

**Policy Standards for
Curriculum Planning and Programming, Assessing and
Reporting to Parents K-12**

(Updated July 2018)

Context

These policy standards outline the requirements for all NSW public schools to plan curriculum, develop programs, assess and report to parents in line with the *Education Act 1990*; the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) syllabuses; credentialing requirements; obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*; and the Disability Standards for Education 2005.

Curriculum planning and programming will account for the needs of every student. Curriculum options and adjustments¹ are negotiated to reflect the learning and support needs of students whose learning is impacted by disability.

The English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) advice has been revised to align with the current policy advice to schools.

1. Curriculum planning and programming – Curriculum and allocation of time

1.1 Years K-6

Learning programs, based on NESA syllabuses, are to be provided to address each learning area in each year of schooling. In primary schools, the six Key Learning Areas (KLA) are:

- creative arts
- English
- human society and its environment (incorporating history and geography)
- mathematics
- personal development, health and physical education
- science and technology.

In providing curriculum, schools are to ensure that priority is given to English and mathematics.

Schools have flexibility in how they deliver learning programs, for example through integrated programs, provided that:

- approximately 50% of time is allocated for English and mathematics and 40% of time for the other KLAs and sport
- as part of the 40% allocation, schools are to include 150 minutes per week for planned physical activity, including a minimum of one hour for sport in Years 3 – 6
- provision is made for Special Religious Education (SRE) and Special Education in Ethics (SEE) in each primary year, where authorised personnel from approved providers are available.

¹ Adjustments are measures or actions taken in relation to teaching, learning and assessment that enable a student whose learning is impacted by disability to access syllabus outcomes and content on the same basis as their peers. Adjustments reflect the learning and support needs of the individual student.

1.2 Years 7-10

The department provides annual updates to schools regarding the requirements for the Record of School Achievement (RoSA). This commenced in 2016.

Learning programs, based on NESA syllabuses, are to be provided for each subject or course in each year of schooling. In providing this curriculum program, schools will meet the requirements of NESA for students to gain the RoSA. Schools must refer to the requirements, rules and procedures as detailed on the Assessment, Certification and Examination (ACE) website to ensure the eligibility of students.

Schools have flexibility in how they deliver learning programs, for example, through integrated programs. Where schools have implemented integrated programs of learning they must be able to demonstrate that the minimum required hours for each of the learning areas have been met.

Provision is to be made for SRE in each of Years 7 to 10, where authorised personnel from approved providers are available.

The following summarises the combined NESA and department minimum requirements for government schools when providing curriculum.

Requirements in hours / minutes	
English (7-10)	500 hours
Mathematics (7-10)	500 hours
Science (7-10)	500 hours
HSIE (7-10)	400 hours distributed as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">o Geography (7-8) – 100 hourso History (7-8) – 100 hourso Geography (9-10) – 100 hourso History (9-10) – 100 hours
Language	100 hours in a continuous one-year period
Technology Mandatory (7-8)	200 hours
Music (7-10)	100 hours
Visual Arts (7-10)	100 hours
PDHPE (7-10)	300 hours (delivered across 7-10)
Additional Studies (Electives) including Board Developed or School Developed Board Endorsed courses	400 hours
Planned physical activity including planned weekly sport	150 minutes per week

1.3 Years 11-12

The department provides annual updates to schools regarding the requirements for the Higher School Certificate (HSC).

Learning programs, based on NESA syllabuses, are to be provided for each subject or course in each year of schooling to ensure students meet the requirements for the award of HSC.

In addition to NESA requirements for students to gain a HSC, government schools are to provide students with the following:

- Life Ready – a 25 hour course
- SRE where authorised personnel from approved providers are available.

Schools are encouraged to provide Year 11 and 12 students with weekly access to a minimum of 150 minutes of physical activity, including sport.

1.4 Complying with the *Education Act 1990* and NESA requirements

All schools are required to maintain documentation that provides evidence of compliance with the NESA syllabuses and reflect the obligations to students under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the Disability Standards for Education 2005.

1.4.1 Years K-6 (Early Stage 1- Stage 3)

Essential elements to be included in a school's documented curriculum:

- syllabus outcomes and requirements in scope and sequence overviews
- syllabus content and teaching activities in teaching programs.

1.4.2 Years 7-10 (Stage 4 – Stage 5)

Essential elements to be included in a school's documented curriculum:

- timetables showing the allocation of time and teachers for each year/class
- the total number of hours allocated to each course
- syllabus outcomes and requirements
- syllabus content and teaching activities in teaching programs
- assessment policies and procedures which comply with the requirements documented on the ACE website, NESA official notices and department memorandums
- confirmation that the school has policies for disability provisions in accordance with the ACE website.

1.4.3 Years 11-12 (Stage 6)

Essential elements to be included in a school's documented curriculum:

- learning programs, based on NESA syllabuses (or approved courses), are to be provided to address each subject provided in Years 11 and 12
- timetables showing the allocation of time and teachers for each year/class
- the total number of hours allocated to each Preliminary and HSC course
- courses of study for each student each year that comply with a pattern of study for Year 11 and 12, as described on the ACE website for candidates for the HSC (ACE 8005)
- an overview of the educational program indicating learning units/units of work mapped against the content and outcomes of the relevant NESA syllabus for each course

- assessment policies and procedures which comply with the requirements as documented on the ACE website and NESAs official notices
- confirmation that the school has policies for disability provisions in accordance with the ACE website
- syllabus outcomes and requirements
- syllabus content and teaching activities in teaching programs.

Particular documentation required in relation to Years 11-12 assessment includes:

- organisational details of the school's assessment program for each course, outlining the number and types of assessment tasks, components, weightings and scheduling of the tasks
- marking, recording and reporting student achievement in assessment tasks
- administrative arrangements regarding absence from an assessment task, late submission of tasks due to illness or misadventure, malpractice and invalid or unreliable tasks
- student appeals against assessment rankings
- 'N' Award (non-completion) warnings and determinations
- providing students with written advice about the school's requirements for assessment in each course.

2. Assessing

Schools are to undertake assessment to inform students' learning. Assessment of student learning will be undertaken for all learners, including students whose learning is impacted by disability.

Adjustments to assessment tasks may be required for a student whose learning is impacted by disability. This should reflect the adjustments made to support the student's learning.

3. Reporting to parents – components of the written report

The parents of all students are to be provided with a written report twice a year. The written report for each student will:

- use plain English
- provide information on a student's learning in each of the KLAs or subjects, as described in 3.1
- compare the student's achievement in each KLA or subject against state-wide syllabus standards¹ using a scale as defined in 3.2
- include teacher comments for each KLA or subject; comments will identify areas of student strength and areas for further development
- have information about the student's attendance at school
- provide information about student achievement in relation to school programs that extend or are additional to syllabus requirements

¹ Syllabus standards are described by the components of a syllabus. The components that contribute to teachers' understandings of syllabus standards include objectives, stage or foundation statements, syllabus outcomes and syllabus content or indicators. Foundation statements (K-6) and Stage statements (Years 7-10) encompass, at a broader level than syllabus outcomes, the nature and scope of learning in each stage.

- provide information about the student's social development and commitment to learning.

3.1 Reporting to parents – achievement in each Key Learning Area

3.1.1 Years K-6 (Early Stage 1 to Stage 3)

Schools will report on the six KLAs of English; mathematics; creative arts; human society and its environment (which includes history and geography); personal development, health and physical education; and science and technology.

Languages will be reported in schools that provide students with a languages program of two or more hours per week.

3.1.2 Years 7-10 (Stage 4 to Stage 5)

Schools will report on subjects or courses studied in the eight KLAs of English, mathematics; science; human society and its environment; creative arts, languages; personal development, health and physical education; and technology and applied studies.

Reports will show information for components of each subject in all KLAs.

3.1.3 Years 11-12 (Stage 6)

Schools will report on subjects or courses studied. Reports will show information for components of each subject.

For VET courses, schools will report on competency achievement. VET courses are competency based where assessment of competencies is standards-referenced.

3.1.4 English as an additional language or dialect EAL/D students, K -10

Schools will report on the overall EAL/D Learning Progression phase of all students identified as EAL/D. Schools will report on how EAL/D students' English language learning has been supported and their progress in learning English.

3.2 Reporting to parents – comparing student achievement against state-wide syllabus standards in each KLA

3.2.1 Kindergarten

Reports will describe how a child's achievement compares with syllabus standards through teacher comments.

3.2.2 Years 1-10

Schools will use the following five point achievement scale to report to parents for students in Years 1 to 10. Achievement is judged in relation to syllabus standards.

The achievement scale is to be used for reporting all KLAs or subjects, except VET courses where competency will be reported.

Describe this achievement level	Using this word	And/or this letter
The student has an extensive knowledge and understanding of the content and can readily apply this knowledge. In addition, the student has achieved a high level of competence in the processes and skills and can apply these skills to new situations.	Outstanding	A
The student has a thorough knowledge and understanding of the content and a high level of competence in the processes and skills. In addition, the student is able to apply this knowledge and these skills to most situations.	High	B
The student has a sound knowledge and understanding of the main areas of content and has achieved an adequate level of competence in the processes and skills.	Sound	C
The student has a basic knowledge and understanding of the content and has achieved a basic level of competence in the processes and skills.	Basic	D
The student has an elementary knowledge and understanding in few areas of the content and has achieved very limited competence in some of the processes and skills.	Limited	E

Where the word summaries are used, the report will contain a statement to explain that the five point achievement scale used in this report equates to the A – E scale.

3.2.3 Years 11-12

Schools will use a numerical score (1-100) or use A-E (or equivalent) achievement grades to clearly convey what the student knows and can do in relation to syllabus standards in each course. Schools will report on competency achievement for VET courses.

3.2.4 EAL/D students, K-10 (Change to reflect current language and policies)

For new arrival EAL/D students in primary, central and high schools, if appropriate, other KLAs or subjects studied may be reported against the five point achievement scale (in 3.2.2), otherwise only comments need be provided.

For new arrival EAL/D students in Intensive English Centre's and Intensive English High Schools, students' achievements in other KLAs are to be described against the standards of the department's Intensive English Program Curriculum Framework.

For other EAL/D students (more than four terms in an Australian school), achievement in the KLAs or subjects (other than English) will be reported using the five point achievement scale (in 3.2.2). EAL/D students' achievement in primary KLAs or secondary subjects will be assessed against syllabus standards.

3.2.5 Reporting on learning outcomes for students whose learning is impacted by disability

Reports for students, whose learning program is based on syllabus outcomes that are the same as the age/stage of their peers, should follow the requirements as set out above 3.1 – 3.2.4.

Reports for students, whose learning program is based on syllabus outcomes that are different from the age/stage of their peers, including life skills outcomes, will indicate achievement against a personalised learning program.

P – Personalised

In general, 'personalised' reports will be provided for students with moderate or severe levels of intellectual disability. 'Personalised' reports may also be provided for students with other disabilities in KLAs or subjects where a student's learning is based on syllabus outcomes that are different from the age/stage of their peers.

In addition to reporting the student's achievement, schools also may report the student's achievement using the following scale in KLAs or subjects through written comments:

P4 – Independent

The student can complete a task independently, without assistance. The student maintains the skill or knowledge over time. The student generalises the skill or knowledge to new settings, people or materials.

P3 – Frequent

The student relies on partial prompts to complete a task. The student can regularly perform the skill or demonstrate knowledge. The student uses the skills or knowledge in a variety of familiar settings and situations.

P2 – Occasional

The student understands information, concept and/or can perform skill. The student often relies on physical or verbal assistance when participating in a task. The student has begun to demonstrate the skills in selected, familiar settings.

P1 – Beginning

The student has some existing prior knowledge and/or necessary pre skills for the task. The student is beginning to participate in a task with maximum teacher assistance. The student uses skills and knowledge in a single setting.

3.3 Reporting to parents – comparing student achievement with the child’s peer group at the school in each KLA or subject in Years 1-12

In response to requests from a child’s parents/carers, schools are to provide information on how their child’s achievement compares with the performance of the student’s peer group. This information will take the form of the number of students in the school peer group receiving each grade or achievement level.

For Years 1-10, school reports (except those referred to in 3.3.1 to 3.3.3) where a peer group comparison is not required will include the following statement:

You may request the school to provide you with written information that clearly shows your child’s achievement compared to his or her peer group at school. This information will show you the number of children in the group in each of the achievement levels.

Schools will advise parents on the written report how the information can be accessed.

For Years 11 and 12, information on how student achievement compares with that of the peer group will be provided through course group rankings or grade distributions.

3.3.1 Schools where the peer group is less than five students are to negotiate with the school community in relation to providing data for comparison. The negotiation should ensure that the potential for publicly releasing information about individual students is avoided.

3.3.2 For EAL/D students in Intensive English Centres and the Intensive English High Schools, where students are grouped according to their level of English language competence, schools are to provide parents with information about their child’s achievement in relation to other students who are at the same level of English language development.

For EAL/D students at primary, central and high schools, who are new arrivals in Australian schools (four terms or less), schools are not required to provide information to parents about how their child compares with the student’s peer group.

3.3.3 Where students are working with a personalised learning plan (as described in section 3.2.5), schools are not required to provide information to parents about how their child compares with the student’s peer group and the student is not included in the number of students achieving at each of the five levels of the achievement scale.