

# ***K–10 Curriculum Framework***

New South Wales. Board of Studies, 2002

## **Overview of the document**

14 page Curriculum Framework for Kindergarten to Year 10 published in March 2002.

## **Keywords**

Lifelong learning; individual talents; self-motivated; effective participation in society; positive self-concepts; diversity; coherence; education must be inclusive; equitable access; participation and outcomes for all students; eight key learning areas; common basis.

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## **Summary of Contents**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- Identifies essential learning and emphasises outcomes and standards.
- Notes that the focus is on a coherent, challenging curriculum that allows for “developmental continuity”. (p. 1)
- Promotes consistency and coherence, and ensuring that syllabuses recognize students’ previous learning and provide the basis for further learning.
- Notes that the framework is designed to “appropriately challenge” students to meet high but realistic expectations, that it articulates standards at each stage from Kindergarten to Year 10 and that it provides the context for “realistic assessment and meaningful reporting”. (p. 2)
- States “This document provides the principal elements of the standards-based K-10 Curriculum Framework. These are:
  - a clear understanding of the purpose for learning
  - the broad learning outcomes essential for all students
  - the principles guiding the development of Board curriculum requirements and syllabuses
  - standards in the K–10 curriculum
  - the process and criteria for the development of quality syllabuses
  - curriculum requirements for Years K–10.” (p. 2)
- Notes that schools have a responsibility for the “total schooling of their students”, the implementation of syllabuses and for “educational experiences” beyond the Board’s syllabuses. (p. 2)

### **2. PURPOSE, OUTCOMES AND PRINCIPLES FOR BOARD OF STUDIES K–10 CURRICULUM**

#### **2.1 A Purpose for Learning**

- States that K–10 syllabuses and curriculum requirements “provide educational opportunities that:
  - engage and challenge all students to maximise their individual talents and capabilities for lifelong learning
  - enable all students to develop positive self-concepts and their capacity to

- establish and maintain safe, healthy and rewarding lives
- prepare all students for effective and responsible participation in their society, taking account of moral, ethical and spiritual considerations
- encourage and enable all students to enjoy learning, and to be self-motivated, reflective, competent learners who will be able to take part in further study, work or training
- promote a fair and just society that values diversity
- promote continuity and coherence of learning and facilitate transition between primary and secondary schooling.” (p. 3)

## **2.2 Broad Learning Outcomes**

- Summarises the learning outcomes and the essential “knowledge, skills, understanding, values and attitudes” students need to “succeed in and beyond their schooling”. (p. 4)
- Notes that the syllabuses describe how learning in the key learning area/subject will contribute to the purpose of the K–10 curriculum and stages that “Students will:
  - understand, develop and communicate ideas and information
  - access, analyse, evaluate and use information from a variety of sources
  - work collaboratively with others to achieve individual and collective broad learning outcomes
  - possess the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain a safe and healthy lifestyle
  - understand and appreciate the physical, biological and technological world and make responsible and informed decisions about it
  - understand and appreciate diverse social, cultural, linguistic, political, geographical and historical contexts and participate as active and informed citizens
  - express themselves through creative activity and engage with the artistic, cultural and intellectual work of others
  - understand and apply a variety of analytical, creative and management techniques to solve problems and to meet needs and opportunities
  - understand, interpret and apply concepts related to numerical and spatial patterns, structures and relationships
  - be productive, creative, discriminating and confident in the development and use of a range of technologies, understanding the implications of technology for society and the environment
  - understand the work environment and have the knowledge, skills and understanding to evaluate potential career options and pathways
  - develop a system of personal values based on their understanding of moral, ethical and spiritual matters.” (p. 4)

## **2.3 Principles to Guide the Development and Implementation of Syllabuses**

- Outlines the following five principles:
  1. “All students must be able to engage in, take responsibility for, and continue their own learning.”
    - This statement is followed by 8 key points, including that “learning occurs at different rates and in different way”; high expectations are important; new learning should build on previous learning; students need time to “explore, experiment and engage with the concepts and principles underpinning what they learn”; teaching and assessment

influences learning; students can develop strategies to self-monitor learning; and frequent feedback is important so students can map their progress. (p. 5)

2. “All students are entitled to a core of knowledge, skills, understanding and values.”
  - This is followed by 4 key points which note that syllabuses will identify essential knowledge and core skills, understanding, values and attitudes. It is noted that these ‘core’ elements are essential for students to be able to “respond positively” to the changing world, and to maximise achievement. (p. 5)
3. “Explicit standards are established that allow recognition of student achievement and planning for further learning.”
  - This is followed by 3 dot points which affirm the importance of outcomes, indicators, assessment and student feedback. (p. 6)
4. “Education must be inclusive of all students attending schools in New South Wales.”
  - This is followed by 4 points which reiterate the importance of essential learnings for all students. Notes that the curriculum provides for equity, that it allows schools to challenge and engage students, and that it allows students to demonstrate achievement. (p. 6)
5. “Teachers, schools and school authorities will decide how to maximise student learning.”
  - This is elaborated in 2 dot points, which note that schools require flexibility to develop programs and that assessment should guide decisions on improvements in learning. (p. 6)

### **3. THE K–10 STANDARDS FRAMEWORK**

- Notes that the K–10 Standards Framework helps schools and teachers to plan, assess and report and provides for a K–10 standards framework.

#### **3.1 What is the K–10 Standards Framework?**

- Notes that syllabuses indicate continuity and developmental sequence of learning and that their aims and objectives are linked to outcomes and content. States that “The knowledge, skills and understanding that students are expected to acquire at each stage of the subject constitute the syllabus standards.” (p. 7)
- Describes the syllabus standards which “provide focus and direction for teaching and learning” by “highlighting essential knowledge, skills and understanding” that contribute to the learning outcomes described in the curriculum framework. (p. 7)
- Notes that performance standards describe levels of achievement and that the assessment helps teachers to link the syllabus standards and performance standards.
- Notes that the framework aligns teaching, learning, assessment and reporting.

#### **3.2 Why is a standards framework necessary?**

- Notes that standards “contribute to effective teaching and learning and will provide a common language for reporting”. (p. 7)
- Describes how teachers will use the standards for planning and integrating learning.
- Notes that assessment and reporting will be used as the basis for decisions about “what, when and how students learn”. (p. 8)
- Notes that the standards identify what all students are expected to achieve and that teachers will set realistic but challenging learning goals.

## **4. PROVIDING QUALITY SYLLABUSES**

### **4.1 The Board's Syllabus Development Process**

- States that “The Board’s syllabus development process is based on principles of project management, and emphasises consultation and quality assurance.” (p. 9)
- Notes that syllabus development projects are designed in four phases:
  1. Syllabus review;
  2. Writing brief development;
  3. Syllabus development; and
  4. Implementation – which in turn leads back to phase one.

### **4.2 Criteria for Approval of Board of Studies Syllabuses**

- States that “All syllabuses for Kindergarten to Year 10 approved by the Board of Studies must meet the criteria established in this K–10 Curriculum Framework.” (p. 10)
- Notes that the quality of K–10 syllabuses is assured through careful consideration of the following 10 points:
  1. “The extent to which the syllabus meets the learning-centred principles in the K–10 Curriculum Framework.”
  2. “A clear rationale and statement of purpose.”
  3. “A review of national and international research and practice.”
  4. “Its place in a K–12 continuum, including consideration of prior and subsequent learning.”
  5. “The extent to which the aim, objectives, outcomes and content are linked and clearly expressed.”
  6. “What students will learn about and will learn to do in order to achieve the syllabus outcomes.”
  7. “Ways in which student achievement of the syllabus outcomes can be assessed.”
  8. “The relationship of the syllabus with the content of other syllabuses.”
  9. “Actual or potential demand for the syllabus.”
  10. “Evidence that the syllabus can be taught within the time and resources reasonably expected to be available to schools.” (pp. 10-11)

## **5. THE BOARD OF STUDIES CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS (P. 12)**

- Notes that the Education Act 1990 (NSW) “establishes minimum curriculum requirements for students attending New South Wales schools, and empowers the Board of Studies to establish guidelines for courses of study” (p. 12).
- Notes that the Act also charges the Board with responsibility for the School Certificate.

### **5.1 Minimum Curriculum Requirements for Years K–6 and 7–10**

- Notes that the Act “prescribes minimum curriculum requirements for Years K–6 and Years 7–10”. (p. 12)

### **5.2 K–6 Syllabuses**

- Notes that the K–6 syllabuses describe standards for Early Stage 1 and Stages 1 to 3.

### 5.3 School Certificate Requirements

- Notes that the Act “describes key learning area/subject requirements for School Certificate candidates” (p. 12) and makes the following points:
  - Courses of study in each of the eight key learning areas for secondary education are to be provided for each student.
  - Courses of study in the key learning areas of English, Mathematics, Science, and Human Society and its Environment are to be provided during each Year.
  - Courses of study in key learning areas are to be taught in accordance with a syllabus developed or endorsed by the Board and approved by the Minister. (p. 12)
- Notes that candidates for the School Certificate are required to study:
  - English, in each of Years 7 to 10;
  - Mathematics, in each of Years 7 to 10;
  - Science, in each of Years 7 to 10;
  - Geography and /or History, in each of Years 7 to 10, with Australian Geography and Australian History studied in Years 9 and 10;
  - PDHPE, in each of Years 7 to 10;
  - Design and Technology;
  - Visual Arts;
  - Music; and
  - Languages. (p. 13)
- States that “Courses in each of these subjects will be based on Board of Studies syllabuses.” (p. 13)
- Notes that syllabuses will indicate the number of hours of study that students would typically need to achieve the standards described in the syllabus. (p. 13)
- Notes that the K–10 standards framework “provides a common basis and language for assessment and reporting student achievement to students, parents and other teachers.” (p. 14)
- Notes that “The School Certificate will be awarded to all students who have fulfilled the School Certificate mandatory study requirements.” (p. 14)