



**English Studies
Stage 6**

Draft Writing Brief

**Consultation Report
February 2016**

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Published by
Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW
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Sydney NSW 2001
Australia

www.bostes.nsw.edu.au

DSSP-27003
D2016/3299

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1 Background information

The preparation of the *English Studies Stage 6 Draft Writing Brief* took into account the broad directions for the learning area, which were developed following public consultation and endorsed by BOSTES in December 2014.

BOSTES conducted consultation in Term 4, 2015 to engage stakeholders in the syllabus development process and to seek their feedback on options and proposals in the draft writing brief.

The consultation program included:

- a meeting of the Years 11–12 Board Curriculum Committee for English on 11 November 2015
- afternoon consultation meetings at:
 - Bankstown on 26 October 2015
 - Tumby Umbi on 27 October 2015
 - Wollongong on 29 October 2015
 - Cammeray on 2 November 2015
 - Pennant Hills on 4 November 2015
 - Armidale on 5 November 2015
 - Sydney on 25 November 2015
- an online survey on the BOSTES website from 19 October to 2 December 2015
- written submissions from:
 - NSW Department of Education
 - Catholic Education Office Sydney
 - Community of Catholic Schools Office – Diocese of Broken Bay
 - Association of Independent Schools of NSW
 - English Teachers' Association of NSW
 - NSW Teachers Federation.

Professional associations and schooling sectors conducted a range of activities during the consultation period to inform feedback to BOSTES.

Feedback from consultation was analysed and informed revisions to the draft writing brief. The final writing brief will be used to develop the draft syllabus.

2 Executive summary

The *English Studies Stage 6 Draft Writing Brief Consultation Report* provides a description of the consultation process and a summary and analysis of feedback received. It details data and findings gathered from 7 metropolitan and regional teacher consultation meetings, 6 written submissions, a meeting of the Years 11–12 Board Curriculum Committee for English and 41 responses to an online survey.

Extensive consultation on the *English Studies Stage 6 Draft Writing Brief* has endorsed the maintenance of the English Studies course as a discrete non-ATAR pathway. There is strong support for revision and retention of the current *Draft English Studies Content Endorsed Course Stage 6 Syllabus*, with feedback provided on the draft writing brief to be taken into account during syllabus development.

There was minimal support for a common Year 11 unit for English Studies and English (Standard). In addition, the consultation highlighted the need for additional guidance and support in relation to school-based assessment and reporting requirements.

Key matters

The key matters to emerge from the consultation included:

- the English Studies course is needed and valued as a non-ATAR pathway for students
- the course focus on developing students' communication skills is well suited to students' needs, interests and abilities
- the English Studies course in its current form prepares students for post-school pathways and links appropriately to workplace and vocational pathways
- catering for the diversity of learners in English Studies is best achieved by greater flexibility and choice in course content and text selection
- combining English Studies and English (Standard) would have a negative effect on both courses and would disadvantage many students
- an external examination for English Studies would be counter-productive and is not required.

Actions in response to key matters

- The integrity of the English Studies course as a non-ATAR pathway will be maintained.
- Course outcomes, content and assessment will be reviewed as part of the syllabus development process, taking into account students' communication skills.
- Consideration will be given to a broad range of relevant personal, community and workplace contexts.
- Consideration will be given to providing flexibility in content and text choices during syllabus development.
- English Studies and English (Standard) will remain discrete courses.
- There will be no HSC examination for the English Studies course.

A summary of key matters and related actions is contained in Section 4 of this report.

3 Summary of respondents

Consultation stakeholder and teacher meetings

1 Board Curriculum Committee (BCC), 7 teacher meetings

BCC members	13	Government sector	59	Catholic sector	34
Independent sector	42	Other	7		

Online survey respondents

41 online survey responses

Respondent:					
Academic	0	Parent	0	Pre-service teacher	0
Principal	0	School executive	8	School faculty	2
Student	1	Teacher	30	Other	0
I am:					
An Aboriginal person	0	A Torres Strait Islander person	0		
An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person	0	Not an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person	41		
Sector:					
Government	29	Catholic	7		
Independent	4	Non-school based	1		
Area of NSW:					
Metropolitan	18	Regional	23		
Number of people contributing to this survey:					
1	36	2–5	3	6 or more	2

4 Key matters

Key matters	Actions
<p>The English Studies course is needed and valued as a non-ATAR pathway for students.</p> <p>The course focus on developing students' communication skills is well suited to students' needs, interests and abilities.</p> <p>The English Studies course in its current form prepares students for post-school pathways and links appropriately to workplace and vocational pathways.</p> <p>Catering for the diversity of learners in English Studies is best achieved by greater flexibility and choice in course content and text selection.</p> <p>Combining English Studies and English (Standard) would have a negative effect on both courses and would disadvantage many students.</p> <p>An external examination for English Studies would be counter-productive and is not required.</p>	<p>The integrity of the English Studies course as a non-ATAR pathway will be maintained.</p> <p>Course outcomes, content and assessment will be reviewed as part of the syllabus development process, taking into account students' communication skills.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to a broad range of relevant personal, community and workplace contexts.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to providing flexibility in content and text choices during syllabus development.</p> <p>English Studies and English (Standard) will remain discrete courses.</p> <p>There will be no HSC examination for the English Studies course.</p>

5 Analysis

5.1 Rationale

Summary

The majority of respondents affirmed the rationale in the draft writing brief. Some submissions made specific recommendations regarding the purpose and focus of the rationale and suggested further points for inclusion. In addition, several respondents offered suggestions for refining the wording to align more closely with their perceptions of the course.

Feedback affirming the rationale

Feedback	Sources
The proposed rationale describes the nature of the course in broad terms, explains its purpose in the curriculum, reflects a contemporary view of the course and effectively reflects the course focus on preparing students for post-school pathways.	AIS CEOSYD Survey (x30)

Key matters and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
The emphasis on analysis and evaluation of texts and language is inappropriate for the English Studies course and candidature and should be reviewed.	AIS DoE Survey (x3)	The rationale will be reviewed in the light of these comments and suggestions.
The rationale is too long and some terminology needs to be reviewed and clarified.	Survey (x2)	

5.2 Aim

Summary

The majority of respondents endorsed the proposed aim, and some noted that it was almost identical to the aim of the current draft syllabus. Additional refinements to the aim were suggested.

Feedback affirming the aim

Feedback	Sources
The proposed aim provides a statement of the overall purpose of the syllabus.	AIS Survey (x27)

Key matters and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
The emphasis on analysis and evaluation of texts is inappropriate for the English Studies course and its candidature and should be removed from the aim.	AIS DoE Survey (x3)	The English syllabuses will retain one overarching aim, common to all courses.
The aim should be tailored to suit the English Studies cohort. It should foreground literacy skills.	AIS Survey (x3)	

5.3 Objectives

Summary

The majority of respondents affirmed the proposed objectives. Several respondents offered suggested changes and additions to the objectives.

Feedback affirming the objectives

Feedback	Sources
The proposed objectives define in broad terms the knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes to be developed through study in this course.	AIS CEOSYD DoE Survey (x26)

Key matters and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
Primary emphasis should be placed on the first objective, that is, developing students' communication skills for future education, employment and citizenship.	AIS CEOSYD Survey (x2)	The English Studies objectives will be reviewed in the light of these comments and suggestions.
Analysis of language structures and features and the requirement that students read a wide range of texts are not appropriate.	AIS Survey (x2)	

5.4 Outcomes

Summary

The majority of respondents confirmed that the sample of outcomes was appropriate, and some noted their similarity to the current draft syllabus. Those who disagreed were mostly concerned that the draft writing brief included only three sample outcomes, rather than the full set, making it difficult to comment. Several suggestions were made regarding the wording of particular outcomes such as they were too similar to the English (Standard) outcomes and the verbs used in some outcomes may be inappropriate for the course.

Feedback affirming the outcomes

Feedback	Sources
The sample of outcomes is appropriate.	AIS DoE Survey (x27)

Key matters and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
More emphasis should be placed on the importance of skills development for students' personal lives and post-school pathways.	CEOSYD	The existing draft English Studies course outcomes will be re-ordered and reviewed for alignment with the K–10 outcomes and the rationale, aim and objectives of the course to ensure a continuum of learning.
The remaining outcomes should also be expressed in clear and specific terms.	AIS Survey (x2)	

5.5 Diversity of learners

Summary

Respondents confirmed that the existing English Studies syllabus is appropriate for the student cohort. It was suggested that greater flexibility in the course structure and opportunities to incorporate school-developed content would provide more flexibility to cater to the diversity of learners.

Feedback about the diversity of learners and Life Skills outcomes and content

Feedback	Sources
As one of a suite of Stage 6 English courses, English Studies caters specifically to a significant cohort within the diversity of learners.	AIS Armidale (CM) Bankstown (CM) Cammeray (CM) CCSOBB CEOSYD DoE ETA NSWTF Pennant Hills (CM) Survey (x15) Sydney (CM) Tumbi Umbi (CM) Wollongong (CM)

Key matters and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
Flexibility in modules and text choices is required to cater effectively to the diversity of learners.	AIS CEOSYD NSWTF Survey (x13)	The draft syllabus will retain flexibility for teachers to be able to cater to the diversity of learners and to align with Life Skills outcomes and content.
Flexibility in modules and text choices would provide ample scope to align with Life Skills outcomes and content.	Survey (x7)	
Retention of the Fundamentals of English course will better enable schools to cater to the literacy needs of English Studies students.	DoE ETA	The place of the Fundamentals of English course will be reviewed once the English (Standard) and English (EAL/D) courses are completed.

5.6 Course structure and options

Summary

Respondents confirmed that a single course for English (Standard) and English Studies would not provide more flexibility to meet the learning and credentialling needs of students.

While some respondents indicated that a common Year 11 Semester 1 study for English Studies and English (Standard) would provide a better basis for choice of a Year 12 English course for a small group of students, a majority of respondents confirmed that the two courses should remain discrete.

Respondents endorsed the suitability of the existing English Studies syllabus for the target student cohort. A number of suggestions for new module topics were provided. Some respondents suggested that scope should be provided for a project-based module that is situated in a community or workplace context.

Feedback affirming the course structure and options

Feedback	Sources
<p>Content organisation and structure The proposed content organisation and structure will benefit students' learning and facilitate the planning of teaching and learning programs.</p>	<p>CEOSYD DoE Survey (x8)</p>
<p>The organisation, structure and sequence of content are logical and clear.</p>	<p>AIS Survey (x4)</p>
<p>Content Content reflecting the existing English Studies course is engaging, relevant, contemporary, broad-ranging in scope and caters effectively to the needs of the target cohort of students.</p>	<p>AIS Armidale (CM) Bankstown (CM) CCSOBB DoE ETA Pennant Hills (CM) Survey (x14) Tumbi Umbi (CM) Wollongong (CM)</p>
<p>Options 1 and 2 are the preferred options.</p>	<p>AIS Armidale (CM) Bankstown (CM) BCC Cammeray (CM) DoE ETA NSWTF Pennant Hills (CM) Survey (x17) Tumbi Umbi (CM) Wollongong (CM)</p>

Feedback	Sources
The inclusion of a core module in both Year 11 and Year 12 is appropriate.	DoE Pennant Hills (CM) Survey (x3) Sydney (CM)
The option for a school-developed module in Year 11 is appropriate.	AIS Bankstown (CM) Camberay (CM) NSWTF Pennant Hills (CM) Survey (x3)

Key matters and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
<p>Content organisation and structure</p> <p>The existing English Studies draft syllabus, revised modules and additional modules provide a comprehensive, relevant and suitable suite of study options for the target cohort.</p>	Armidale (CM) CCSOBB Pennant Hills (CM) Survey (x12) Tumbi Umbi (CM) Wollongong (CM)	Current course modules will be reviewed and updated, and new modules will be developed. One or more modules may be designated for study in Year 11 only. Most modules will be able to be studied in either Year 11 or Year 12.
<p>Schools should have the flexibility to tailor and implement a pattern of modules over Year 11 and Year 12 to suit the needs, interests and abilities of the particular student cohort.</p>	AIS Camberay (CM) NSWTF Survey (x6) Sydney (CM) Tumbi Umbi (CM) Wollongong (CM)	
<p>A single course for English Studies and English (Standard) would not provide more flexibility to meet the learning and credentialing needs of students.</p>	AIS Armidale (CM) Bankstown (CM) BCC Camberay (CM) CCSOBB CEOSYD DoE ETA NSWTF Pennant Hills (CM) Survey (x24) Tumbi Umbi (CM) Wollongong (CM)	Each course will remain separate to focus more successfully on meeting the needs and purposes of their distinctive cohorts. This flexibility caters for the individual needs, interests and patterns of study.
<p>A common Year 11 Semester 1 study for English Studies and English (Standard) is not required.</p>	AIS Armidale (CM) Bankstown (CM) BCC CCSOBB CEOSYD DoE ETA	

Key matters	Sources	Actions
	NSWTF Pennant Hills (CM) Survey (x17) Tumbi Umbi (CM) Wollongong (CM)	
A common Year 11 Semester 1 study for English Studies and English (Standard) is incompatible with the proposed common content requirements for English (Standard) and English (Advanced).	AIS BCC Pennant Hills (CM) Survey (x2)	
Content The option to incorporate a school-developed module in Year 11 and/or Year 12 is required.	AIS NSWTF Survey (x5)	The option of a school-developed module in Year 11 will be retained and more specific guidelines provided.
Removal of the option to include a school-developed module would alleviate confusion and lack of parity.	DoE	
Texts Further clarification is required regarding text suggestions.	AIS NSWTF Survey (x4)	Consultation on the draft syllabus will include opportunities to provide feedback on suggested texts.
The English Studies course should provide opportunities for the study of texts that are directly relevant to students' needs, interests and abilities.	AIS Cammeray (CM) Survey (x5) Sydney (CM)	

5.7 Assessment and reporting

Summary

A majority of respondents confirmed that an external assessment is not required for the English Studies course. There was broad agreement on the need for more support for schools in relation to school-based assessment and reporting, particularly in relation to applying the achievement standards at the end of the course.

Feedback affirming the information on assessment and reporting

Feedback	Sources
The existing school-based assessment and reporting requirements in this subject/course provide a clear and accurate indication of student achievement.	AIS Armidale (CM) Bankstown (CM) Cammeray (CM) CCSOBB CEOSYD Pennant Hills (CM) Survey (x14) Sydney (CM) Tumby Umbi (CM)
The English Studies course caters for the student cohort who are not seeking an ATAR.	AIS Armidale (CM) Bankstown (CM) BCC Cammeray (CM) CCSOBB CEOSYD DoE ETA Pennant Hills (CM) Survey (x13) Sydney (CM) Tumby Umbi (CM) Wollongong (CM)

Key matters and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
An external assessment/examination is not required.	AIS Armidale (CM) Bankstown (CM) BCC Cammeray (CM) CCSOBB CEOSYD DoE ETA Pennant Hills (CM) Survey (x18) Sydney (CM) Tumbi Umbi (CM) Wollongong (CM)	School-based assessment and HSC examination requirements will be reviewed during the syllabus development process.
Existing school-based assessment and reporting requirements should be maintained.	Armidale (CM) Bankstown (CM) Cammeray (CM) CSOBB DoE Pennant Hills (CM) Survey (x8) Sydney (CM) Tumbi Umbi (CM)	School-based assessment and reporting requirements will be reviewed and clarified as part of the syllabus development. Consultation feedback will be considered during syllabus development.
The weighting of elements in the school-based assessment specifications are complicated and restrictive and require review.	Bankstown (CM) Survey (x4) Tumbi Umbi (CM)	Consultation feedback will be considered during syllabus development.
Schools and teachers require additional support and guidance regarding school-based assessment and reporting requirements.	Bankstown (CM) Cammeray (CM) DoE ETA Pennant Hills (CM) Survey (x5) Tumbi Umbi (CM)	Advice about assessment in English Studies and materials to support initial implementation will be developed during syllabus development.

5.8 Other comments

Summary

Respondents confirmed that the draft writing brief provides a sound basis for development of the English Studies syllabus. Consideration of guidelines and appropriate pathways for access to English Studies was also raised.

Feedback affirming the draft writing brief

Feedback	Sources
The draft writing brief provides a sound basis for developing the final writing brief and draft syllabus.	AIS Survey (x20)

Key matters raised and actions

Key matters raised	Sources	Actions
<p>Syllabus development</p> <p>The existing draft syllabus for the English Studies course should provide the basis for future syllabus development.</p>	<p>Armidale (CM) Bankstown (CM) Cammeray (CM) CCSOBB ETA Pennant Hills (CM) Survey (x11) Tumbi Umbi (CM) Wollongong (CM)</p>	<p>The current <i>Draft English Studies Content Endorsed Course Stage 6 Syllabus</i> will be taken into account during syllabus development in conjunction with the consultation feedback provided on the draft writing brief.</p>

6 Quantitative analysis of survey responses

Note: Due to rounding, some percentages may not total 100%.

Survey Item	Number of responses	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Yes	No
Rationale							
1. The proposed rationale describes the nature of the course in broad terms and explains its purpose in the curriculum.	33	24%	67%	6%	3%		
2. The proposed rationale reflects a contemporary view of the course.	33	28%	60%	12%	0%		
Aim							
3. The proposed aim provides a statement of the overall purpose of the syllabus.	32	22%	59%	13%	6%		
Objectives							
4. The proposed objectives define in broad terms the knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes to be developed through study in this course.	30	27%	67%	7%	0%		
Outcomes							
5. The sample of outcomes is appropriate.	29	28%	65.52%	3%	3%		
Course structure and options							
6. Prefer Option 1	7					35%	65%
7. Prefer Option 2	10					50%	50%
8. Prefer Option 3	3					15%	85%
9. Does the study of texts focus sufficiently on opportunities to investigate the qualities of the text, and the ideas and intentions expressed in the text?	20					100%	0%
10. Would a common Preliminary Semester 1 study for English Standard and English Studies provide a better basis for choice of an HSC English course?	19					21%	79%
11. Would a single course for English Standard and English Studies provide more flexibility to meet the learning and credentialing needs of students, including those working towards an ATAR?	25					4%	96%

Survey Item	Number of responses	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Yes	No
12. Does Option 1 provide sufficient learning experiences for students whose post school study plans change during the Preliminary Year?	20					80%	20%
13. Does Option 2 provide sufficient learning experiences for students whose post school study plans change during the Preliminary Year?	19					58%	42%
14. Does Option 3 provide sufficient learning experiences for students whose post school study plans change during the Preliminary Year?	19					53%	47%
15. Is there another structure or option BOSTES should consider?	22					41%	59%
General							
16. The draft writing brief provides a sound basis for developing the final writing brief, which is the blueprint for the development of the draft syllabus.	23	17%	70%	9%	4%		

7 Respondents

7.1 Consultation meetings

Afternoon consultation meetings

(code: CM)

Location	Date (2015)	Total
Bankstown	26 October	26
Tumbi Umbi	27 October	15
Wollongong	29 October	10
Cammeray	2 November	34
Pennant Hills	4 November	20
Armidale	5 November	9
Sydney	25 November	28

Board Curriculum Committee consultation meeting at BOSTES on 11 November 2015 (code: BCC)

Name	Organisation
Mr Gary Johnson	Chair
Professor Will Christie	Committee of Chairs of Academic Boards/Senates NSW
Mr David Eccleston	NSW Teachers Federation
Ms Lyn Fetterplace	Catholic Education Commission NSW
Ms Roslyn Giles	NSW Department of Industry – TAFE NSW
Mrs Prue Greene	NSW Department of Education
Mrs Linda McNeil	Council of Catholic School Parents NSW
Mr Peter Moore	NSW/ACT Independent Education Union
Mr Callan Moroney	NSW Department of Education
Mr Bradden Spillane	NSW Teachers Federation
Mr Jason Vials	Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of NSW
Mr Matthew White	Australian Association for Special Education NSW Chapter
Ms Karen Yager	English Teachers' Association of NSW

7.2 Written submissions

Organisations, groups and individuals	Code
Association of Independent Schools of NSW	AIS
Catholic Education Office Sydney	CEOSYD
Community of Catholic Schools Office – Diocese of Broken Bay	CCSOBB
English Teachers' Association of NSW	ETA
NSW Department of Education	DoE
NSW Teachers Federation	NSWTF