and consistency of the achievement standards
- improve the description of the quality of expected learning
- improve the sequence of growth and development.

1.2.2 The purpose and design of achievement standards and their relationship with assessment and the reporting framework is more clearly described in the *Shape of the Australian Curriculum* paper and in information material to support implementation.

1.2.3 Work samples collected from trial schools and from other sources illustrate the achievement standards for each year in each learning area. The number of annotated work samples has increased with the release of the final curriculum to better and more comprehensively represent the expected level of achievement.

1.3 Catering for students with diverse and special needs

Concerns were expressed across all learning areas that the curriculum does not take into account all students, nor allows teachers the flexibility required in teaching students with diverse learning abilities, from diverse backgrounds and from regional areas. (Insync Consultation Report)

Trial school teachers expressed concern that the content descriptions and achievement standards failed to cater to a diverse range of students including multi-aged and mixed ability classes, and EALD students. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

1.3.1 More explicit statements have been included in introductory and supporting documentation on how the Australian Curriculum meets the learning needs of each student, together with advice on how classroom and school-level strategies can play a significant role.

1.3.2 The revised Australian Curriculum (curriculum content, elaborations and achievement standards) is more inclusive in the language and concepts used to better account for the learning needs of students with special education needs.

1.3.3 In order to develop a consistent understanding of the diversity of the EAL/D cohort in Australian schools and the importance of language within each learning area, a statement has been included in the 'Organisation' section of each learning area. Existing state and territory EAL/D documents will be reviewed to identify the support material that can be linked to the curriculum.

1.3.4 Sequences of learning 'prior to K' will be developed in the first half of 2011 to provide for those students with special education needs (ie with severe intellectual disabilities) whose learning is

not currently represented in the draft K-10 curriculum.

1.4 Broader range of annotated work samples

A broader range of annotated work samples was requested in order to exemplify the standards. Multi-modal (ie written, video, oral and aural) samples would be more beneficial, particularly if accompanied by rubrics representing a greater range of assessment tasks. (Insync Consultation Report)

Over 48% of trial school teachers disagreed that the annotated work samples illustrate and exemplify the achievement standards. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

1.4.1 Work samples collected from trial schools have been annotated and published to support illustration of achievement standards for each year in each learning area. Additional work samples will be collected and added to the website over the 12 months from time of release.

1.4.2 Some assessment tasks will accompany the release version of the curriculum, with additional advice on assessment to be developed over the course of 2011.

1.5 Stronger focus on transition points

In considering feedback across the stages of schooling, there were calls for a stronger focus on transition points in order to review the leaps in content and specialisation, specifically from year 6 to 7. (Insync Consultation Report)

Trial school teachers from Qld, WA, NT and SA expressed concern that the draft Australian Curriculum failed to cater to students who are undertaking Year 7 in a primary context. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

1.5.1 Curriculum content has been reviewed and revised in each learning area for age-appropriateness and to strengthen sequencing at key transition points particularly from years 6 to 7.

1.5.2 ACARA support material (information sheets and FAQs) have been updated to more clearly articulate the relationship with the Early Years Learning Framework.

1.5.3 Year 7 curriculum content across all learning areas but particularly science has been reviewed to ensure that it can be taught in both primary and secondary school settings, without reducing expectations for Year 7 students who are in secondary settings.

1.6 Revision of curriculum nomenclature

There was general feedback across the curriculum that improved clarity is required with regards to language use, terminology and descriptions. Typical feedback included the consistent use of terminology both within and across learning areas. (Insync Consultation Report)

A significant proportion of trial school teachers (30%) expressed concern with the language used in the draft Australian Curriculum, claiming that it is unclear and ambiguous. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

1.6.1 The conceptual organisation of the curriculum within and across learning areas has been reviewed to improve clarity and consistency overall.

1.6.2 The glossary of terms has been reviewed to support consistency of terminology used across the Australian Curriculum and for clarity of specific terminology within learning areas.

1.6.3 In each learning area, the clarity of language and consistency of terminology has been reviewed and revisions made accordingly.

2. English

2.1 Content sequencing and placement

Consistent feedback highlighted several topics which were misplaced across year levels. In addition, there was a perceived lack of coherence around how content was linked across the strands. (Insync Consultation Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

2.1.1 The sequencing of grammar, spelling, vocabulary, punctuation, phonological knowledge and phonics has been reviewed and revised, where necessary, so there is clearer logical progression.

2.1.2 To increase coherence, content descriptions have been rewritten to ensure that the connections across strands are clear.

2.1.3 Lack of coherence has been addressed through the use of common sub-strands across all year levels without forcing content into each year. The titles of the sub-strands have been reviewed for consistency across year levels.

2.1.4 Similar sub-strand headings are now used across the three strands where appropriate to more clearly show the relationships between content. Examples of how the strands can be integrated in the curriculum have been developed and included as part of the organisation of the learning area.

2.1.5 A scope and sequence of the curriculum by strand and sub-strand will be available on-line.

2.1.6 To provide clarity about the purpose of the year level descriptions, an explanation has been included in the organisation of the learning area.

2.2 Clarity about the depth of teaching and learning required

The need for English content descriptions together with achievement standards that clearly specify the depth of what students are expected to learn at each year level was deemed essential. (Insync Consultation Report)

The content descriptions and achievement standards should contain more detail about developmentally appropriate progression of knowledge, skills and understandings. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

2.2.1 The content descriptions have been revised to ensure they more clearly specify the depth of learning required. Content elaborations have been revised to support this.

2.2.2 The achievement standards have been revised to ensure they focus on depth of understanding and sophistication of skills rather than being a summary of content.

2.2.3 The achievement standards have been revised to ensure they show developmentally appropriate progression of knowledge, understanding and skills.

2.3 Catering for students with diverse and special needs

Concerns were expressed that the English curriculum does not take into account all students, nor allows teachers the flexibility required in teaching students with diverse learning abilities, from diverse backgrounds and from regional areas. (Insync Consultation Report)

Concerns were expressed by trial school teachers that the English curriculum is not sufficiently inclusive and does not cater for multi-levelled classes. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

To ensure inclusivity:

2.3.1 Content descriptions and achievement standards have been revised in consultation with specialists who work in the areas of: special education; English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D); and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

2.3.2 A statement has been included in the organisation of the learning area section about the ways in which the curriculum caters for students with special education needs.

2.3.3 A statement has been included in the organisation of the learning area section about the need for teachers to cater for EAL/D students. Content elaborations have been reviewed for inclusivity. Work samples from EAL/D students have been included where possible.

2.3.4 The ways in which the intercultural understanding general capability has been strengthened with a specific sub organiser entitled 'Language in its social, historical and cultural contexts'.

2.3.5 Grammar skill development for ESL/EAL/D students has been addressed through the development of a language and literacy continuum. An EAL/D support document that describes the language progression of EAL/D learners and how this bridges to the Australian Curriculum for all learning areas will be available.

2.4 Development of oral competence

Consistent feedback highlighted that across the curriculum, there is inadequate focus on oral language and vocabulary development, relative to reading and writing. Particularly within the early primary years, speaking skills need to be consolidated before reading and writing.
(Insync Consultation Report)

More emphasis needs to be placed on oral language and predicting text. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

2.4.1 To ensure there is more emphasis on oral language, content descriptions that specifically focus on oral language (listening and speaking) have been written instead of combining them with content descriptions that focus on all modes. This will ensure that content descriptions that address oral language are clearly evident across all levels.

2.4.2 The presentation of the curriculum on-line will provide the option for teachers and others to view the curriculum content by modes.

2.4.3 To emphasise the importance of consolidating speaking skills to support reading and writing, the sequence of oral language from Year K has been reviewed (across vocabulary, sentence complexity, using language for different purposes, comprehension).

2.4.4 The vocabulary sequence across the year levels has been revised to enhance students' understanding of texts.

2.5 Inclusion of handwriting

Inconsistencies across states and territories were highlighted on the issue of a nationally approved handwriting style in keeping with a national curriculum. (Insync Consultation Report)

Trial school teachers called for a national handwriting style. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

2.5.1 ACARA will work with state and territory jurisdictions to investigate the feasibility of a common Australian handwriting style, that should be based on what is the most effective and efficient style for students.

2.6 Representation of general capabilities

Less integration of ICT was evidenced in secondary years as opposed to a more focused development of these skills in earlier years. Feedback indicated that the communicative potential of ICT could be better capitalised on in the draft English curriculum. (Insync Consultation Report)

More visual literacy and ICT is needed in the English curriculum. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

2.6.1 Detailed conceptual statements and learning continua for all general capabilities based on contemporary research, have been developed to provide comprehensive, consistent advice, , to learning area writers and those engaged in revision of the K-10 curriculum.

2.6.2 To address the issue of ICT, the content descriptions at all levels, particularly 7-10, have been reviewed against the detailed conceptual statements and learning continua provided for writers about the ICT general capability. Content has been revised to ensure greater emphasis on digital literacy, with the advice about communicating and creating with ICT as a particular focus. People with expertise in general capabilities have assisted in the revision of the draft curriculum.

2.6.1 General capabilities materials that have informed the writing and revision process will be made available to teachers and others in order to assist their planning in relation to general capabilities.

2.7 A continuum of grammar, punctuation and spelling

Trial school teachers highlighted the need for a continuum of grammar punctuation and spelling to guide teachers. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

2.7.1 A continuum has been developed through the scope and sequence of sub-strands.

2.8 Types of Texts

Feedback from trial schools indicated that there is a need for guidelines about text types for each year level. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

2.8.1 Types of texts appropriate for the selection in teaching and learning programs have been addressed in the year level descriptions.

3. Mathematics

3.1 Content and achievement standards pitched and sequenced inappropriately

Consistent feedback indicated that content and achievement standards have been set too high and are generally too difficult for the average student. A stronger focus on the sequencing of content was also raised in order to better reflect student consolidation of concepts. (Insync Consultation Report)

Trial school teachers regarded the achievement standards as being too broad. Achievement standards were criticised for not identifying the depth of content, knowledge and application expected. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

3.1.1 For each strand, content has been reorganised into sub-strands to enhance the clarity and coherence of content scope and sequence across Years K-10. This process identified gaps in the sequences. Content has been relocated to more appropriate levels which has improved the continuity of conceptual and skills development across K-10.

3.1.2 The proficiency strands, as significant mathematical capabilities and applications, have been made more explicit in both the content descriptions and the achievement standards in order to enhance the levelness and sequence of the curriculum.

3.1.3 Achievement standards have been revised to focus more on the development of skills and understanding and to better reflect the cognitive demand of content for each year level.

3.2 Content overcrowding

The mathematics curriculum is too content heavy, particularly in terms of statistics, and that this may detract from the depth and understanding of other topics. Duplication and inconsistencies both within and across the strands should be reviewed. (Insync Consultation Report)

The mathematics curriculum contains both gaps and duplication within and across the strands. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

3.2.1 The amount of statistics has been reduced from the consultation draft but, in accord with the intent of the *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Mathematics*, there remains an enhanced presence of statistics in comparison to current state and territory mathematics curricula.

3.2.2 A mapping of content was undertaken to inform revisions to the sequencing of content and the reorganisation into sub-strands. This has resulted in removal of content that was repeated and the removal of some content that was considered not essential for all students.

3.2.3 Approximately 15% of content descriptions have been deleted to alleviate the problem of overcrowding. These deletions include some statistics content and “location” content (considered more appropriate to geography).

3.3 Catering for students with diverse and special needs

The mathematics curriculum does not take into account all students, nor allows teachers the flexibility required in teaching students with diverse learning abilities, from diverse backgrounds and from regional areas. (Insync Consultation Report)

Trial school teachers expressed concern about the curriculum being too challenging for students, especially years 7-10. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

3.3.1 To ensure inclusivity, content descriptions and achievement standards have been revised in consultation with specialists who work in special education, English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

3.3.2 A statement has been included in the organisation of the learning area section about the ways in which the curriculum caters for students with special education needs. In many situations (e.g. with respect to geographical location of schools) students' needs are attended to by the professional decision-making of education authorities, schools and teachers as they access the curriculum to develop appropriate teaching / learning programs.

3.4 Problem solving coverage

Feedback indicated that problem solving was not sufficiently considered in the draft curriculum. It was felt that this skill needs to be strengthened across all strands. (Insync Consultation Report)

Trial schools called for a scope and sequence of proficiencies and a greater emphasis on mental computation in all year levels. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

3.4.1 The proficiency strand of 'Problem solving' has been strengthened and made more evident in the content descriptions across all strands and to be represented more explicitly and appropriately in the achievement standards.
A statement to describe where problem solving is evident in the content descriptions for that year level has been included in the year level descriptions.

3.5 Incorporating ICT skills

Specific inclusion of ICT skills was not clearly evident in the draft mathematics curriculum across all year levels. More rigorous linkages between content and technology need to be made in the document along with software that can be used. Using ICT in mathematics needs to reflect a change in thinking and not just a change in the tools used. (Insync Consultation Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

3.5.1 The inclusion of technology has been strengthened by including more explicit references to how it enhances mathematical understanding, rather than its current placement in content descriptions using the phrase "including ICT".

3.6 Guidelines around the use of calculators

Guidance was sought around the appropriate stage and level to introduce calculators. Feedback highlighted the fine line between introducing calculators too early, which may not allow students to develop their own mathematical processing skills, and failing to incorporate calculators in other subject areas. (Insync Consultation Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

3.6.1 Revision of the curriculum includes references to digital technologies in the Number and Algebra strand from Year 3. The use of calculators in Years 3, 4 and 5 are evident in the elaborations. The use of digital technologies, including calculators, is included in Year 6 in preparation for the calculator section of NAPLAN in Year 7.

3.7 Representation of proficiencies

Consultation feedback indicated that the development of the content does not adequately represent the proficiencies nor encourage teachers to relate the concepts from different strands. (Insync Consultation Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

3.7.1 The vocabulary used to describe the proficiency strand has been used consistently and explicitly in content descriptions for K-10. The year level statements at the beginning of each year include clear statements identifying where the proficiencies are evident in the content descriptions for that particular year level.

3.8 Representation of cross-curriculum priorities

The majority of online respondents indicated that the cross curriculum priorities were not clearly evident in the content descriptions for mathematics. (Insync Consultation Report)

Concern was expressed that the importance of teaching language and vocabulary is not reflected in the mathematics curriculum. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

3.8.1 Mathematics content has been revised to explicitly incorporate cross-curriculum priorities and foreground numeracy as appropriate. As numeracy is the application of mathematics in real-world contexts, it enables the opportunity to address the cross curriculum priorities. References to the priorities are in the elaborations.

3.8.2 The importance of teaching mathematical language is explained in the organisation of the learning area statement, and a numeracy continuum has been developed to reflect language demands.

4. Science

4.1 Content overcrowding

A common issue raised was that the Science Understanding strand was content heavy and covering it all in sufficient depth would be difficult. Specifically, geological content was overrepresented. There were also general views that the content was lacking around emerging sciences and new technologies. (Insync Consultation Report)

Trial school teachers expressed concern that the science curriculum is content heavy and lacks clarity. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

4.1.1 The process of content reduction was guided by a focus on core concepts of science. This makes explicit the conceptual development of *Science Understanding*. The unifying ideas have been revised and are now referred to as overarching ideas; these are more identifiable within the curriculum.

4.1.2 The overall volume of the *Science Understanding* (SU) Strand has been reduced by between 10-15%. The rationale for this is to allow for the development of Science Inquiry Skills and interrelationships developed with the *Science as a Human Endeavour* (SHE) strand. It also allows greater flexibility for teachers to deliver the curriculum to a range of students in a range of learning situations and to cater for the differing needs of students.

4.1.3 Some of the geological content in relation to landforms and weather has been removed. Only content that is identified as being specifically scientific has been retained in the science curriculum.

4.1.4 In relation to overlap with health education, areas such as human reproduction and disease have been retained but content descriptions have been re-written to ensure a focus on Science Understanding rather than issues more appropriate to be covered in Health or Physical Education.

4.2 Achievement standards pitched and sequenced inappropriately

Consistent feedback indicated that the achievement standards are pitched too high across year levels. Clearer standards that specify the depth of student learning required at each year level were considered critical. (Insync Consultation Report)

A significant proportion of trial school teachers (35%) expressed concern that the content descriptions and achievement standards do not provide clarity about the depth of learning. The curriculum was also considered to be too academically rigorous and does not give scope for students with special education or learning needs. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

4.2.1 The achievement standards have been revised to ensure that developmental progression through the years is appropriate. The directions taken with the content of the three strands will also help to consolidate and clarify a more obvious developmental sequence. Examples of

content have been removed from achievement standards in order to focus on the key understanding, rather than coverage of the scope of content.

4.2.2 The achievement standards have been revised to focus more on core understanding of science concepts to address the perception that the standard is too high.

4.2.3 Ambiguous words such as “begin to” and “simple” have been removed and replaced with language which gives a clearer indication of level of achievement. The achievement standards have also been revised to ensure that the focus is on the quality of student learning rather than level of guidance and support from the teacher.

4.2.4 Achievement standards have been illustrated with additional annotated work samples to help clarify the quality of learning expected at each year level.

4.3 Resourcing implications for primary schools

The national science curriculum requires equipment and facilities that many primary schools and regional schools may not have (e.g. science labs). (Insync Consultation Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

4.3.1 Content has been reviewed to ensure that the material is suitable for both the conceptual level of students and the possible location of their learning.

4.3.2 Writers have considered that the teaching of Science in Year 7 in some jurisdictions will be taking place in primary schools. Content for year 6 and below has also been written for a primary school environment and includes content that is currently being taught in a range of primary schools around the country.

4.3.3 It is recognised, however, that a curriculum that is built around inquiry-based teaching and learning may well have resourcing issues across all stages of schooling, especially in regional and remote Australia.

4.4 Emerging and contemporary sciences

The science curriculum was lacking in content around emerging sciences and new technologies. (Insync Consultation Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

4.4.1 The *Science as a Human Endeavour* strand has been revised to ensure a greater inclusion of contemporary applications of science by highlighting the influence and applications of Science. Elaborations in both the *Science Understanding* and *Science as a Human Endeavour* strand in the revised documents also focus on contemporary application to guide teachers in how the contemporary aspects can be integrated into the Science curriculum.

4.4.2 There are opportunities to teach more contemporary science understandings in the areas of genetics, astronomy and global systems as described in the *Science Understanding* strand. Potential links between science understanding in these areas and the *Science as a Human Endeavour* strand have been strengthened in the elaborations as part of the revision process in order to exemplify the contemporary aspects of science.

4.4.3 It is noted that it is challenging to introduce contemporary science into the K-10 curriculum as the high conceptual nature of the content will hinder its accessibility for the majority of students. Therefore the focus for contemporary science in K-10 is the application of science to enable the contemporary aspect of science to be part of the curriculum for all students.

4.5 Indigenous Perspectives

Trial school teachers expressed concern over the extent to which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives should be evident in the curriculum. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

4.5.1 The modality of the organisation of the learning area statement has been changed to address this. Instead of students 'will' learn, the language now reflects opportunities to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives.

4.6 Interconnection of the Strands

Trial school teachers felt that the connection between the strands needs further explanation. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

4.6.1 The language of *Science as a Human Endeavour* has been revised to match more closely with the Science Inquiry skills.

4.6.2 Elaborations have been developed to explain the relationships between the strands to exemplify their interconnectedness.

5. History

5.1 Content overcrowding

Concerns were expressed that the history curriculum is too content heavy, particularly in years 7 to 10, and that this may detract from the depth and understanding of teaching and learning and adequate coverage of the range of topics. (Insync Consultation Report)

Trial school teachers were very concerned that the curriculum is over ambitious and overcrowded, particularly in Years 7-10. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

5.1.1 Years K-6 curriculum content has been revised to ensure a coherent and manageable sequence of content.

5.1.2 Years 7-10 curriculum content has been revised. The overviews now focus on the key events and developments for each historical period. Electives are identified within a defined set of depth studies to provide a degree of flexibility and to ensure the manageability of content.

5.1.3 An underlying frame has been developed within the historical knowledge and understanding strand to inform the writing of a set of content descriptions. This has been individualised for each depth study to provide clarity about what is to be taught.

5.2 Strengthening the concepts of historical understanding *(General feedback)*

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

5.2.1 A sequence of learning for historical understandings has been developed based on contemporary research. This has informed the more explicit representation of historical understanding.

5.2.2 Historical knowledge and the concepts of historical understanding have now come together into one strand called “Historical knowledge and understanding”. The concepts of historical understanding are also included in the year level descriptions at each year level to ensure their explicit representation in the history curriculum.

5.3 Achievement standards unclear and pitched inappropriately

The history achievement standards were generally seen as unclear and not reflecting the content. (Insync Consultation Report)

A significant proportion of trial school teachers claim that the achievement standards are unclear and ambiguous (36%). (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

5.3.1 Achievement standards have been redrafted to provide greater detail and clarity about the quality of learning expected at each year level.

5.3.2 The achievement standards have been redrafted with a greater emphasis on understandings and skills, with a broadly consistent structure reflecting the historical inquiry process.

5.3.3 Content descriptions have been redrafted to provide more appropriate supporting examples in the content descriptions that can better inform and be aligned with the relevant achievement standards.

5.4 Inclusion of recent history content, Indigenous perspectives and global perspectives

A lack of emphasis on contemporary history was identified; in particular around Asian history and Australia's history post WWII. In addition, a general theme across the feedback centred on how to recognise Indigenous perspectives without the teachings appearing tokenistic.
(Insync Consultation Report)

Trial school teachers called for changes in technology to be included as a topic of study given its impact and relevance. There was also a call for more indigenous content and more opportunities to study world and Asian history in the primary years.
(Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

5.4.1 Contemporary history has been strengthened particularly in Year 10 which will cover for example, popular culture and the environment movement.

5.4.2 The K-6 content and the 7-10 content (overviews and depth studies) has been redrafted to include specific references to contemporary history where appropriate, including Australian history post WWII and Asian history.

5.4.3 Experts in the area of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture have worked with writers, to ensure that the related history content is represented in ways that contribute to a deep understanding of historical events and issues, such as heritage and struggles for rights and freedoms.

5.4.4 Content has been revised so that appropriate content is selected and to ensure specific content descriptions are phrased in ways that avoid tokenism. This work has been informed by continua for the teaching and learning of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures in the curriculum.

5.5 Clarity required around "depth studies"

Feedback identified a need for clearer guidelines around the teaching of overviews and depth studies. Submissions indicated a lack of clarity around the purpose of depth studies, the coverage of content points and the extent of material to be covered in depth studies. There was also a reported lack of clarity around the role of the overviews in providing the context for learning at each year level. (Insync Consultation Report)

Trial school teachers expressed concern over the organisation of and lack of clarity around depth studies. It was widely held that details on the depth of learning required is lacking as is consistency regarding overviews. More opportunity for choice of depth studies was also called for. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

5.5.1 Guidance (as advice) has been provided to teachers about proportion of time expected typically for the teaching of overviews and depth studies.

5.5.2 Overviews and depth studies in years 7-10 have been redeveloped in ways consistent with the definitions in the *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: History*. The depth studies have been revised in Years 7-10 to include a defined set of contexts as a vehicle for developing the understandings and skills.

5.5.3 Additional text in the form of instruction/advice has been written to provide clarity about what is to be taught and how it might be approached in the classroom, for example:
- the purpose of depth studies in providing opportunities for historical inquiry, and the development of historical understanding and skills
- that the order and detail in which content descriptions are taught are teaching and learning decisions.

5.5.4 The digital presentation of the history curriculum has been redesigned to address the issue of repetition of depth study headings (Draft presentation led to confusion about whether only one or all of the content descriptions within a depth study were required to be taught).

5.6 Content elaborations

Consistent feedback on the elaborations described them as not sufficiently illustrating the content descriptions. (Insync Consultation Report)

A large number of trial school teachers (40%) did not agree that elaborations effectively and sufficiently illustrate the content descriptions and that they are clear, unambiguous and coherent. (Trial School Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

5.6.1 Additional content elaborations have been written for K-10, particularly in the historical skills strand to provide further illustrations of the content descriptions. Attention has been given to the phrasing of some content elaborations to ensure they are more representative of the content to be taught in each year across K-10.

5.6.2 The depth studies have been revised in Years 7-10 to include a defined set of contexts. Content descriptions have been written for each context where appropriate. This has enabled the writing of more specific content elaborations to illustrate the content descriptions for a particular context.

6. Stages of schooling: Years K - 2 (English, mathematics, science, history)

6.1 Integrated and play based learning for K

Many respondents indicated that integrated and play-based learning for K students should be articulated in the curriculum. (Insync Consultation Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

6.1.1 Introductory and support materials has been revised to better present how the Australian Curriculum builds on the Early Years Learning Framework and the intention and opportunities for 'play-based' learning in the first year of schooling.

6.1.2 The general capabilities within the learning areas have been strengthened to ensure that opportunities for integrated and play-based learning are emphasised.

6.1.3 Curriculum revisions have ensured there are opportunities to maximise in particular creative thinking and personal and social development capabilities in the early years curriculum.

6.2 Transition points – early childhood and primary education

The K – 2 Curriculum was perceived as not adequately taking into account key transition points between early childhood learning and primary education. In particular there was a perceived absences of linkages to the Early Years Learning Framework. (Insync Consultation Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

6.2.1 The K year level description has been revised to acknowledge diversity of prior learning on entry to school, especially in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

6.2.2 Curriculum content and achievement standards have been reviewed and revised in each learning area for age-appropriateness and to strengthen sequencing, particularly for smooth transitions across stages of schooling.

6.2.3 The organisation sections of the learning area curriculum make explicit reference and connections to the principles and goals of the Early Years Learning Framework in order to provide a sense of continuity of teaching and learning at this key transition point.

6.3 Inconsistent language and terminology

Inconsistent language and terminology in the K – 2 curriculum across learning areas and the lack of contemporary content. (Insync Consultation Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

6.3.1 The language and terminology used across the learning areas K-2 has been reviewed to ensure greater consistency and has been aligned with the Early Years Learning Framework.

6.3.2 The glossary of terms has been revised to support consistency of terminology used across the Australian Curriculum and for clarity of specific terminology within learning areas.

6.3.3 In each learning area, the language of content and achievement standards has been revised to ensure clarity and consistency, and to enhance inclusivity, particularly with respect to students with diverse learning needs.

6.4 General capabilities and cross-curriculum dimensions

General capabilities and cross curriculum dimensions were identified as not being sufficiently covered. (Insync Consultation Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

6.4.1 The representation of the general capabilities in English, mathematics, science and history has been strengthened as follows:

- conceptual statements and learning continua were developed for all of the general capabilities to provide detailed, consistent guidance to learning area writers about the inclusion of general capabilities
- general capabilities' experts reviewed drafts of F–10 English, mathematics, science and history against the general capabilities continua, providing advice on the identification and elaboration of general capabilities in the revised documents
- general capabilities text in the organisation of the learning area sections was revised to reflect the place, nature and strength of representation of each general capability in the four learning areas
- general capabilities have been identified (and explicitly tagged online) wherever they are explicit in F-10 English, mathematics, science and history content descriptions and elaborations
- further information on the general capabilities will be available online for teachers and schools with the release of Phase 1 learning areas.

7. Stages of schooling: Years 3 – 6 (English, mathematics, science, history)

7.1 Continuity between primary and secondary

A lack of continuity was consistently identified, particularly between the primary and secondary curricula. (Insync Consultation Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

7.1.1 The scope and sequence across learning areas have been checked for continuity and progression, in particular, to ensure an appropriate increase in challenge at primary and secondary transition points.

7.1.2 Content has been reviewed and revised in each learning area for age-appropriateness and to strengthen sequencing, particularly for smooth transitions across stages of schooling.

7.2 Catering for students with diverse learning needs

The issue that generated the least positive evaluation was around the curriculum being inclusive of the range of learners. (Insync Consultation Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

7.2.1 Revision of Phase 1 learning area curriculum has focused on the incorporation of more inclusive language within the content. Content elaborations have been reviewed to provide context and opportunities that will cater for the diversity of learners.

7.2.2 Special education experts have advised on ways in which the revisions to the content and achievement standards will ensure a more inclusive curriculum so all students have the opportunity to learn and to demonstrate relevant achievement.

7.3 Inconsistent language and terminology

There is inconsistent language and terminology in the 3 – 6 curriculum across learning areas and insufficient future-oriented content. (Insync Consultation Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

7.3.1 The language and terminology used across the learning areas for Year 3-6 has been adjusted for greater consistency and aligns with and builds upon that of the Early Years Learning Framework.

7.3.2 The glossary of terms has been expanded to support consistency of terminology used across the Australian Curriculum and for clarity of specific terminology within learning areas.

7.3.3 In each learning area, the language of content and achievement standards has been reviewed and revised to ensure clarity and consistency and to enhance inclusivity, particularly with respect to students with diverse learning needs.

8. Stages of schooling: Years 7 – 10 (English, mathematics, science, history)

8.1 Clarity and sequencing

Most critical feedback was received on the clarity and sequencing of 7 – 10 content descriptions, elaboration and achievement standards. (Insync Consultation Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

8.1.1 In each learning area the sequence and wording of content descriptions and the elaborations have been revised to ensure they more clearly specify the depth of learning required.

8.1.2 The nature and purpose of achievement standards and their relationship to content descriptions is presented more clearly in the organisation section of each learning area and in support materials. The achievement standards have been revised to ensure they focus on depth of understanding and sophistication of skills rather than being a summary of content knowledge.

8.1.3 The data sets provided by jurisdictions have been analysed to inform revisions to pitch and sequence of the content and achievement standards

8.2 Inclusivity

Across all stages of learning, the 7 – 10 curriculum was considered the least inclusive of the range of learners. (Insync Consultation Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

8.2.1 The Australian Curriculum across the four learning areas has been revised to incorporate more inclusive language in the curriculum content and, through content elaborations, and provides context and opportunities catering for the diversity of learners.

8.2.2 Special education experts have advised on ways in which the revisions to the content and achievement standards will ensure a more inclusive curriculum so all students have the opportunity to learn and to demonstrate relevant achievement.

8.3 Inadequate coverage of contemporary/future oriented content

There is an inadequate coverage of contemporary/future oriented content, the general capabilities and cross curriculum dimensions in the draft 7-10 curriculum. (Insync Consultation Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

8.3.1 The representation of general capabilities and cross curriculum priorities, in particular sustainability, has been reviewed across the curriculum in order to strengthen contemporary and future-oriented content. A contemporary, futures oriented curriculum attends to learning beyond the learning areas. In the Australian Curriculum general capabilities and cross curriculum priorities assist students to make sense of themselves in the world and to connect their learning to the times in which they live.

8.3.2 In science for example, a restructure of the *Science as a Human Endeavour* strand will enable a greater inclusion of contemporary applications of science. Elaborations in the *Science Understanding* strand will also focus on contemporary applications. There is the opportunity to teach contemporary science in Year 10 in the areas of genetics, astronomy and global systems.

8.4 Transition points between primary and secondary education

The 7-10 curriculum does not adequately take into account key transition points. (Insync Consultation Report)

Actions taken by ACARA in response to this feedback:

8.4.1 Content has been reviewed and revised in each learning area for age-appropriateness and to strengthen sequencing, particularly for smooth transitions across stages of schooling.

8.4.2 Content has been reviewed to ensure that the material is suitable for both the conceptual level of students and the possible location of their learning.

8.4.3 This issue has been attended to in the writing of the curriculum. Writers considered that the teaching of content in Year 7 in some jurisdictions will be taking place in primary schools. Content for year 6 and below was also written for a primary school environment and includes content that is currently being taught in a range of primary schools around the country.

8.4.4 The glossary of terms has been expanded to support consistency of terminology used across the Australian Curriculum and for clarity of specific terminology within learning areas