



## Senior Secondary Australian Curriculum

### What does the senior secondary Australian Curriculum include?

ACARA has developed senior secondary curriculum for English, Mathematics, Science, and History - 14 subjects as indicated in the table below:

Learning area	Subject
English	English
	English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D)
	Essential English
	Literature
Mathematics	Essential Mathematics
	General Mathematics
	Mathematical Methods
	Specialist Mathematics
Science	Chemistry
	Biology
	Earth and Environmental Science
	Physics
History	Ancient History
	Modern History

Further senior secondary curriculum may be developed by ACARA, subject to decisions made by Australian education ministers.

### What has been agreed to for 2013?

The senior secondary Australian Curriculum for English, Mathematics, Science and History has been endorsed by Ministers of Education in December 2012, as the agreed and common base for development of state and territory senior secondary courses.

During 2013, ACARA will work with each of the respective state and territory curriculum, assessment and certification authorities, as each authority determines what will be integrated into their local courses, and report back to Ministers about:

- a) the senior secondary Australian Curriculum content that will be common to all states and territories
- b) the process and timelines for validation of the draft achievement standards, to inform subsequent discussion about their proposed use
- c) the process and timeline within which each state and territory will undertake the integration of the Australian curriculum content and achievement standards into state and territory courses and commence implementation of the new courses.

ACARA will also work with states and territories to develop a work plan for the development of further senior secondary curriculum.

### How are the senior secondary Australian Curriculum subjects structured?

The senior secondary Australian Curriculum for each subject specifies content and achievement standards.

The content describes the knowledge, understanding and skills that are to be taught and learned within a given subject.

The achievement standards describe the quality of learning (the depth of understanding, extent of knowledge and sophistication of skill) expected of students who have studied the content for the subject.

The curriculum for each senior secondary subject is organised into four units with the last two units cognitively more challenging than the first two.

Each unit is designed to be taught in about half a 'school year' of senior secondary studies.

Content has been specified for each unit, and achievement standards are described for each pair of units, that is, Units 1 and 2, and Units 3 and 4.



## Senior Secondary Australian Curriculum

The curriculum also includes a rationale and a set of aims for the subject, a description of how the subject is organised, how general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities are represented, and a glossary of key terms used.

### Are there any prior knowledge requirements in the senior secondary Australian Curriculum?

The curriculum has been written on the assumption that students who undertake a senior secondary subject have prior knowledge, understanding and skills developed during their Foundation to Year 10 schooling.

Decisions about whether a student should enrol in a subject in the senior secondary years, taking account of assumptions about prior learning, are matters for students and their schools and/or state and territory curriculum authorities.

### What do achievement standards in the senior secondary Australian Curriculum look like?

For the senior secondary Australian Curriculum, subject-specific achievement standards have been developed. They provide an indication of typical performance at five different levels (for some states this corresponds with A-E grades while others have different scales) following the completion of senior secondary Australian Curriculum for a pair of units in a subject.

### How has the senior secondary Australian Curriculum addressed the needs of students with special education needs?

The senior secondary subjects have been designed to be accessible to as many students as possible. States and territories have arrangements in place as part of their senior secondary curriculum, assessment and certification practices and policies to address the needs of all students.

### What flexibility is there for students to move between subjects?

States and territories determine flexibility arrangements to meet student needs and interests by, for example, allowing students to complete one unit in a subject and then transfer to another subject, or to offer year-long or two-year courses. For further information about flexibility within a learning area, please consult your local authority.

### How different is the senior secondary Australian Curriculum to state and territory curriculum?

The senior secondary Australian Curriculum for the 14 subjects in English, Mathematics, Science and History has been developed with reference to the latest curriculum development in states and territories and internationally.

Many elements of the senior secondary Australian Curriculum will be familiar to teachers.

The information sheets for the senior secondary Australian Curriculum in English, Mathematics, Science and History refer to the overall similarities and differences between the Australian Curriculum senior secondary subjects and state and territory courses.

### How will 'national curriculum' be examined and certificated?

Certification, assessment and examination requirements for the senior secondary years will continue to be the responsibility of individual state and territory authorities. National senior secondary examinations are not part of ACARA's curriculum development agenda.



## Senior Secondary Australian Curriculum

### What will states and territories do with the senior secondary Australian Curriculum?

ACARA has developed and published the Australian Curriculum for the 14 senior secondary subjects on the Australian Curriculum website at [www.australiancurriculum.edu.au](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au) following extensive consultation and engagement.

State and territory curriculum, assessment and certification authorities are responsible for how senior secondary courses are organised, and they will determine how the Australian Curriculum content and achievement standards is to be integrated into their courses.

The state and territory authorities will also determine the assessment and certification specifications for those courses and any additional information guidelines and rules to satisfy local requirements including advice on entry and exit points and credit for completed study.

Contact details for these authorities are:

ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies	GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601 P: 02 6205 7181 E: <a href="mailto:BSSS.Enquiries@act.gov.au">BSSS.Enquiries@act.gov.au</a> W: <a href="http://www.bsss.act.edu.au">www.bsss.act.edu.au</a>
Office of the Board of Studies NSW	GPO Box 5300 Sydney NSW 2001 P: 02 9367 8111 E: <a href="mailto:service@bos.nsw.edu.au">service@bos.nsw.edu.au</a> W: <a href="http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au">www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au</a>
Northern Territory Board of Studies	GPO Box 4821 Darwin NT 0801 P: 08 8999 5659 E: <a href="mailto:infocentre.det@nt.gov.au">infocentre.det@nt.gov.au</a> W: <a href="http://www.det.nt.gov.au">www.det.nt.gov.au</a>
Queensland Studies Authority	PO Box 307 Spring Hill QLD 4004 P: 07 3864 0299 E: <a href="mailto:office@gsa.qld.edu.au">office@gsa.qld.edu.au</a> W: <a href="http://www.gsa.qld.edu.au">www.gsa.qld.edu.au</a>
Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA)	41 St Andrews Place East Melbourne VIC 3002 P: 03 9651 4300 E: <a href="mailto:vcaa@edumail.vic.gov.au">vcaa@edumail.vic.gov.au</a> W: <a href="http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au">www.vcaa.vic.edu.au</a>
SACE Board of South Australia	60 Greenhill Road Wayville SA 5034 P: 08 8372 7400 E: <a href="mailto:info@saceboard.sa.gov.au">info@saceboard.sa.gov.au</a> W: <a href="http://www.sace.sa.edu.au">www.sace.sa.edu.au</a>
Tasmanian Qualifications Authority	PO Box 147 Sandy Bay TAS 7006 P: 03 6233 6364 E: <a href="mailto:reception@tqa.tas.gov.au">reception@tqa.tas.gov.au</a> W: <a href="http://www.tqa.tas.gov.au">www.tqa.tas.gov.au</a>
School Curriculum and Standards Authority	27 Walters Drive Osborne Park WA 6017 P: 08 9273 6300 E: <a href="mailto:info@scsa.wa.edu.au">info@scsa.wa.edu.au</a> W: <a href="http://www.curriculum.wa.edu.au">www.curriculum.wa.edu.au</a>