

**Australian Curriculum: Languages  
Foundation to Year 10  
Preamble, Rationale, Aims and  
Organisation (revised)**

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## Preamble

The *Australian Curriculum: Languages* is designed to enable all students to engage in learning a language in addition to English. The design of the *Australian Curriculum: Languages* recognises the features that languages share as well as the distinctiveness of specific languages.

There are aspects of the curriculum that pertain to all languages. The key concepts of language, culture, and learning as described in the *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Languages*, underpin the learning area. They also provide the basis for a common rationale and set of aims for all languages.

The Australian Curriculum: Languages includes language-specific curricula, for world languages and a *Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages*.

## Language, culture and learning

The inter-relationship of language, culture, and learning provides the foundation for the *Australian Curriculum: Languages*.

In the languages learning area the focus is on both language and culture as students learn to communicate meaningfully across new linguistic and cultural systems and different contexts. This process involves reflection and analysis, as students move between the new language being learnt and their own existing language(s). It is a reciprocal and dynamic process which develops intercultural dimensions of learning experiences. It is not a 'one plus one' relationship between the two languages and cultures, where each language and culture stays separate and self-contained. Comparison and referencing between the two languages and cultures builds understanding of how languages 'work', how they relate to each other and of how language and culture shape and reflect experience, that is the experience of language using and language learning. The experience of being in two worlds at once involves noticing, questioning, and developing awareness of how language and culture shape identity.

## Language specificity

The curriculum content and achievement standards are different for specific languages because of inherent differences in the languages themselves.

Each language has its own distinctive structure, systems, conventions for use, related culture(s), place in the Australian and international communities, as well as its own history in Australian education.

## Diversity of language learners

Understanding who learners are, as language learners and as young people, is the starting point for developing their language learning. An increasingly varied range of students now study languages in Australian classrooms. The changing pattern of migration to Australia is extending the range of languages students bring with them to school. Education systems seek to provide for this diversity of language background and for the fact that languages classrooms include students with varying degrees of experience of and proficiency in the language being learnt, as well as affiliations with additional languages.

Learners come to learning languages with diverse linguistic, cultural, and personal profiles, bringing distinctive biographies which include: individual histories; geographies; previous experiences of and relationships with the target language and particular motivations, expectations, and aspirations.

As unique, social, and cultural beings, students interpret the world and make sense of their experiences through their own social and cultural traditions, understanding and values.

Learners of languages in Australia comprise three major groups:

- second language learners
- background language learners
- first language learners.

**Second language learners** are those who are introduced to learning the target language at school as an additional, new language. The first language used before they start school and/or the language they use at home is not the language being learnt.

**Background language learners** are those who may use the language at home, not necessarily exclusively, and have varying degrees of knowledge of the language being learnt and proficiency. These learners have a base for literacy development in the language.

**First language learners** are users of the language being learnt who have undertaken at least primary schooling in the target language. They have had their primary socialisation as well as initial literacy development in that language and use the target language at home. For Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages, first language learners are learners whose primary socialisation is in the language being learnt and who may or may not have yet developed initial literacy.

Within each of these groups, there are differences in target language proficiency. It is acknowledged that the span of language experiences of background learners is particularly wide, and learners in this group are likely to have quite diverse affiliations with the target language. Nevertheless, for pragmatic reasons, it is not feasible to identify further groupings.

A framework is being developed for Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages that caters for different learner pathways that also take into account the state of the particular language involved.

## Rationale and aims

### Rationale

Through learning languages, students acquire:

- essential communication skills in the target language
- an intercultural capability, and an understanding of the role of language and culture in communication.

Language learning provides the opportunity for students to engage with the linguistic and cultural diversity of the world and its peoples, to reflect on their understanding of experience in various aspects of social life, and on their own participation and ways of being in the world.

Learning languages broadens students' horizons in relation to the personal, social and employment opportunities that an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world

presents. The interdependence of countries and communities means people in all spheres of life are required to negotiate experiences and meanings across languages and cultures. Despite its status as a world language, a capability in English only is no longer sufficient. A bilingual or pluri-lingual capability is the norm in most parts of the world.

Learning languages:

- extends the capability to communicate and extends literacy repertoires
- strengthens understanding of the nature of language, of culture, and of the processes of communication
- develops intercultural capability
- develops understanding of and respect for diversity and difference, and an openness to different perspectives and experiences
- develops understanding of how culture shapes world view and extends learners' understanding of themselves, their own heritage, values, culture, and identity
- strengthens intellectual and analytical capabilities and enhances creative and critical thinking.

Learning languages also contributes to strengthening the community's social, economic and international development capabilities. Language capabilities represent linguistic and cultural resources through which the community can engage socially, culturally, and economically, in domains which include business, trade, science, law, education, tourism, diplomacy, international relations, health and communications.

Learning Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages meets the needs and rights of young people to learn their own languages and recognises their significance in the language ecology of Australia. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, learning their own languages is crucial to overall learning and achievements, to developing a sense of identity and recognition and understanding of language, culture, Country and Place. For all students, learning Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages provides a distinctive means of understanding the country in which they live, including the relationship between land, the environment, and people. The ongoing and necessary reclamation and revitalisation of these languages also contributes to reconciliation.

## Aims

The *Australian Curriculum: Languages* aims to develop the knowledge, understanding, and skills to ensure students:

- communicate in the target language
- understand language, culture, and learning and their relationship, and thereby develop an intercultural capability in communication
- understand themselves as communicators.

These three aims are interrelated and provide the basis for the two organising strands: Communicating and Understanding. The three aims are common to all languages.

## Organisation

Learner background and time-on-task are two major variables that influence language learning and they provide the basis for the structure of the *Australian Curriculum: Languages*.

These variables are addressed through the organisation of content and achievement standards according to pathways and learning sequences respectively.

## Pathways

In the *Australian Curriculum: Languages*, pathways for second language learners, background language learners and first language learners have been developed as appropriate to cater for the dominant group(s) of students learning each specific language within the current Australian context. For the majority of languages, one curriculum pathway has been developed for Years F–10, catering for the dominant cohort of learners for that language in the current Australian context. For Chinese, pathways have been developed for three learner groups: first language learners, background language learners and second language learners.

The *Framework for Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages* includes three learner pathways:

- first language learner pathway
- revival language learner pathway
- second language learner pathway.

## Sequences of Learning

The design of the *Australian Curriculum: Languages* takes account of different entry points into language learning across Foundation to Year 10, which reflects current practice.

For the second language learner pathway and the background language learner pathway there are two learning sequences:

- Foundation to Year 10 sequence
- Years 7–10 (Year 7 Entry) sequence

For the first language learner pathway there is one learning sequence:

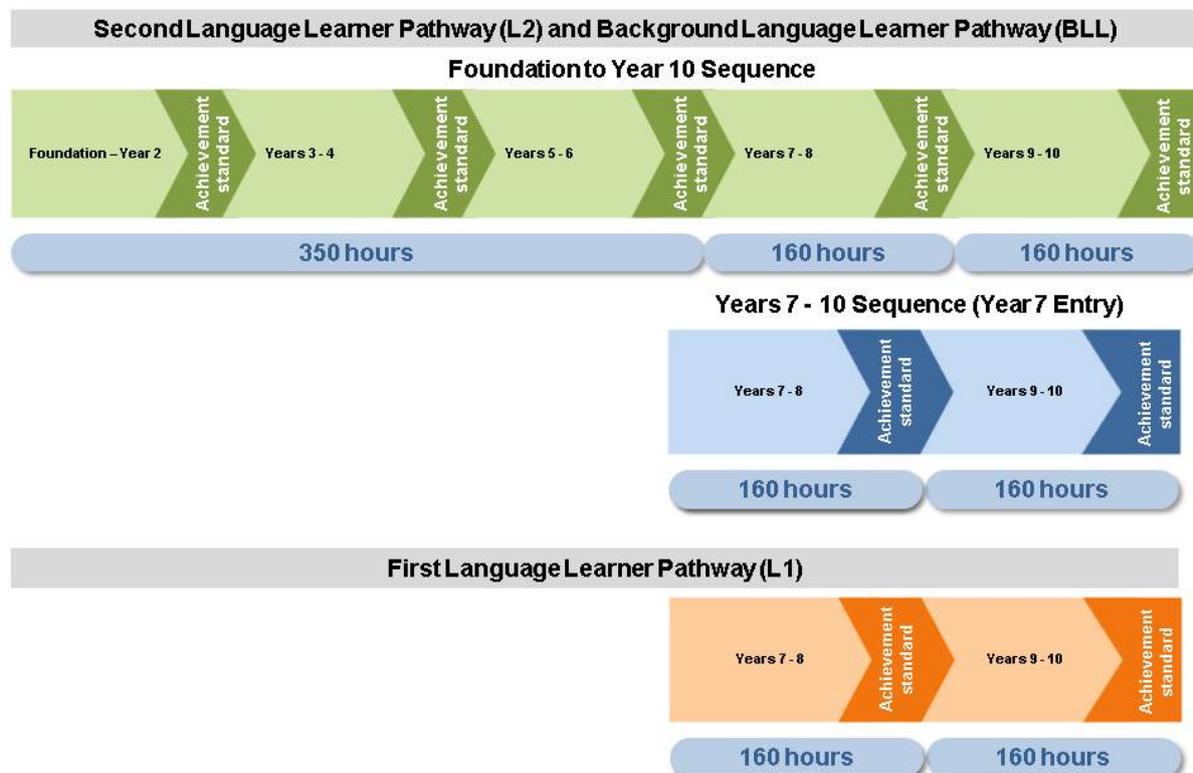
- Years 7–10 (Year 7 Entry) sequence.

Content and achievement standards are described according to two year bands of learning: Foundation-Year 2; Years 3-4; Years 5-6, Years 7-8, and Years 9-10. In the *Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages*, content and achievement standards are described according to three year bands of learning: Foundation – Year 3...

The curriculum has been developed based on an indicative number of hours. These indicative hours represent an assumption made about time on task within each of the learning sequences for the purposes of curriculum development.

The diagram below indicates the relationship between the pathways, sequences, bands, indicative hours for writing, and achievement standards:

The relationship between the pathways, sequences, bands, indicative hours for writing and achievement standards



## Content structure

The content of the *Australian Curriculum: Languages* is organised through two interrelated strands which realise the three aims. The two strands are:

- *Communicating*: using language for communicative purposes in interpreting, creating, and exchanging meaning
- *Understanding*: analysing language and culture as a resource for interpreting and creating meaning.

The strands reflect three important aspects of language learning: (1) communication, (2) analysis of aspects of language and culture, and (3) reflection that involves (a) reflection on the experience of communicating and (b) reflection on comparative dimensions of the languages available in students' repertoires (for example, the first language in relation to second language and self in relation to other).

## Strands and sub–strands

A set of sub–strands has been identified within each strand which reflects dimensions of language use and the related content to be taught and learned. The strands and sub–strands do not operate in isolation but are integrated in relation to language use for different purposes in different contexts. The relative contribution of each sub–strand differs for different languages, pathways, and bands of learning. The sub-strands are further differentiated according to a set of 'threads' that support the internal organisation of content

in each sub-strand and assist in addressing a sufficient range and clear progression of content across the learning sequences.

Diagram 1: Relationship between strands and sub-strands

The following table provides a brief description of each of the strands and sub–strands.

Strand	Sub-strand	Description
<b>Communicating:</b>  <i>Using language for communicative purposes in interpreting, creating and exchanging meaning.</i>	1.1 Socialising	Interacting orally and in writing to exchange, ideas, opinions, experiences, thoughts and feelings; and participating in planning, negotiating, deciding and taking action.
	1.2 Informing	Obtaining, processing, interpreting and conveying information through a range of oral, written and multimodal texts; developing and applying knowledge.
	1.3 Creating	Engaging with imaginative experience by participating in, responding to and creating a range of texts, such as stories, songs, drama and music.
	1.4 Translating	Moving between languages and cultures orally and in writing, recognising different interpretations and explaining these to others.
	1.5 Reflecting	Participating in intercultural exchange, questioning reactions and assumptions; and considering how interaction shapes communication and identity.
<b>Understanding:</b>  <i>Analysing and understanding language and culture as resources for interpreting and shaping meaning in intercultural exchange.</i>	2.1 Systems of language	Understanding language as a system, including sound, writing, grammatical and textual conventions.
	2.2 Language variation and change	Understanding how languages vary in use (register, style, standard and non-standard varieties) and change over time and place.
	2.3 The role of language and culture	Analysing and understanding the role of language and culture in the exchange of meaning.

## Context statement

A context statement has been developed for each language to describe the situation of the particular language in the Australian community and in Australian education and to describe the nature of learning the specific language. The context statement includes:

- the place of the target language and culture in Australia and the world
- the place of the target language in Australian education
- the nature of learning the target language
- the diversity of learners of the target language.

## Band descriptions

The band descriptions provide a general description of language learning that is typical at particular year levels along the F–10 continuum. They have been developed to correspond to learning in the following bands: F–2, Years 3–4, Years 5–6, Years 7–8, and Years 9–10. Each band description includes discussion of:

- the nature of the learner
- target language learning and use
- contexts of interaction
- texts and resources
- features of target language use
- level of support
- the role of English.

## Content descriptions

The content of learning in each language in the *Australian Curriculum: Languages* is described through a set of content descriptions for each band. These are intended to describe the knowledge, understanding, skills, and processes that teachers are expected to teach and students are expected to develop at that band level.

Content descriptions specify content to be taught in a holistic and integrated way. They do not provide prescriptive directions for teaching.

## Content elaborations

Content elaborations provide elaborations of key elements of each content description; illustrations, descriptions or examples to indicate possibilities for teaching. They are intended as complementary support material. They are neither comprehensive nor prescriptive.

Content elaborations may include:

- contexts of language use
- further detail on dimensions of the content description
- aspects of relevant linguistic and cultural knowledge
- key language
- possible tasks and experiences
- connections across concepts.

## Achievement standards

Achievement standards across Foundation to Year 10 indicate the quality of learning that students are likely to demonstrate by a particular point in their schooling. Achievement standards are language-specific and pathway-specific. The achievement standard for the end of Year 8 and the end of Year 10 in the Foundation to Year 10 sequence are not equivalent to the achievement standards at the end of Year 8 and the end of Year 10 in the Years 7–10 (Year 7 Entry) sequence. The relationship between the achievement standards and the indicative hours used in writing the curriculum is outlined in Diagram X.

The set of achievement standards describes progress in a specific language, demonstrating quality or evidence of expected learning. This sequence provides teachers with a frame of reference for considering progression in learning in each specific language.

An achievement standard describes the quality of learning (for example the depth of conceptual understanding and the sophistication of skills and understandings) that would indicate the student is well placed to commence the learning required at the next level of achievement. It is recognised that student achievement differs according to the specific language and the particular pathway and entry point to language learning. Language-specific exemplification is used to capture the expected level of sophistication in performance and understanding.

## **Student diversity**

ACARA is committed to the development of a high-quality curriculum for all Australian students that promotes excellence and equity in education.

All students are entitled to rigorous, relevant and engaging learning programs drawn from the Australian Curriculum: Languages. Teachers take account of the range of their students' current levels of learning, strengths, goals and interests and make adjustments where necessary. The three-dimensional design of the Australian Curriculum, comprising learning areas, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities, provides teachers with flexibility to cater for the diverse needs of students across Australia and to personalise their learning.

More detailed advice for schools and teachers on using the Australian Curriculum to meet diverse learning needs is available at: <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au>

## **Students with Disability**

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Disability Standards for Education 2005 require education and training service providers to support the rights of students with disability to access the curriculum on the same basis as students without disability.

Many students with disability are able to achieve educational standards commensurate with their peers, as long as the necessary adjustments are made to the way in which they are taught and to the means through which they demonstrate their learning.

In some cases curriculum adjustments are necessary to provide equitable opportunities for students to access age-equivalent content in the Australian Curriculum: Languages. Teachers can draw from content at different levels along the Foundation to Year 10 sequence or the Years 7-10 (Year 7 Entry) sequence. Teachers can also use the extended general capabilities learning continua in Literacy, Numeracy and Personal and social capability to adjust the focus of learning according to individual student need.

## **Gifted and talented students**

Teachers can use the Australian Curriculum: Languages flexibly to meet the individual learning needs of gifted and talented students.

Teachers can enrich student learning by providing students with opportunities to work with learning area content in more depth or breadth; emphasising specific aspects of the general capabilities learning continua (for example, the higher order cognitive skills of the Critical and creative thinking capability); and/or focusing on cross-curriculum priorities. Teachers can

also accelerate student learning by drawing on content from later levels in the Australian Curriculum: Languages and/or from local state and territory teaching and learning materials.

## Students with English as an Additional Language or Dialect

Languages play a crucial role in the educational experience of students and in the curriculum as a whole. Given the diversity of students in Australian education, it is important to recognise that a range of languages is used either as part of the formal curriculum or as part of learners' socialisation within and outside the school.

Learners bring their first language or languages as the one(s) they use for their initial socialisation in their family or community. For the majority, this is English. For many it can be a range of different languages. Learners also encounter the language or languages of instruction at school. For most in Australia, this is English. For many students in Australia, the language of instruction is not the same as their first language. These students may learn through English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EALD) programs.

In contemporary understandings of language acquisition, development and learning, all the languages learners experience in their socialisation and education form part of learners' distinctive linguistic and cultural repertoires. These are variously developed by both the experience of schooling and broader social community experience. These repertoires are an integral part of learners' identities and what they bring to the learning of additional languages as part of the Languages learning area within the school curriculum.

While the curriculum for languages primarily addresses the learning of languages as an area of learning in the school curriculum, this learning cannot be separated from the development of learners' more general communicative repertoires. It is through such a relational and holistic approach to languages education that learners develop their capabilities in knowing and using multiple languages. They extend their communicative and conceptual development, learning, and identity formation.

In various kinds of bilingual programs, students are afforded an opportunity to learn through the medium of English and another language (the learners' first or an additional language). These programs are of particular value in ensuring learners continue to develop at least two languages that are of value to them. They are of value to both their conceptual development and learning and to their identity formation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities recognise the importance of literacy to their children. They support literacy education programs that are founded on establishing literacy in their children's first languages. These are the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages their communities use. Literacy in English is regarded as concomitant on first establishing students' literacy in their first languages. Although most bilingual programs in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are designed to help students' transition into learning in English, their fundamental value is in the development of bilingual literacy. Strengthening the bilingual literacy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students can significantly contribute to improving their overall academic achievement and success.

A national English as an Additional Language or Dialect: Teacher Resource has been developed to support teachers in making the Australian Curriculum: Foundation to Year 10 in each learning area accessible to EAL/D students.

## General capabilities

In the Australian Curriculum, the general capabilities encompass the knowledge, skills, behaviours, and dispositions that, together with curriculum content in each learning area and the cross-curriculum priorities, will enable students to live and work successfully in the 21st century.

There are seven general capabilities:

- Literacy (LIT)
- Numeracy (NUM)
- Information and communication technology capability (ICT)
- Critical and creative thinking (CCT)
- Personal and social capability (PSC)
- Ethical behaviour (EB)
- Intercultural understanding (ICU).

In the *Australian Curriculum: Languages*, general capabilities are identified wherever they are developed or applied in content descriptions.

They are also identified where they offer opportunities to add depth and richness to student learning through content elaborations. Icons indicate where general capabilities have been identified in languages content. Teachers may find further opportunities to incorporate explicit teaching of the capabilities depending on their choice of activities.

Detailed descriptions and elaborations of each of the general capabilities and the way these capabilities may be developed, including learning continua, can be found at <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au>

### Literacy (LIT)

Learning languages develops overall literacy. It is in this sense ‘value added’, strengthening literacy-related capabilities that are transferable across languages, both the language being learnt and all other languages that are part of the learner’s repertoire. Languages learning also strengthens literacy-related capabilities across domains of use, such as the academic domain and the domains of home language use, and across learning areas.

Literacy development involves conscious attention and focused learning. It involves skills and knowledge that need guidance, time and support to develop. These skills include the:

- ability to decode and encode from sound to written systems
- the learning of grammatical, orthographic, and textual conventions
- development of semantic, pragmatic, and interpretative, critical and reflective literacy skills.

Literacy development for second language learners is cognitively demanding. It involves these same elements but often without the powerful support of a surrounding oral culture and context. The strangeness of the additional language requires scaffolding. In the language classroom, analysis is prioritised alongside experience. Explicit, explanatory, and exploratory talk around language and literacy is a core element. Learners are supported to develop their own meta-awareness, to be able to think and talk about how the language works and about how they learn to use it. Similarly, for first language learners, literacy development that

extends to additional domains and contexts of use requires comparative analysis that extends literacy development in their first language and English.

### **Numeracy (NUM)**

Learning languages affords opportunities for learners to use the target language to develop skills in numeracy, to understand, analyse, categorise, critically respond to and use mathematics in different contexts. This includes processes such as using and understanding patterns, order, and relationships to reinforce concepts such as number, time or space in their own and in others' cultural and linguistic systems.

### **Information and communication technology capability (ICT)**

Learning languages is enhanced through the use of multimodal resources, digital environments and technologies in the target language. Accessing live target language environments and texts via digital media contributes to the development of information technology capabilities as well as linguistic and cultural knowledge. Accessing different real-time contexts extends the boundaries of the classroom.

### **Critical and creative thinking (CCT)**

In learning a language, students interact with people and ideas from diverse backgrounds and perspectives, which enhances critical thinking, reflection and encourages creative, divergent and imaginative thinking. By learning to notice, connect, compare, and analyse aspects of the target language, students develop critical, analytic and problem-solving skills.

### **Personal and social capability (PSC)**

Interacting effectively in an additional language and with people of diverse language backgrounds involves negotiating and interpreting meaning in a range of social and cultural situations. This involves understanding and empathizing; important elements of social and intercultural competence. Being open-minded and recognising that people view and experience the world in different ways and learning to interact in a collaborative and respectful manner are key elements of personal and social competence.

### **Ethical behaviour (EB)**

When learning another language, students are taught explicitly to acknowledge and value difference in their interactions with others and to develop respect for diverse ways of perceiving and acting in the world. Opportunities are provided to monitor and to adjust their own ethical points of view. In learning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, students should consider appropriate ethical behaviour in terms of engaging with the owners and custodians of the languages. Similar consideration is required when interpreting and translating, or when collecting and analysing primary research data.

### **Intercultural understanding (ICU)**

The development of intercultural understanding is a central aim of learning languages, as it is integral to global citizenship and lifelong learning. Students bring various preconceptions, assumptions, and orientations shaped by their existing language(s) culture(s) to their learning that can be challenged by the new language experience. Learning to move between the existing and new languages and cultures is integral to language learning and is key to the development of students' intercultural capability. By learning a new language, or learning to

use an existing language in new domains and contexts, students are able to notice, compare, and reflect on things previously taken for granted; to explore their own linguistic, social and cultural practices as well as those associated with the target language. They begin to see the complexity, variability, and sometimes the contradictions involved in using language. Learning a new language does not require forsaking the first language. It is an enriching and cumulative process, which broadens the learner's communicative repertoire, providing additional resources for interpreting and making meaning. Learners come to realise that interactions between different people via different languages also involves interactions between the different kinds of knowledge, understanding, and values that are articulated through language(s) and culture(s). They realise that successful intercultural communication is not only determined by what they do or say but also by what members of the other language and culture understand from what they say or do.

### **Cross-curriculum priorities**

The Australian Curriculum gives special attention to three cross-curriculum priorities:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures (ATSIC)
- Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia (AAEA)
- Sustainability (SUST)

The cross curriculum priorities are embedded in the curriculum and will have a strong but varying presence depending on their relevance to each of the learning areas.

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures (ATSIC)**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are strong, rich, and diverse. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity is central to this priority. It is intrinsically linked to living and learning in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, deep knowledge traditions and holistic world view.

A conceptual framework based on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' unique sense of Identity has been developed as a tool for embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures within the Australian curriculum. This sense of identity is approached through the interconnected concepts of Country/Place, people, and culture. Embracing these elements enhances all areas of the curriculum.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander priority provides opportunities for all learners to deepen their knowledge of Australia by engaging with the world's oldest continuous living cultures. This knowledge and understanding will enrich their ability to participate positively in the evolving history of Australia.

A direct way of learning about and engaging with diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is to learn an Aboriginal language and/or a Torres Strait Islander language. There is an inseparable connection between Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages and land/sea, Country and Place, the environment, fauna, and flora. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures are an integral part of the learning of Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages.

In learning all languages there is scope for making inter-linguistic and intercultural comparisons across languages, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, to

develop understanding of concepts related to the linguistic landscape of Australia and to the concepts of language and culture in general.

### Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia (AAEA)

In the *Australian Curriculum: Languages*, the cross-curriculum priority of Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia enables the development of rich and engaging content and contexts for developing students' capabilities to engage with the languages and cultures of Asia and of people of Asian heritage within Australia.

The *Australian Curriculum: Languages* enables students to learn the languages of the Asian region, learning to communicate and interact in interculturally appropriate ways, exploring concepts, experiences, and perspectives from within and across Asian cultures.

In the Languages learning area, students develop an appreciation for the place of Australia within the Asian region, including the interconnections of languages and cultures, peoples and communities, histories and economies. Students learn how Australia is situated within the Asian region, how our national linguistic and cultural identity is continuously evolving both locally, regionally and within an international context.

### Sustainability (SUST)

In the *Australian Curriculum: Languages*, the priority of sustainability provides a context for developing students' capability to communicate ideas, understanding, and perspectives on issues and concepts related to the environment.

The *Australian Curriculum: Languages* contributes to students' capabilities to investigate, analyse, and communicate concepts and understandings related to sustainability in broad contexts, and to advocate, generate and evaluate actions for sustainable futures. Within each language, students engage with a range of texts focused on concepts related to sustainability.

These include:

- the environment
- conservation
- social and political change
- linguistic and cultural ecologies
- change, both within the target language and culture, and across languages and cultures in general.

In this way, students develop knowledge, skills, and understanding about sustainability within particular cultural contexts. This is crucial in the context of national and international concerns about, for example, climate change, food shortages, and alternative ways of caring for land and agriculture. Through developing a capability to interact with others, negotiating meaning and mutual understanding respectfully and reflecting on communication, students learn to live and work in ways that are both productive and sustainable.

Learning Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages contributes to the global effort to exchange knowledge among people with varied practices in caring for the land. It also contributes to the reconciliation process in Australia and goals for language revival.

## Links to other learning areas

In addition to being a means through which people engage in communication, language is a means through which knowledge is constructed, developed, represented, negotiated, stored, contested, discussed, communicated, taught, and learnt.

The knowledge that constitutes the core of languages curriculum involves various dimensions. First, there is knowledge of the language itself as a linguistic system. Knowledge in the languages curriculum also includes knowledge of culture. Thematic content is included as an integrating device for drawing together key dimensions of content:

- general knowledge
- broader knowledge of the world
- general cultural knowledge
- knowledge drawn from other areas of the curriculum.

In some language programs, content is prioritised differently, For example, in content-based programs and in different models of bilingual programs. In programs broadly described as 'bilingual', the knowledge of learning areas such as history, science or mathematics is taught and learnt through the medium of the target language. Students develop both content and language knowledge to varying degrees depending on the particular purpose, nature, and conditions of the program. Learners for whom English is a second language, as well as learners for whom it is a 'foreign' language, such as international students, are required to develop the full range of language and literate practices to participate effectively in mainstream curriculum.

Language learning expands learners' existing knowledge of language and literacy. They develop new and increasingly complex understanding of language, culture and literacy; and of ways in which knowledge is constructed and presented via different modes of communication and different types of texts. This integration of knowledge of language, culture and literacies and is a complex but necessary part of an integrated view of language learning which combines learning language and culture, learning through language and culture and learning about language and culture.

While language learning may draw upon knowledge from any learning area, the key focus on communication and intercultural engagement, builds particular synergies with some learning areas. The major focus on literacy development and meta-linguistic awareness, for example, links directly to the English learning area, providing opportunities for comparison, reflection and reinforcement of both the target language and of English as the primary medium for learning across the curriculum.

Concepts, skills, and understandings developed in the Humanities and Social Sciences learning area are important in the process of learning specific languages and cultures, and contribute to understanding how languages and cultures change over time and in different contexts, how communities and cultures interact in the world.

The Arts learning area represents a body of knowledge related to human expression and interpretation of experience and the world. Language learning draws on concepts, skills and understandings within the arts as learners represent their linguistic and cultural knowledge through various artistic forms of expression such as dance, drama, and music.

Communication is increasingly occurring through multiple and varied forms of technology and through participation in contemporary communication practices. The Technologies learning area makes important contributions to the Languages area, supporting the development of a range of knowledge, skills and understanding, including the capability to discern the quality of ideas and information encountered by learners.

## Implications for implementation

### Program Provision in Schools

The *Australian Curriculum: Languages* describes the nature, scope and sequences of expected learning and student achievement. It is intended to guide the development of programs that are coherent, challenging, rewarding, and broadly educational, and to enrich the communicative repertoire of individual students.

It is acknowledged that at present the policy settings for hours of study and conditions of delivery (duration, frequency, intensity) for learning languages are diverse across states and territories of Australia. However, the *Australian Curriculum: Languages* has been developed on the assumption that all students will learn languages across primary and secondary schooling. It is also assumed that the curriculum will provide for continued learning in different pathways through to the senior secondary years.

The curriculum has been developed based on the relationship between indicative hours of writing, content, and achievement standards. It recognises there will be different forms of provision and local education authorities and schools will determine how best to organise programs in their particular context to maximise regularity and continuity in learning at primary and secondary level.

The pathways and sequences do not necessarily represent or determine the administrative organisation of language programs in particular schools as these decisions are made by local education authorities and schools.

### Developing teaching and learning programs

The Australian Curriculum: Languages is designed to achieve three aims that are realised through two interrelated strands: Communicating and Understanding. In developing teaching and learning programs the two strands need to be considered holistically in order to attend to both active language use and related knowledge and understandings.

The set of strands and sub-strands capture a range of dimensions of language use. As such, they are intended to capture the scope, that is, the range and variety of content to be experienced and learned by students. Teachers will need to design teaching and learning programs by drawing on the content descriptions from a number of sub-strands and integrating these to create meaningful learning experiences for their particular learners. The emphases across the strands and sub-strands may vary for different languages, bands and pathways, and for different program contexts. Since content descriptions indicate the nature and scope of the learning over two year spans, teachers will need to make decisions about which aspects of the content descriptions will be taught in which year of their program. Year by year programs can then be used to inform the development of short term programs (e.g. one term/several weeks).

Taken together, band descriptions, content descriptions, content elaborations and the achievement standards provide an overall sense of 'level' or expectations about language teaching and learning at a given moment in time and over time. In the development of programs they give a sense of the level of complexity at which the work can be pitched. In relation to assessment they provide a reference point for making judgments about students' progress in learning. Teachers will make decisions about pedagogies that best meet the learning needs of their particular students and the context of their particular program in their program.

## **Glossary**

A glossary is provided to support a common understanding of key terms in the curriculum for the languages learning area.