Beginning language teachers’ 7–12 handbook



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# Introduction

This handbook has been developed by the Languages and Culture team for beginning teachers in NSW public schools. The Languages and Culture team sits within the Department of Education’s Curriculum Directorate. The team provides advice and support to language 7–12 teachers across NSW, through professional learning, their statewide staffroom, local networks and resources available on the [department’s website](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/languages).

This handbook aims to:

* provide an overview of languages education in NSW
* provide links to resources and websites
* outline the support available to language teachers.

The information contained in this document is correct as of November 2024.

**Note:** this document provides advice only. It is the responsibility of individual school executive and teaching staff to ensure record keeping is compliant with both NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and departmental requirements and policies.

# NESA versus the department – who does what?

## NSW Education Standards Authority

NSW Education Standards Authority ([NESA](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/)) is an independent statutory authority which supports schools to deliver the best possible outcomes for students. NESA sets and monitors quality teaching, learning, assessment and school standards across NSW government and non-government schools by:

* setting the syllabus for each Board Developed course
* producing and marking HSC examinations
* overseeing the accreditation of teachers
* granting the Record of School Achievement (RoSA) in Years 10 and 11
* delivering basic skills testing, including HSC minimum standard of literacy and numeracy
* monitoring school compliance with registration requirements.

Teachers must use NESA syllabus documents to write their own teaching programs, including assessments. Teaching programs must align to NESA’s syllabuses to be compliant. NESA carries out inspections to ensure schools are compliant with registration requirements. Typically, NESA would ask to see a scope and sequence for a stage, a teaching program or unit, an assessment plan for the year and student work samples. Your head teacher will guide you through the process.

## Department of Education

The NSW Department of Education (the department) is the largest provider of education in Australia, delivering high-quality public education to two-thirds of the NSW student population. The remaining third of students attend either independent schools (non-government schools) or Catholic schools.

Each sector is responsible for implementing the curriculum in their schools in alignment with the syllabus documents and their sector’s policies and procedures.

In the department, our work is underpinned by [Our Plan for NSW Public Education (PDF 1275 KB)](https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/about-us/strategies-and-reports/plan-for-nsw-public-education/plan-for-nsw-public-education-poster.pdf).

# The context of language learning in NSW schools

Local factors often impact language learning in schools. These factors may include teacher availability and community support for languages.

## K–6

In primary schools, the study of a language is an **optional** component of the curriculum, and there is no languages key learning area (KLA).

Approximately 17% of primary schools offer a languages program through government-funded initiatives or through individual school resources. As such, students at your school may or may not have had prior experience learning a language at primary school.

If your feeder primary schools offer a language program, consider developing links with these schools to explore continuity pathways for language learners.

## 7–12

In secondary schools, there is a languages KLA, with **mandatory** curriculum requirements. Please note that the KLA is ‘Languages’ (not ‘Languages Other Than English’, or ‘LOTE’, which are both outdated).

The decision regarding which language(s) to offer is made at a school level, based on available resources, community needs and/or interests, as well as access to qualified languages teachers.

### Stage 4 – the ‘100 hours’

The study of 100 hours of one language over one continuous 12-month period is mandatory between Years 7–10, but preferably in Stage 4 ([ACE manual 4007 – mandatory curriculum requirements for the Record of School Achievement](https://ace.nesa.nsw.edu.au/ace-4007)).

The course should provide a good foundation for learners continuing the study of the language into Stage 5 and then into Stage 6 Continuers.

### Stage 5

In Stage 5, students may elect a language course.

Schools can offer elective language courses which are 100 hours or 200 hours in length, with most schools offering 200-hour electives. Keep in mind that students are better equipped to choose Continuers courses in Stage 6 if they have access to the full 200 hours in Stage 5.

### Stage 6

Students may continue with their chosen language or languages in Stage 6 and/or commence the study of a new language.

In Stage 6, a wide variety of languages is offered in NSW schools, catering for beginning students to students with a heritage in a particular language and/or a range of prior language experiences.

In modern languages, there are up to 5 types of Stage 6 courses (depending on the language):

* Beginners
* Continuers
* Extension
* [Language] in Context – Collaborative Curriculum and Assessment Framework for Languages (CCAFL).
* [Language] and Literature for students with a background in the language.

Classical languages offer Continuers and Extension courses.

### Additional pathways for language learners

If your school is unable to offer a language students wish to learn, there are other pathways of study.

#### Secondary College of Languages

[Secondary College of Languages](https://sclanguages.schools.nsw.gov.au/) offers students from government and non-government high schools the opportunity to study their background language if it is not available for study in their weekday school.

The college operates on Saturdays during the school term in 13 campuses located in Sydney, Wollongong and Newcastle.

Contact [SCLanguages.School@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:SCLanguages.School@det.nsw.edu.au) to learn more.

#### NSW School of Languages

[NSW School of Languages](https://nswschoollang.schools.nsw.gov.au/) is a distance education language specialist school, offering courses in 12 languages. Subject to satisfying certain guidelines, students in NSW secondary and central schools may enrol to study a Stage 5 or Stage 6 language course not available at their home school.

Face-to-face lessons are held once per term, and telephone or video lessons are held once per week. The students’ home schools must provide their students with the required resources such as phone, computer, internet and video conferencing access, as well as supervision and a safe learning space.

Contact [NSWSchoolLang.school@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:NSWSchoolLang.school@det.nsw.edu.au) to learn more.

#### Distance education schools

Distance education is an equity program for geographically-isolated students or students whose circumstances prevent them from regularly attending school in NSW. Students can be enrolled full-time, or single and multiple course enrolments are also available for students in Years 9–12 when the home school cannot provide the required breadth and flexibility of curriculum.

Secondary distance education centres which offer languages are [Camden Haven High School](https://camdenhave-h.schools.nsw.gov.au/distance-education.html) in Laurieton, [Dubbo School of Distance Education](https://dubbo-d.schools.nsw.gov.au/) in Dubbo, [Finigan School of Distance Education](https://finigan-d.schools.nsw.gov.au/) in Queanbeyan and [Southern Cross School of Distance Education](https://sthcrossc-d.schools.nsw.gov.au/) in Ballina.

# The syllabuses and their content

NESA sets the curriculum through syllabuses for each KLA. Schools and teachers use syllabuses to develop educational programs for students.

Syllabuses describe the knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes that students are expected to develop at each stage of learning.

## K–10 syllabuses

There are 4 K–10 language syllabuses in NSW:

* [Modern Languages K–10](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/languages/modern-languages-k-10-2022/overview)
* [Classical Languages K–10](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/languages/classical-languages-k-10-2022/overview)
* [Aboriginal Languages K–10](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/languages/aboriginal-languages-k-10-2022/overview)
* [Auslan K–10](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/languages/auslan-k-10-2023/overview).

Teachers use the syllabus(es) relevant to the language(s) they are teaching.

Within each syllabus, in the **Content** section for each stage, you will find examples that unpack the content dot points for each outcome. In the **Teaching and learning support** section, you will find comprehensive teaching advice, sample scope and sequences and sample units developed by NESA. For modern and classical languages, this section also contains grammar and language examples.

### Modern Languages K–10

The Modern Languages K–10 Syllabus (2022) is a framework to support any modern language. Language-specific examples are provided by NESA for 19 modern languages.

In the syllabus:

* the central goal is communicating in the target language
* there are 3 focus areas – **Interacting**, **Understanding texts** and **Creating texts**
* all focus areas emphasise using and understanding culturally-appropriate target language (culture cannot be taught in isolation from the language)
* interacting is primarily demonstrated through oral language.

To enhance your understanding of the Modern Language K–10 Syllabus, you can complete the [professional learning modules](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/languages/professional-learning-languages-k-12/languages-7-12-professional-learning-catalogue) and view past statewide staff meetings on the [Languages NSW YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/@languagesnsw).

### Classical Languages K–10

The Classical Languages K–10 Syllabus (2022) is a framework to support any classical language. Language-specific examples are provided by NESA for 4 classical languages.

In the syllabus:

* the central goal is empowering students with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to access and appreciate a range of classical texts
* there are 2 focus areas – **Understanding texts** and **Intercultural understanding**
* Understanding texts includes translation – by translating texts, the analysis of languages reinforces meaning
* Intercultural understanding involves learning about the classical world, making connections and comparisons, and reflecting on language, culture and identity.

### Aboriginal Languages K–10

The Aboriginal Languages K–10 Syllabus (2022) is a framework to support the teaching of any Aboriginal Language of Australia, with priority given to the language of Country where the school is located.

Students learn to communicate in the target language, including formal and informal language used in daily life, and an awareness of dialectal and/or regional differences. Students may also learn that the target language has corresponding sign and restricted language.

The Aboriginal Languages K–10 Syllabus (2022) has 5 focus areas:

* Interacting
* Responding
* Composing
* The role of language, culture and identity
* Language awareness and building.

Syllabus content is designed to accommodate the range of student entry points and range of learners, some of whom may have significant prior learning, experience or background in the target language and/or other Aboriginal Languages. Content has been developed in 3 ways:

* students who are studying the target language as Language Revival learners
* students who are studying the target language as First Language learners
* students undertaking a course based on Life Skills outcomes and content.

#### Community consultation

The local Aboriginal Community of the school is an important partner and should be the first contact regarding the introduction of Aboriginal Languages into school-based teaching and learning programs.

For full details, please see ‘Community consultation’ in the [course overview section of the Aboriginal Languages K–10 Syllabus](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/languages/aboriginal-languages-k-10-2022?tab=course-overview#community-consultation-aboriginal_languages_k_10_2022).

Within the syllabus, in the **Content** section for each stage, you will find information on Life Skills, teaching advice, and examples that unpack the content dot points for each outcome. In the **Teaching and learning support** section of the syllabus, you will find further information about the content dot points, including suggested grammar points.

### Auslan K–10

Auslan is the language of the Deaf community of Australia and belongs to the British, Australian and New Zealand Sign Language family. It is a distinct and legitimate language with its own grammar and vocabulary which are different from those of English. Key Word Sign is not Auslan. Key Word Sign borrows signs from Auslan.

Auslan has 2 main dialects, Northern and Southern dialects. It is expected that this syllabus is delivered using the Northern dialect.

The syllabus can also be taught through adapted forms of Auslan for students who are deafblind.

Schools must teach Auslan as a language and cannot teach about Auslan, or about Deaf culture as this will not meet syllabus outcomes.

Implementation of the Auslan K–10 Syllabus commences in schools in 2026. In 2024 and 2025, teachers familiarise themselves with the syllabus, and plan and prepare for implementation of the curriculum. Schools that already offer an Auslan program may implement earlier than 2026.

The Auslan K–10 Syllabus (2023) has 4 focus areas:

* Interacting in Auslan
* Understanding texts in Auslan
* Creating texts in Auslan
* Role of language, culture and identity.

Through these focus areas, students communicate meaning in Auslan and develop intercultural capability in d/Deaf and hearing environments.

Content has been developed for:

* students studying Auslan as an additional language
* students with prior learning and or experience who are learning Auslan as an additional language
* students studying Auslan as a first language.

#### Community consultation

Engagement and appropriate consultation with the local or nearest available Deaf community and/or background and/or proficient users of Auslan is key to Auslan being taught in a contextually and culturally-correct manner. Decisions about teaching this syllabus are made by schools and education sectors in consultation with the Deaf community.

For full details, please see ‘Community consultation’ in the [course overview section of the Auslan K–10 Syllabus](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/languages/auslan-k-10-2023/overview#community-consultation-auslan_k_10_2023)

## 11–12 syllabuses

The information provided below relates to Board Developed courses. Please note, there are currently no Board Developed Stage 6 courses in Auslan or Aboriginal Languages. There is a [Aboriginal Languages Stage 6 Content Endorsed Content (CEC) Syllabus](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-languages/aboriginal-languages).

The department’s support can be found on the [Planning, programming and assessing languages 11–12](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/languages/planning-programming-and-assessing-languages-11-12) webpage.

### Modern languages

There are 5 different types of courses in Stage 6. All of these are 2-unit courses with the exception of Extension which is a one-unit course.

[Eligibility criteria](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-languages/eligibility#:~:text=Course%20eligibility%20criteria&text=Students%20either%20have%20no%20prior,Stage%204%20or%20Stage%205) apply to some Stage 6 modern language courses.

Students need to apply to their school principal for an eligibility determination during Term 3 of Year 10, if possible. To be deemed eligible for a course, a student must meet all the eligibility criteria for that course at the time of entry to the course. The principal's eligibility determination should be provided to the student in writing at least 10 school weeks prior to the commencement of the course.

Eligibility forms, including a statutory declaration, are kept at the school. They do not have to be submitted to NESA, but NESA officers may request copies of these forms.

For further information, refer to the [eligibility for Stage 6 Languages courses section](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-languages/eligibility) on the NESA website and [ACE manual 8008 – entry requirements for Stage 6 Languages courses where eligibility criteria apply](https://ace.nesa.nsw.edu.au/ace-8008).

#### Beginners courses

Beginners courses are offered in Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Modern Greek and Spanish.

These courses are designed for students with little to no prior spoken or written knowledge or experience of the language. [Eligibility criteria](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-languages/eligibility#:~:text=Course%20eligibility%20criteria&text=Students%20either%20have%20no%20prior,Stage%204%20or%20Stage%205) apply to enrol in Beginners courses.

The prescribed topics in Stage 6 Beginners courses should be studied from 2 interdependent perspectives:

* the personal world
* the [Language]-speaking communities.

These topics are taught across Year 11 and Year 12. In these 2 perspectives, the topics studied include:

* family life, home and neighbourhood
* people, places and communities
* education and work
* friends, recreation and pastimes
* holidays, travel and tourism
* future plans and aspirations.

The syllabus provides a comprehensive outline of the grammar knowledge required, which can be useful for program registration purposes.

There are no prescribed vocabulary lists – vocabulary is taught according to the topics studied, although it is generally expected that students will know the vocabulary used in the grammar outline. Some Asian languages have prescribed character lists.

Support for teachers of Beginners courses includes:

* sample listening and reading activities
* sample speaking questions, by topic
* advice documents and videos.

#### Continuers courses

Continuers courses are designed for students who are interested in further developing their skills and knowledge of a language or languages they have been previously learning, generally for 200–300 hours before starting the Stage 6 Continuers course. Note that [eligibility criteria](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-languages/eligibility#:~:text=Course%20eligibility%20criteria&text=Students%20either%20have%20no%20prior,Stage%204%20or%20Stage%205) may apply, depending on the language.

Stage 6 Continuers courses focus on 3 prescribed themes:

* the individual
* the [Language]-speaking communities
* the changing world.

Each language has a list of prescribed topics and suggested sub-topics. These are listed in the individual syllabuses.

The syllabus provides a comprehensive outline of the grammar knowledge required, which can be useful for program registration purposes.

There are no prescribed vocabulary lists – vocabulary is taught according to the themes and topics prescribed in the syllabus. It is expected that students will be familiar with a range of vocabulary and idiomatic expressions.

Chinese and Japanese have prescribed character lists.

Support available online for teachers of Continuers courses includes:

* Stage 6 Continuers – answering listening and reading questions
* text types documents in a range of languages
* sample listening and reading activities
* sample speaking questions, by topic
* advice documents and videos.

#### Extension courses

Extension courses are available for study in Year 12 only and commence in Term 4. These courses enhance students’ knowledge and understanding of language and culture through accessing a variety of texts, some of which are prescribed, related to the theme and issues outlined in the syllabus. Extension courses provide students with the opportunity to extend their ability to use and appreciate the target language as a medium for communication and creative thought and expression.

Extension courses are offered in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Modern Greek and Spanish.

Students engage with the theme ‘The individual and contemporary society’ through course prescriptions (study of a prescribed text, prescribed issues and a range of relevant related texts).

The emphasis of assessment in Extension courses is productive language (speaking and writing) and text analysis.

To support teachers of Extension courses, the department has provided [Support materials for the 2025–2030 course prescriptions](https://langext.emagined.com.au/). Use the materials as a basis to create teaching and learning activities specifically tailored to the needs and interests of your students. (Please note, the Chinese Extension Stage 6 Course Prescriptions 2020–2024 have been [extended for an additional year](https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/nesa/news/all/hsc-chinese-extension-prescriptions-changed). They will be used for the HSC examinations in 2025. Teachers of Chinese Extension Stage 6 should continue to use ‘Young Style’ (2013) for examination in the HSC 2025. Access support via the [Chinese Extension page](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/languages/planning-programming-and-assessing-languages-11-12/chinese-extension).)

#### [Language] in Context courses

[Language] in Context courses are available in Chinese, Japanese and Korean.

Most students undertaking these courses come from families where the language is used and there may be a close connection to the culture. Typically, they have some understanding and knowledge of the language, although their spoken language is generally much stronger than their written language skills. These students have most likely completed most of their schooling in English. [Eligibility criteria](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-languages/eligibility#:~:text=Course%20eligibility%20criteria&text=Students%20either%20have%20no%20prior,Stage%204%20or%20Stage%205) apply to enrol in [Language] in Context courses.

Students engage with themes including personal, community and international perspectives in the context of social and community settings, contemporary literature and the arts, and media. Students complete a Personal Investigation which allows students to reflect on their own personal and cultural identity by making links with their heritage.

The syllabuses provide extensive prescriptions for grammar, and character lists are provided for Chinese and Japanese.

#### [Languages] and Literature courses

[Languages] and Literature courses are available in Chinese and Korean.

The courses are designed for students with a cultural and linguistic background in the language – students who are first-language speakers, or who have completed a significant part of their formal education in the target language.

[Languages] and Literature courses demand a higher level of language competence than [Language] in Context courses. Assessment emphasises written rather than oral language skills, with reading and writing being the most heavily weighted assessment components.

The courses focus on the study of language and ideas through prescribed themes and contemporary issues. These themes and contemporary issues are studied through a range of prescribed texts. The prescribed texts change every 5 years, and new course prescriptions begin in 2025.

The syllabuses provide lists of text types plus extensive prescriptions for grammar.

### Classical languages

The following Continuers and Extension classical language courses are available for study in Stage 6: Classical Greek, Classical Hebrew and Latin.

#### Continuers courses

The Continuers level syllabus is designed for students who have typically studied a classical language for 200 to 300 hours at the completion of Year 10.

Stage 6 Continuers is split into 2 year-long components:

1. **Preliminary course (120 indicative hours)**

The Preliminary course is structured to provide students with opportunities to read original [classical language] texts, developing the skills needed to study the prescribed texts for the HSC course and to translate unseen texts. Students extend their vocabulary, consolidate their language skills and study additional linguistic features not prescribed in the Years 7–10 syllabus. Students also begin to appreciate the purpose and point of view of different authors and their effective use of language.

It is a requirement that the Preliminary course not teach texts which will be prescribed for the following year in either the Continuers or Extension courses.

1. **HSC course (120 indicative hours)**

The HSC course is designed to allow students to apply and extend the knowledge and skills gained through a wider reading of authors in the Preliminary course to a detailed study and analysis of 2 prescribed texts, one verse and one prose. Students apply their linguistic skills and their familiarity with [classical language] literature in the independent translation of unseen passages of original [classical language] text.

The prescribed texts are found in the [Course prescriptions for Latin Continuers](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-languages/continuers/latin-continuers-syllabus/course-prescriptions), [Course prescriptions for Classical Greek Continuers](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/wcm/connect/5625925c-1200-4c0a-8f76-ee045c16ed07/course-prescriptions-classical-greek-continuers-2011-2023.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=) and [Course prescriptions for Classical Hebrew Continuers](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/wcm/connect/a3c71299-f11c-4453-9d68-364f6ab32233/classical-hebrew-continuers-course-prescriptions-2013-2020.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID). The texts are prescribed in advance and have overlapping timeframes which means a teacher should only need to prepare at most one new text per year across both Continuers and Extension courses in the language.

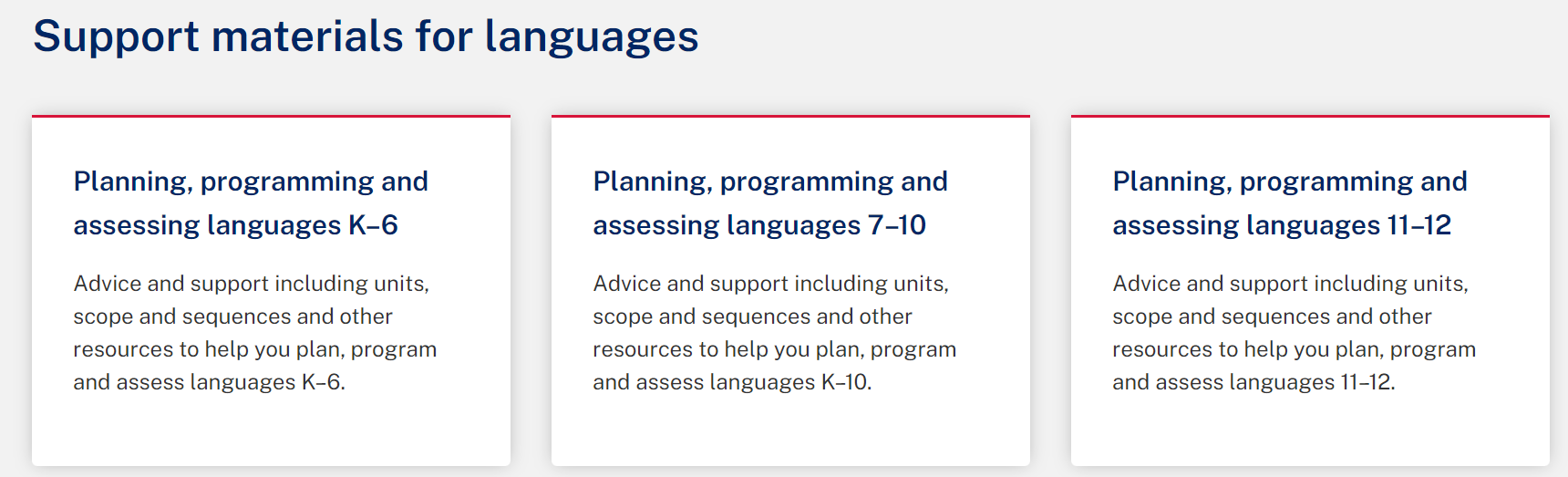
#### Extension courses

Extension classical language courses commence in Term 4. The Extension course leads students into an area of classical literature that is not explored in the Continuers course.

# Programming

On the [department’s website](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/languages/planning-programming-and-assessing-languages-7-10) you will find resources to support languages programming from Years K–12.

Figure 1 – support materials for languages available on the department's website



Learning is a cumulative and systematic process. Organising the content, teaching strategies and activities into learning sequences (for example, of 3 weeks) chunks the learning, acknowledging that the use of working memory is optimised when new content is broken into manageable steps and consolidated with practice. Learning sequences should be designed to allow students to develop their skills gradually, reinforcing and building vocabulary and structures over time. By providing opportunities to revisit and build on what they have learned, students can use their language skills to participate in increasingly complex situations.

**The department strongly encourages a backward mapping approach to unit design.**

1. Start your unit by designing the final summative task, aligned to the outcomes and content you want to assess, with a sample response and marking guidelines. This enables you to identify the language and skills students will need to learn throughout the unit.
2. Next, create 2 to 3 ‘mini task progress checkpoints’ that build in complexity to the final task. Use these mini tasks at the end of each learning sequence. Chunk the learning into learning sequences that lead to each mini task.
3. Finally, develop the teaching and learning activities to support the learning within each sequence. Include content that is inclusive for all students and differentiated to suit all learner needs. Include scaffolds to support all learners to succeed to their best ability.

Consider the following, as you design your programming documents:

* **Student engagement strategies** to encourage student participation and engagement.
* Regularly link content to students’ personal worlds, encouraging them to build connections with each other and appreciate the relevance of the learning in a meaningful way.
* Use tools to form groups, for example craft sticks or colour/number/vocabulary cards. For example, if using number or colour cards, say in the target language *‘Numbers 5, 10, 15 and 20 form a group’* or *‘All the yellow cards form a group’*. If using vocabulary cards, say *‘All the goldfish work together’* *or ‘All the grandparents work with all the grandchildren’*. This encourages students to work with each other. The [Wheel of names online tool](https://wheelofnames.com/) can also be used to call on students at random to participate in activities and formatively assess their progress.
* Language learning games facilitate enjoyment in learning and socialisation with peers. A range of examples are included in the department’s sample units and support documents. Select 2 to 3 to use regularly with students, for example ‘Beat the teacher’ ‘Sentence stealer’ and ‘One pen one dice’, gradually adding complexity to the language structures as students’ language skills and confidence grow. Once these become routine for students, they will focus on the language, enhancing classroom management.
* [**Brain breaks**](https://education.nsw.gov.au/schooling/school-community/wellbeing-framework-for-schools/cognitive-wellbeing-strategies/brain-breaks-for-cognitive-wellbeing) to allow students to replenish focus and attention. After focused learning and practice of new content, embed a no-stakes activity to allow students to mentally rest and regroup.
* **Differentiation examples** to adjust the learning for students with advanced proficiency in the target language, for high potential and gifted students, and for students requiring additional support. Adjust or add to these strategies to suit your students. Examples are included in the department’s support.
* **Student-friendly infographics** help students visualise the learning journey and take ownership of the learning by setting learning goals and making connections between prior learning and new learning.
* **Anchor charts** to provide a visual summary of learning. Anchor charts can be created collaboratively as a class or individually for a personalised summary of useful vocabulary and structures for the unit. Anchor charts can be handwritten or digital.
* **Visible thinking routines** to promote deeper understanding, student reflection and feedback opportunities. A wide range of visible thinking routines for the languages classroom, feedback guides for teachers and students, the ‘Learning journals – guide for students’ and an online sample self-reflection guide for students can be found at the [Teaching tools page](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/languages/planning-programming-and-assessing-languages-7-10/teaching-tools) of the Languages curriculum webpage. Practising routines with students so they become automatic can reduce cognitive load.
* **Sentence builders** to support students with modelled and guided learning.
* **Online flashcards and games** using tools such as [Kahoot](https://kahoot.com/) and [Quizlet](https://quizlet.com/en-gb) to provide students with opportunities to create flashcards and play games to practise new vocabulary and structures. Allowing students ongoing opportunities to revisit and memorise vocabulary and structures at intervals throughout the unit (spreading out study over time) supports memory retrieval practices.
* **Mini whiteboard activities** to formatively assess every student’s understanding and collaboration.
* [**Exit slips**](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/543) to encourage student reflection, check for understanding and provide informal feedback.

## K–10 support

Currently, the department’s support is predominantly for modern languages, as these have the highest candidature in NSW public schools. Support for classical languages will be published in 2025. Support for Aboriginal Languages is provided by the [Aboriginal Education and Communities Directorate](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/aec). Support for Auslan is currently in the planning phase, for publication prior to the 2026 implementation date.

### Modern languages

For modern languages 7–10, the department has provided both generic and language-specific support.

Generic support can be found on the [Planning, programming and assessing languages 7–10](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/languages/planning-programming-and-assessing-languages-7-10) webpage and includes:

* Programming guidelines for the Modern Languages K–10 Syllabus
* Assessment guidelines for the Modern Languages K–10 Syllabus
* Unit guidelines and sample template for the Modern Languages K–10 Syllabus
* Staffroom posters.

Language-specific support includes sample scope and sequences, fully-resourced units (with assessment), as well as a range of high-impact activities aligned to the syllabus content dot points. You will also find student-facing infographics, which illustrate the learning in each scope and sequence and each unit.

The units are evidence based, aligned to explicit teaching pedagogy with student engagement strategies embedded. They include student-friendly infographics which can be displayed in the classroom. Activities include opportunities for authentic interaction between students, games to encourage student engagement, and listening exercises. Use of the target language is modelled for both teachers and students, to support the development of communication skills.

Fully-resourced sample units are available for:

* Chinese (Stages 4 and 5)
* French (Stages 4 and 5)
* German (Stage 4)
* Indonesian (Stage 4)
* Italian (Stages 4 and 5)
* Japanese (Stages 4 and 5)
* Korean (Stage 4)
* Spanish (Stages 4 and 5).

The units can be adapted for any language. If your language is not in the list above, look at a similar language’s resources and see if you can adapt them.

Units for Arabic and Modern Greek will be published in 2025.

Adjust the units to suit your context. For example, some classes may get through a unit in one term, whereas other classes may require a semester. Some of the activities might suit your students and some might not. Remember that you need to balance the variety of activities each lesson so that your students are engaged and on task as much as possible with their learning.

# Assessment

The primary role of assessment is to establish where students are in their learning so that learning progress can be monitored over time and planned teaching can be modified to suit students at their point of need. Assessment is most effective when it is an integral part of teaching and learning programs.

NESA states that assessment involves:

* establishing where students are in their learning
* ongoing monitoring
* formative and summative tasks
* providing feedback about student progress.

There are various types of assessment that take place as part of learning. It is important to recognise effective [assessment principles](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/understanding-the-curriculum/assessment/approaches) as you develop your teaching and learning programs.

Summative assessment captures student achievement at a moment in time, usually at the end of an instructional sequence or unit. The main goal of summative assessment is to evaluate student learning at the conclusion of a unit by comparing it against a standard or marking guidelines. In Years 7–10, teachers develop marking guidelines which align with the [NESA Common Grade Scale](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/understanding-the-curriculum/awarding-grades/common-grade-scale), contextualised to the task and the related syllabus outcomes and content. Some examples of summative assessment include formal exams, end-of-unit projects or presentations, and assignments.

Formative assessment is used by teachers to evaluate and provide feedback on student learning during the instructional process. Formative assessment has 2 primary aims – to identify where students are at in relation to understanding and applying the content, identifying areas of strength and weakness in order to adjust future teaching methods and materials accordingly, and to close the gap between where students are now and where they need to get to. Some examples of formative assessment are quizzes, class discussions, exit tickets, peer feedback, teacher observation and mini tasks.

The department’s key considerations for [quality assessment](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/assessment/strengthening-assessment/effective-assessment-practice) are that tasks:

* directly align with student learning outcomes and activities undertaken
* consider how students best demonstrate these learning outcomes
* are relevant to the students’ learning stage and life experiences
* allow for differentiation to show the depth of student understanding
* use different approaches as part of the teaching and learning cycle
* provide feedback that promotes learning progress.

Feedback is effective when it is both timely and task focused (CESE 2020). It focuses on growth and improving understanding for future learning experiences. Plan for feedback and ensure you provide students with opportunities to reflect and act on the feedback you provide.

In language teaching, feedback should be based on student achievement in the macro skills. For professional learning on feedback, complete the micro learning module [Effective feedback in languages](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/languages/professional-learning-languages-k-12/languages-7-12-professional-learning-catalogue/effective-feedback-in-languages). Feedback ideas and templates can be found on the [Digital Learning Selector.](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/?cache_id=07890)

Advice about effective feedback can also be found on the [NESA website](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/understanding-the-curriculum/assessment/effective-feedback).

## 7–10

Each year you need to develop an assessment schedule for your classes in Years 7 to 10. You will need to consider the macro skills you are assessing, the number of formal assessment tasks for the year, what types of tasks you will give students to assess skills and learning content effectively, and weightings for formal assessment tasks. For each formal assessment task, you will need to follow your school’s guidelines, but generally you will be expected to issue assessment notifications to students with at least 2 weeks’ notice. Your assessment notifications will need to include syllabus outcomes, content to be examined, the type of task, for example an oral, listening, reading comprehension or writing task, the due date and marking guidelines. Consider modelling sample responses with students prior to assessments so the expectations of the task are clear.

Assessment tasks may assess one outcome only, or can be ‘interrelated’ tasks, where one part of the assessment task relates to students being able to complete a different part of the assessment task. For example, students demonstrate understanding of a text, and then produce a related written response. Your assessment notification must detail the requirements for each part of the task.

In the Modern Languages, Aboriginal Languages and Auslan K–10 Syllabuses, communicating is critical. For the assessment of communication to be meaningful, students need to understand the purpose and audience of the communicative act, within a real-world or simulated real-world context.

When grading student achievement at the end of a Stage 5 course (100 or 200 hours) for the RoSA, teachers use the relevant course performance descriptors:

* [Course performance descriptors for Modern Languages K–10 Syllabus](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/languages/modern-languages-k-10-2022?tab=assessment#course-performance-descriptors-modern_languages_k_10_2022)
* [Course performance descriptors for Classical Languages K–10 Syllabus](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/languages/classical-languages-k-10-2022?tab=assessment#course-performance-descriptors-classical_languages_k_10_2022)
* [Course performance descriptors for Aboriginal Languages K–10 Syllabus](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/languages/aboriginal-languages-k-10-2022?tab=assessment#course-performance-descriptors-aboriginal_languages_k_10_2022)
* [Course performance descriptors for Auslan K–10 Syllabus](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/languages/auslan-k-10-2023/assessment#course-performance-descriptors-auslan_k_10_2023).

For further professional learning, watch the Language and Culture team’s statewide staffroom presentation on [Assessment ideas for various contexts](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ajb0f3SZ6Uc).

## 11–12

Stage 6 assessment requirements are found on the [NESA website](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/Understanding-the-curriculum/assessment). [HSC examination](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/resources/hsc-exam-papers) papers are available for each course on the NESA website and contain marking guidelines and HSC marking feedback.

Each school develops an assessment program for Year 11 and Year 12 adhering to [NESA’s guidelines](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/ace-rules/ace2/assessment-programs#acerule=n2_1_preliminary_school_based_assessment&part=preamble) in terms of components to assess and the weightings of each task. General information about assessment in Stage 6 can be found on the [NESA](https://www.educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/Understanding-the-curriculum/assessment) website. Language-specific information can be found on the NESA website in each syllabus under ‘Assessment and reporting in [Language] Stage 6’. It is crucial to read the documentation, ask questions if unsure and always follow NESA’s guidelines.

School-based assessment requirements specify that tasks should assess macro skills in a holistic and authentic way, combining skills rather than testing them in isolation. As such, school-based assessment tasks should differ in structure and style to HSC examinations (which assess the macro skills separately), with the exception of Year 11 yearly and Year 12 trial HSC examinations.

Assessment tasks may have multiple parts, however all parts should be completed on the same day (or in the same assessment period when combining oral and written). There may be times where it is necessary to carry a task over to the next consecutive day, for example, if conducting a speaking assessment with a class of 12 students involving a simulated job interview, this may take more than a lesson. Although NESA would like tasks to be completed on one date, the date may be written as a week, for example, ‘Week 8’ for a task of this nature. The [Assessment Certification Examination (ACE)](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/ace-rules/ace2/assessment-programs) website contains assessment rules.

The department has developed the ‘Stage 6 languages – developing a notice of assessment’ document that provides information on the thinking, intentions and design that goes into a notice of assessment. It can be found on the [Planning, programming and assessing languages 11–12](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/languages/planning-programming-and-assessing-languages-11-12) webpage.

NESA requires schools to submit a grade for each student based on their achievement at the end of the Year 11 course. The [Common Grade Scale for Preliminary courses](https://www.educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/Understanding-the-curriculum/awarding-grades/monitoring-grades/common-grade-scale/!ut/p/z1/xZRbd6IwFIV_DY9ZOQm38IiXQtURwVvlpStisHQkUMQ6M79-os6ssVq1XX2YPJGw9wln8yU4xg84lvw1W_I6KyRfqfksth6Nex9AB9rzRr4FbiP0_I4PVDcsPN0LqEss4huky2xGwB1ZJGg7DYB7G8fHfkZDA0IygEg9O5O-ceqHg98wuuYdEM82PukPvL0_IBbt2DQYmwc_oR4hjH4Dm9rgRoPmoOXfUeiZf_xwYbjwMf-VD_yY_7Igvp7_BMc4LpNsgWecpuCANUfMsQUynNREjqVTlJo6EylJmMXETp3Iuqyf8KzcPiaFrIWsNSir4lkkNdqKuQZSrLkGhCBCNdjIhajWNZeLTC5R_SRQsqmqLNmsNrkGfMur_YtlxRdirUFeyKwuquOlpMjV6mGK1glfidPUztuKr_-U6a6P4wqBGTZVbp4TunSiD0fkVOD1PeWMQrsR6E0Stf4K_pFL24ocvev3yLBHW51zwTnabwXvsPtW8A6ctxqdqaDsi0F1Ff-vmdjisSyqXB3X4Sdp8G_uQL64w43y9hfLd26dD3WBZc8vL7GruN_B_qPGD_8R_DIf70fO9J_oe9SO_F-NPvKac7YdpfnU_Q0YIGvA/dz/d5/L2dBISEvZ0FBIS9nQSEh/?urile=wcm%3Apath%3A%2Fpw_content%2Fproject-web%2Fnesa%2F11-12%2FUnderstanding-the-curriculum%2Fawarding-grades%2Fmonitoring-grades%2Fcommon-grade-scale) is used in the allocation of these grades. You need to take into consideration the summative assessment mark for each student alongside these grades in your decision making.

At the end of Year 12, schools must submit a school-based assessment mark for each student in a subject. Formal school-based assessment tasks are based on course requirements and components and weightings that contribute to the determination of the final mark for a course. The final formal, weighted assessment mark should not be revealed to students as it is subject to moderation, and this can lead to confusion.

### HSC examinations

NESA oversees all oral and written HSC examinations.

#### Oral examinations

HSC oral examinations for Beginners, Continuers, Extension and [Language] in Context courses are held separately to the written examinations, usually in August or September. There is no oral examination for classical language courses. Oral examination centres vary from year to year and schools can schedule their students to their preferred session times and venues. Venues, dates and session times are available through [Schools Online](https://bosho.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/links/schoolsonline.html) one week before scheduling opens. Discuss preferred exam dates and times with students before scheduling. When students have been scheduled, they download their Student Confirmation Sheet from [Students Online](https://studentsonline.nesa.nsw.edu.au/). [Language] and Literature courses do not have an HSC oral examination.

#### Written examinations

The HSC written examination timetable is available on the NESA website each year in early May. Each student will have access through Students Online to their own written HSC timetable. The final written examination takes place on the date specified in the HSC written examination timetable, at the student’s day school, regardless of where the language is studied.

Unannotated monolingual or bilingual print dictionaries may be used in all Beginners, Continuers, [Language] in Context, [Language] and Literature and Extension HSC examinations. As such, schools should support students in understanding how to effectively use dictionaries. For classical languages, unannotated monolingual and/or bilingual print dictionaries may be used in Latin examinations. No dictionaries can be used in Classical Greek or Classical Hebrew. Specialist dictionaries such as grammar dictionaries, dictionaries of idioms or syllabary dictionaries are not permitted nor are digital and kanji dictionaries.

# Reporting

Reporting happens each semester and is a departmental requirement. Being organised at the beginning of the year or semester will make the reporting period less stressful. You need to know the outcomes for each stage you will be reporting on so that you can gather data throughout the semester. You should be reporting on formative and summative assessment, not just summative tasks. Classroom observations, feedback on learning activities as well as formal feedback on assessment tasks can all be used to inform your report comments. Some schools use banks of comments. If this is not the case for you, it is a good idea to develop your own bank of comments based on the syllabus outcomes and grades your school uses. According to the department’s [Curriculum planning and programming, assessing and reporting to parents K-12 policy](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2005-0290), report comments need to be individualised and accessible for parents so keep your community in mind when writing.

# Explicit teaching

Explicit teaching is a powerful, evidence-based teaching practice. The department’s [Explicit teaching in NSW public schools (PDF 989 KB)](https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/documents/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/explicit-teaching/explicit-teaching-in-nsw-public-schools.pdf) document outlines the enabling factors to optimise student learning and explores the teaching strategies aligned with explicit teaching practice.

Learning is a cumulative and systematic process. Organising the content, teaching strategies and activities into learning sequences chunks the learning, acknowledging that the use of working memory is optimised when new content is broken into manageable steps and consolidated with practice. The learning sequences should allow students to develop their skills gradually, reinforcing and building vocabulary and structures over time. By providing opportunities to revisit and build upon what they have learned, students can use their language skills to participate in increasingly complex situations.

In each unit for [modern languages 7–10](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/languages/planning-programming-and-assessing-languages-7-10), we have included explicit teaching strategies that can be adapted to suit the teaching context, as well as an infographic showing how each teaching strategy works in languages.

Figure 2 – explicit teaching in languages



# Differentiation

Differentiation refers to the responses that teachers make to learner’s needs. Effective differentiation functions on the premise that every student can achieve with the appropriate guidance and support. There are 4 types of classroom elements that can be differentiated according to the readiness, interests and learning profile of students. These elements are:

* content
* process
* product
* learning environment.

Teachers are ‘differentiating’ when they:

* provide several learning options or different paths to learning, to help students take in information and makes senses of concepts or skills
* provide appropriate levels of challenge for all students including those who are behind, those in the middle and those who are advanced.

Differentiation can be a challenge for teachers in every subject. Teachers may need to program for students with an intellectual disability, students who have little or no English, students experiencing difficulty with learning, and high potential and gifted (HPG) students. The department’s information about [Universal Design for Learning](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/planning-programming-and-assessing-k-12/about-universal-design-for-learning) will help teachers reflect on planning to support all learners in classrooms. The school’s Learning and Support teacher (LaST) is also a good source of information about how to support individuals in classes.

Engage with the Languages and Culture team SWS presentation on [Differentiation in the languages classroom](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8KZiSL5b74&list=PLleeTfvCJCVMlf2gtDzj7augBSx870dh0&index=10) for further information. We have also included sample differentiation strategies in all our sample units for the Modern Languages K–10 Syllabus.

## Proficiency levels in languages

If you teach modern languages, Aboriginal Language or Auslan, you may also need to differentiate for students with widely varying levels of proficiency in the target language.

In the Modern Languages K–10 Syllabus, examples have been provided in the content for Stages 4 and 5 for beginner, intermediate and advanced learners.

In the Aboriginal Languages and Auslan K–10 Syllabuses, content is provided for students:

* learning the target language as an additional language
* with prior learning and/or experience in the target language, in or outside the classroom
* learning the language as their first language.

Even students with a background in the language may have varying skills, including:

* students who are completely literate in the language
* those who have strong oral skills but cannot read or write the language
* those who have some language skills in a range of skills.

To support all students in your classroom, you will need to access and/or create a broad range of authentic target language resources, and consider the ways you can modify your teaching and learning activities to suit the range of learners.

## Adjustments for students with learning support needs

There will be students in classes who may require adjustments so they can access learning. Check whether students in your class have an individual learning support plan (PLP or ILP) and, if so, make sure you are aware of what adjustments are recommended on the plan. Make sure you liaise with the school’s Learning and Support teacher who can advise you if needed. Access [NESA](https://www.educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/languages/supporting-students-with-disability-in-languages) for strategies.

## Life Skills

NESA recognises that a small percentage of students with intellectual disability best fulfil the mandatory curriculum requirements for languages by undertaking Life Skills outcomes and content.

Life Skills outcomes for Years 7–10 are included in all K–10 languages syllabuses.

Schools with [eligible students](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/diversity-in-learning/special-education/life-skills) can develop a [School Developed Board Endorsed Course](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/understanding-the-curriculum/curriculum-development/board-endorsed-courses) for a Stage 6 Life Skills course in any language. Applications for these courses are submitted to NESA via Schools Online. You should seek advice from your head teacher if you feel this applies to your context.

## High potential and gifted education

All schools have [high potential and gifted students](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/learning-remotely/teaching-at-home/diversity-and-inclusion/supporting-high-potential-and-gifted-students) and teachers need to ensure that learning experiences meet their needs across all domains of potential: [intellectual, creative, social-emotional and physical.](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/high-potential-and-gifted-education/supporting-educators/assess-and-identify#Learning4)

It is important to be familiar with the [High Potential and Gifted Education (HPGE) policy](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2004-0051) to promote engagement and challenge for every student across all domains of potential, while explicitly recognising and addressing the learning needs of high potential and gifted students. Watch the Languages and Culture statewide staff meeting on [High potential and gifted education in languages](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ItXOc_3ubmE&list=PLleeTfvCJCVMlf2gtDzj7augBSx870dh0&index=16) for more information. To understand programming implications for [High potential and gifted students in languages](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/languages/professional-learning-languages-k-12/languages-7-12-professional-learning-catalogue/high-potential-and-gifted-students-in-languages-7-10), complete the 90-minute module. To access the course, contact the team at [languagesnsw@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:languagesnsw@det.nsw.edu.au) for the link (DoE teachers only). The department also has a HPGE statewide staffroom which employees can join by completing this [form](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=muagBYpBwUecJZOHJhv5kQv0I43ddGNFoSx4AdDZdpRUQlFZSElNR1VGTVlZVlJLNFdWMFFPSUIzUCQlQCN0PWcu).

# Resourcing language programs

Try to ensure that you are resourced in a way that best meets the needs of your language(s) and the students.

Considerations include:

* ensuring access to high-quality language resources that provide strong opportunities for student engagement
* ensuring your classroom environment allows enough space for students to move around so they can engage in the collaborative nature of language learning.
* ensuring regular, reliable access to technology (computer labs, laptops or tablets) to increase the teacher’s ability to engage students in creative and productive language tasks, such as filmmaking or music making.

## Additional considerations for modern languages

In modern languages, students should engage with a wide range of authentic resources, including written and digital texts, audio texts, music, film and realia. Sourcing authentic resources may require funding – budget allowances for online subscriptions, magazines, books, films, posters and realia are an important support for teachers. If you prefer to use a textbook, it will need to be regularly updated to ensure that content and cultural information are relevant and current.

# Learning environment

Students learn best in safe and inclusive environments that consider the cultural, social, emotional, behavioural and physical aspects of learning. The [Quality Teaching Model](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/professional-learning/quality-teaching-rounds#:~:text=Teaching%20Model%2C%20access-,this%20document.,-Learn%20more%20about), developed for the NSW Department of Education in consultation with the University of Newcastle, states that ‘Quality Learning Environment refers to pedagogy that creates classrooms where students and teachers work productively and are clearly focused on learning. Such pedagogy sets high expectations and develops positive relationships among teachers and students.’ According to the Quality Teaching Model, a quality learning environment encompasses 6 elements: explicit quality criteria, student engagement, high expectations from teachers, social support, students’ self-regulation and student direction.

CESE’s [What works best: 2020 update](https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/education-data-and-research/cese/publications/research-reports/what-works-best-2020-update#Summary1) publication also outlines 8 quality teaching practices that are known to enhance the learning outcomes of students, all linked to quality learning environments. It is a worthwhile resource for beginning teachers to read and includes strategies and examples for each of the 8 teaching practices.

Classroom layout is one of the most powerful ways a lesson can be influenced. Consider the layout of the classroom and how it could be impacting student learning. Are you visible? Is the board visible? Is the classroom set up for pair work, group work or individual learning? Different classroom set ups will support different types of lessons you have planned. Reorganising the furniture takes a few minutes but can make a big difference to engagement in the classroom.

If you have your own classroom, consider decorating with posters and charts to support learning and create a cultural place where students feel comfortable and inspired.

# Using technology in language learning

Technology in the language classroom has several functions, including:

* giving students access to authentic texts
* allowing for practice in an engaging way
* reducing workload for teachers.

Access to technology can facilitate communication and collaboration with target-language speaking students from around the world, enabling meaningful communication. Recent developments in technology such as AI can enhance language learning, but any use of technology must require some input from students or practice opportunities to be effective. Individual teachers need to decide what technology and how much they use depending on their context.

Finding authentic resources online that can be used directly or adapted to the language learning level of students can enhance the teaching of intercultural understanding. Technology can support differentiated learning through means such as graphic organisers to sort and classify ideas, visual aids for learning new vocabulary, opportunities for further practice via online websites, and access to authentic texts for content differentiation for advanced and high potential and gifted students. It can give students the possibility to try language structures out without fear of being humiliated.

If you are looking to embed ICT into lessons, the department’s [Digital Learning Selector](https://sites.google.com/education.nsw.gov.au/gettingstartedwithtechnology/digital-learning-selector) is an online resource for teachers looking for new ideas, and discovering new activities with templates that can be adapted.

For more technology ideas, [magazine.T4L](https://t4l.schools.nsw.gov.au/magazine-t4l.html) is an online magazine in which you will find an easy snapshot of tech solutions for your classroom and links to boost your digital knowledge.

# Advocacy

Learning a language has significant benefits. Through learning languages, students engage in purposeful communication and reflect on the heritage, culture and identity of themselves and others. Some benefits from learning additional language(s) include:

* being able to positively transfer literacy skills between languages, as they learn about grammatical structures and broaden their vocabulary
* improving communication skills
* developing more open and curious attitudes about their own or other cultures.

A key component of growing a successful languages program in your school is delivering engaging teaching and learning programs which are visible to the school community. You can help raise the profile of languages in your school and grow community awareness of the benefits of language learning with students, parents and other teachers.

Suggestions include:

* a languages section in the school newsletter
* displaying student work in the front office
* ensuring languages curriculum information on your school’s website is current
* regular posting of language class activities on the school’s social media platforms
* running extra-curricular clubs
* organising a range of incursions and excursions, which can motivate and engage students.

If you are in a school with a large number of students from language backgrounds other than English, you can also advocate for the benefits of bilingualism and the impact it can have on student performance.

Be a visible part of your school. Participate in school camps, take a grade sport or extra-curricular activity and attend performance evenings whenever you can. You will get to know colleagues, as well as students across the school. Share your own language learning narratives with students by bringing in artefacts and photos, tapping into students’ interests, playing target language music in class or creating language-based treasure hunts around the school.

## Excursions and incursions

Excursions and incursions are an essential part of quality teaching and learning programs but must provide educational value by supporting curriculum outcomes. They should offer students the opportunity to practise language skills they have learned in the classroom as well as provide cultural experiences that enrich students’ language learning. Inexpensive, easy-to-organise incursions are ideal. [Language teacher associations](#_Other_language_and) and cultural organisations offer a variety of excursion and incursion opportunities for schools. Excursion ideas include film festivals, workshops or visits to restaurants. Students enjoy being away from the classroom, so participating in excursions can enhance their learning experience and engagement.

Incursions are easier to organise and often visible to the rest of the school which is an advantage in demonstrating how much fun learning a language can be. Consider cooking, sports games, arts and crafts, and celebrating cultural festivals. There are external companies that will come to schools and run performances in the target language, do cooking demonstrations, sell culturally specific food. Language teacher associations sometimes run student competitions. There are many virtual excursions and online walking tours of famous sites around the world to engage students. Involving the parent community in a languages day or giving cooking demonstrations will reduce costs as well make connections that will benefit both students, teachers and the school community. Try collaborating with other faculties such as CAPA and PDHPE to organise whole-school cultural events.

Generally, schools have a policy on how many excursions and incursions you can organise per class per year, so organising activities that do not disrupt other faculties is preferable.

The Languages statewide staffroom contains many ideas for language specific excursions and incursions.

### Overseas excursions

If you are thinking of organising an overseas excursion, you will need to start planning about 2 years prior to the trip. Make sure you talk to your head teacher as a starting point and then your school principal. The department’s [Overseas excursions planning](https://education.nsw.gov.au/inside-the-department/teaching-and-learning/overseas-excursions) information will help you navigate the lengthy and complex process.

# Classroom management

Classroom management is crucial in creating optimal conditions for learning. Effective classroom management minimises and addresses all levels of disengagement and disruptive behaviours.

Having good classroom management is about creating and maintaining positive learning environments that provide structure, predictability and consistency for students. A positive social and emotional classroom climate where students’ social and emotional competence are supported with positive teacher-student relationships are classrooms where students will feel valued and engaged in learning. Developing good classroom management skills takes time, patience and trial and error as students need to be explicitly taught routines.

Research and support strategies can be found on the [department’s website](https://education.nsw.gov.au/schooling/school-community/attendance-behaviour-and-engagement/behaviour-support-toolkit/support-for-teachers/classroom-practice0/classroom-management) as well as the [Australian Education Research Organisation](https://www.edresearch.edu.au/guides-resources/practice-resources/classroom-management-resources-user-guide) (AERO).

# Support

## Languages and Culture team

The Languages and Culture team offers a range of support to language teachers and their head teachers.

Our role is to support the effective implementation of language programs 7–12 in NSW public schools, including:

* designing and delivering relevant and innovative projects and professional learning
* providing expert curriculum advice and support related to syllabus implementation.

Our [webpage](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/languages) includes:

* programming resources, for example, sample scope and sequences and units
* advice documents for HSC modern and classical languages students
* practice speaking questions for Stage 6 Beginners and Continuers modern languages courses
* sample listening and reading resources for a range of Stage 6 courses.

### Languages statewide staffroom

Teachers of all languages are welcome to join the Languages statewide staffroom ([entry survey](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=muagBYpBwUecJZOHJhv5kSNaKRC4ClVDiPgZI5jjt3lUQ1pMWVRSU0kzWExaMEIyVFg5VlJPVkRVRyQlQCN0PWcu)) which exists for all teachers of modern and classical languages 7–12, and their head teachers. It is housed in Microsoft Teams. There are currently over 1,350 members.

Here, we advertise professional learning opportunities and share resources and teaching strategies. Members can also seek advice from others or share their own resources.

The Languages and Culture team holds statewide staff meetings in Week 4 of each term to deliver professional learning.

There are numerous [statewide staffrooms](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/statewide-staffrooms) available to support teachers, such as [HPGE and Inclusive education – disability](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/statewide-staffrooms#Specialist4). For Aboriginal languages, there is also the [Aboriginal education statewide staffroom](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/team/19%3ade69dd0df2aa4bd7bb2d6ebdbbf8863f%40thread.tacv2/conversations?groupId=f44b1107-14e1-4042-af2a-6024389a144f&tenantId=05a0e69a-418a-47c1-9c25-9387261bf991).

### Virtual Languages Mentoring Network

The [Virtual Languages Mentoring Network](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/languages/leading-languages-k-12/leading-languages-7-12#Virtual1) (VLMN) is a structured, 18 month mentoring program for beginning teachers of languages. A beginning teacher is one in their first 5 years of teaching languages.

Each participant (mentee) is assigned an experienced, language-specific teacher mentor. Each mentor works with up to 2 mentees, ensuring relationships are central to the mentoring journey.

### Networks

There are 19 geographically-based language teacher networks operating across NSW, as well as a virtual network for language teachers who are geographically remote from their nearest network.

Networks offer targeted professional learning, tailored to meet local needs, and provide an invaluable opportunity for teachers to collaborate with other languages teachers.

View the full list of [language teacher networks locations and contacts](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/languages/language-teacher-network).

### Social media

The Languages and Culture team also provides support through these forums:

* [Languages NSW blog](https://www.languagesnsw.com/blog)
* [Languages NSW on X](https://x.com/languagesnsw?lang=en)
* [Languages NSW on Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/languages.nsw/)
* [Languages NSW on Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/languagesnsw/) (@languagesnsw)

### Nihongo Tanken Centre

If your school offers a Japanese program, consider accessing the support offered by the [Nihongo Tanken Centre](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/key-learning-areas/languages/nihongo-tanken-centre). This is a purpose-built Japanese immersion centre, located in the grounds of Kirrawee High School in southern Sydney. It provides a stimulating and authentic Japanese environment where students from Kindergarten to Year 12 can use and develop their Japanese language skills.

The centre offers:

* face-to-face excursions
* virtual programs
* Stage 6 support
* teaching and learning packages
* a help line for teachers
* teacher workshops.

## Professional learning

Professional learning is integral to the development of skills, knowledge and the improvement of classroom practice for teachers. As all teachers work towards their accreditation or maintenance of accreditation, there is a need for relevant, KLA-specific professional learning.

Public schools are allocated funding to support the professional development of beginning teachers in their first 2 years of employment. Schools use these funds in different ways, for example, ongoing reduced face-to-face teaching time, sporadic casual cover to allow you to complete programming or report writing, purchasing resources to support you, and so on. Talk to your head teacher about how you can best access and use your funding.

The Languages and Culture team offers a range of professional learning opportunities for language teachers 7–12, including:

* [Languages statewide staffroom](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/statewide-staffrooms#Secondary2) meetings in Week 4 each term
* recordings of statewide staff meetings, and other professional learning meetings, on the [Languages NSW YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/c/Languages-NSWDepartmentofEducation)
* language teacher network meetings
* eCourses via the [Department of Education](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/languages/professional-learning-languages-k-12).

Other providers of PL opportunities may include:

* [NESA](https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/nesa/teacher-accreditation/maintain-accreditation/professional-development-requirements#toc-finding-a-professional-development-course)
* teacher associations
* private providers.

## Language teacher associations

Language teacher associations exist to support teachers with professional learning, provide opportunities for students through incursions, excursions and competitions, and help teachers maintain their language proficiency. To join there is usually, but not always, a membership fee.

* [Chinese Language Teacher Association](http://www.cltansw.org/)
* [Classical Languages Teachers Association](http://www.cltainc.org/)
* [NSW Association of French Teachers](https://naft.org.au/)
* [NSW Indonesian Teachers Group Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/share/g/Xg6WL9mq1VA1pmYx/?mibextid=K35XfP)
* [Italian Language Teachers Association](https://www.ilta.nsw.edu.au/)
* [Japanese Teachers' Association of NSW](https://www.jtan.org.au/)
* [Korean Language Teachers Association](https://www.koltansw.com/)
* [Modern Language Teachers’ Association of NSW](https://www.mltansw.asn.au/)
* [Spanish Teachers’ Association of NSW](https://www.stansw.com.au/)

## Other language and culture organisations

* [Korean Cultural Centre](https://koreanculture.org.au/)
* [Alliance Française](https://www.afsydney.com.au/)
* [Goethe Institut](https://www.goethe.de/ins/au/en/index.html)
* [Instituto Cervantes](https://sidney.cervantes.es/en/default.shtm)
* [Japan Foundation](https://sydney.jpf.go.jp/)

## General support

There is a lot of support available through various channels depending on your need. As a beginning teacher, your head teacher should be your main support, even if they are not a trained languages teacher. Colleagues can provide general support, for example, teachers from your own or other faculties, the Learning and Support teacher for help with students who have a learning difficulty, and the Welfare team for wellbeing information about students you teach.

For department staff, try the [Beginning Teacher Information Hub](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teach-nsw/beginning-teacher-information-hub) for general information.

# Performance and Development Framework

The [Performance and Development Framework](https://education.nsw.gov.au/inside-the-department/human-resources/performance/school-teachers/performance-and-development-framework) outlines the annual process for teachers to develop their teaching practice, engaging in professional learning, collegial dialogue and reflection. Each year teachers are required to complete a Performance and Development Plan (PDP) to support the development of teaching practice through feedback, reflection and professional development. You create your PDP in collaboration with your supervisor to identify goals, set out a plan to achieve your goals, implement your plan, and review and reflect on your progress towards your goals.

As a beginning teacher, your PDP goals should focus on what you want to reasonably learn and achieve in one year. You need to align your goals to the professional development you wish to undertake that will support you in either achieving or maintaining accreditation.

# Accreditation

NESA manages [teacher accreditation](https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/nesa/teacher-accreditation) in NSW and all teachers must have active accreditation to teach in a NSW school. Once given Provisional or Conditional accreditation, you then work towards achieving the mandatory level of Proficient Teacher. Once Proficient Teacher accreditation has been achieved, you must maintain your accreditation by meeting the conditions set out in the [NSW Teacher Accreditation Manual](https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/nesa/teacher-accreditation/resources/teacher-accreditation-manual). Teachers must complete a minimum of 100 hours of professional learning aligned to the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/nesa/teacher-accreditation/resources/standards) over a 5 year period for full-time teachers, or 7 years for teachers employed on a casual or part-time basis.

You need to pay the [NESA accreditation fees](https://education.nsw.gov.au/inside-the-department/human-resources/performance/school-teachers/accreditation) each year to teach in a public school.

[AITSL](https://www.aitsl.edu.au/#:~:text=Quality%20teaching%20and%20leadership%20is%20at%20the%20heart,their%20practice%20and%20develop%20and%20grow%20their%20expertise.) supports quality teaching in schools and the Standards are set for teachers to ‘reflect on their practice and develop and grow their expertise’. Support for new teachers to become [Proficient](https://www.aitsl.edu.au/lead-develop/induction/support-for-new-teachers) in meeting accreditation requirements is available on their website.

# Employment

In the final year of your accredited teaching degree, you can start looking for work as a teacher after gaining interim approval to teach. This allows you to teach casually in NSW public schools prior to graduation. You may choose to work on a casual basis to start with while searching for full-time or part-time permanent or temporary employment with the department.

Before you step into a classroom, there are some steps you must take. You will be required to gain [accreditation with NESA](https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/nesa/teacher-accreditation/get-accredited) before you can apply for [approval to teach](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teach-nsw/become-a-teacher/approval-to-teach) with the NSW Department of Education. You will also need a valid [Working with Children Check](https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-for-a-working-with-children-check) obtained through the Office of the Children's Guardian.

The [department’s website](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teach-nsw/find-teaching-jobs) has comprehensive information on how to look and apply for jobs as well as available scholarships.

[Teach NSW](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teach-nsw/beginning-teacher-information-hub) has comprehensive information about employment opportunities.

## Permanent employment

Once you are qualified, approved and accredited to teach in NSW public schools, you can apply for advertised permanent teaching positions. Available positions can be found on the [I work for NSW](https://iworkfor.nsw.gov.au/) website or [JobFeed webpage](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teach-nsw/find-teaching-jobs/jobfeed).

## Temporary employment

Temporary teachers are employed on either a full-time basis, for a minimum of 4 weeks and a maximum of one school year, or on a part-time basis for 2 or more school terms.

Temporary teachers receive most of the entitlements of permanent teachers, including an annual salary.

## Casual employment

As a casual teacher, you are employed on a day-to-day basis to meet relief needs within a school. You are paid a daily rate based on your years of training and experience, which is loaded to include a component for sick leave and holiday pay. The preferred casual teacher booking system is [ClassCover](https://www.classcover.com.au/teachers/).

# Teacher wellbeing

The Department of Education is committed to supporting the wellbeing of staff across schools. The [Staff Wellbeing Strategy 2024–27](https://education.nsw.gov.au/inside-the-department/health-and-safety/staff-wellbeing-strategy) outlines the department’s vision and priorities in supporting staff to perform at their best and feel trusted and valued.

Public school teachers can access free counselling through the [Employee Assistance Program](https://education.nsw.gov.au/inside-the-department/health-and-safety/staff-wellbeing/employee-assistance-program--eap-) (EAP) for personal, leadership, beginning teacher and the new traumatic incident support. Staff can receive 4 sessions over a consecutive 2-year period.

# Appendix

## Policy documents

* [Curriculum planning and programming, assessing and reporting to parents K-12 policy](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2005-0290)
* [High Potential and Gifted Education (HPGE) policy](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2004-0051)

## Useful contacts

* [languagesnsw@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:languagesnsw@det.nsw.edu.au).
* [EDConnect](https://education.nsw.gov.au/inside-the-department/edconnect) (for DoE staff only) 1300 32 32 32. for example, support or advice about technology, leave, salary.
* [NSW Teachers Federation](https://www.nswtf.org.au) contact 1300 654 369

## Useful websites

* [Beginning Teacher Information Hub](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teach-nsw/beginning-teacher-information-hub)
* [Strong start great teachers](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/professional-learning/teacher-quality-and-accreditation/strong-start-great-teachers)
* [Beginning teacher support network](https://engage.cloud.microsoft/main/groups/eyJfdHlwZSI6Ikdyb3VwIiwiaWQiOiI1MzgyNTQ3In0/all?domainRedirect=true)

# References

NSW Department of Education (n.d.) [*Quality Teaching Model*](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/professional-learning/quality-teaching-rounds#:~:text=Teaching%20Model%2C%20access-,this%20document.,-Learn%20more%20about)*,* NSW Department of Education website, accessed 28 October 2024.

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