

Senior Secondary

Overview

What does the senior secondary Australian Curriculum include?

There are senior secondary curricula in English, Mathematics, Science, and Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS). Each learning area comprises a number of subjects.

English

- English
- English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D)
- Essential English
- Literature

Mathematics

- Essential Mathematics
- General Mathematics
- Mathematical Methods
- Specialist Mathematics

Science

- Chemistry
- Biology
- Earth and Environmental Science
- Physics

Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS)

- Ancient History
- Geography
- Modern History

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

The senior secondary Australian Curriculum for English, Mathematics, Science and History was endorsed by Ministers of Education in 2012, and Geography in 2013, as the agreed and common base for development of state and territory senior secondary courses.

Since 2013, ACARA has worked with each of the state and territory curriculum, assessment and certification authorities to determine how and when these curricula can be integrated into local courses. This included consideration of:

- the senior secondary content that will be common to all states and territories
- the process and timeline within which each state and territory undertakes the integration of the Australian curriculum content and achievement standards into state and territory courses.

ACARA continues to work with states and territories on the development of further senior secondary curriculum.



Senior secondary

Overview

How are the senior secondary Australian Curriculum subjects structured?

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

- The content describes the knowledge, understanding and skills that are to be taught and learned within each subject.
- The achievement standards describe the quality of learning (the depth of understanding, extent of knowledge and sophistication of skill) expected of students who have studied the content for the subject.

The curriculum is designed to be taught over a two-year period. Each senior secondary subject is organised into four units with the final two units designed to be cognitively more challenging than the first two.

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

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

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

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

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

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

For the senior secondary Australian Curriculum, subject-specific achievement standards have been developed.

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

How does the senior secondary Australian Curriculum address diverse student needs?

Senior secondary subjects are designed to meet the diverse student needs and interests. States and territories have arrangements in place as part of their senior secondary curriculum, assessment and certification practices and policies to address the needs of all students.

What flexibility is there for students to move between subjects?

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

How does the senior secondary Australian Curriculum differ from state and territory curriculum?

The senior secondary Australian Curriculum for the subjects in English, Mathematics, Science and HASS was developed with reference to the latest curriculum developments in states and territories and internationally.

The information sheets for the senior secondary Australian Curriculum in English, Mathematics, Science and HASS describe the general features of each subject in each learning area.

Senior secondary

Overview

How is the senior secondary curriculum examined and certificated?

Certification, assessment and examination requirements for the senior secondary years are the responsibility of individual state and territory authorities.

How do states and territories incorporate the senior secondary Australian Curriculum?

ACARA has developed and published the Australian Curriculum senior secondary subjects on the Australian Curriculum website at australiancurriculum.edu.au following extensive consultation and engagement.

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

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

For further information contact your local authority. Link to state and territory authorities here:

ACT	ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies
NSW	NSW Education Standards Authority
NT	Northern Territory Board of Studies
Qld	Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority
SA	SACE Board of South Australia
Tas.	Office of Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certification
Vic.	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
WA	School Curriculum and Standards Authority

