BOSTES

Submission to the
Australian Government
Review of the
Australian Curriculum
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Introduction

This submission represents the joint perspectives of the NSW education sectors. This includes the three NSW school sectors: the NSW Department of Education and Communities, the Association of Independent Schools of NSW and the Catholic Education Commission of NSW. The position of the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) outlined in this submission reflects the views of teachers and parents garnered through NSW curriculum consultation processes via close liaison with the government and non-government school sectors.

BOSTES was created by the NSW Government to sustain and improve the high standards of student achievement in NSW schools.

It commenced operation on 1 January 2014, merging the functions previously provided by the Board of Studies NSW (or BOS) and the NSW Institute of Teachers. BOSTES brings together functions related to curriculum, assessment and reporting and teacher quality, and it allows for specific focus on the use of research, data and expertise in standard setting to identify policy opportunities across the education spectrum in NSW.

The submission may be augmented following consultation with the reviewers.

This BOSTES response to the Review of the Australian Curriculum reflects the specific context of the legislation which establishes curriculum in NSW, and the views of schools, teachers, parents and educators.

The Education Act 1990 (NSW) establishes the processes for developing and approving curriculum for use in NSW schools. Curriculum can only be endorsed in NSW following approval by the Minister for Education, on advice from the BOSTES.

The Act prescribes, in detail, the responsibilities of the BOSTES with regard to NSW curriculum. This includes specifying the syllabuses that constitute primary and Years 7–10 curriculum and the requirement to have regard to student achievement levels in syllabus development. The Act also specifies the responsibilities of government and non-government schools in relation to this.
This legislative context, and the requirement to fulfil this designated role, has provided the basis for all the BOSTES’ responses to the curriculum development and delivery processes of the Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority (ACARA).

In this context curriculum in NSW is understood as: statements of what school students are expected to learn and be able to do; content which describes what is to be taught, organised primarily into subject disciplines or key learning areas; standards which identify the level at which students demonstrate that they have acquired knowledge and understanding; and stimulus and support materials to assist teachers and students including with regard to assessment.

The Act describes the NSW curriculum as being comprised of syllabuses that detail courses available in eight key learning areas (KLAs). Any syllabus developed or endorsed by the BOSTES is to indicate aims, objectives and outcomes in terms of the knowledge, skills and practical experiences described in stages of learning.

In schools, the ‘school’s curriculum’ is generally taken to include all learning programs such as the subject-specific syllabuses, sport programs, formal leadership programs and structured extra- and co-curricular activities.

Through the Australian Curriculum development and approval process NSW has attempted to align the nationally agreed ambition to describe common and essential learning for all Australian students with its own commitment to particular structures and processes for curriculum development and its legal requirements as set out in the Education Act.

In publishing NSW syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum for the first phases of this work, and undertaking to develop and publish syllabuses for the subsequent phases, NSW has agreed that the Australian Curriculum has met the standard required for this purpose. This notwithstanding, this review provides an opportunity to comment on the project thus far, and to provide the perspectives of the BOSTES and NSW education sectors on the Australian Curriculum development process in the interests of transparent and constructive approaches to public policy.

The new NSW K–10 syllabuses in English, Mathematics, Science and History for the Australian Curriculum were endorsed and approved by the minister and are now being implemented in NSW schools. Implementation is staggered and follows a year of familiarisation and professional development. This approach was negotiated with NSW education stakeholders. It is also custom and practice in curriculum development and implementation in NSW that schools and teachers are allowed time to develop confidence in
the key aspects of the syllabuses including the broad and interrelated objectives, outcomes and specific content demands.

The BOSTES will consider the findings of the review and the Commonwealth’s response when these are released. Without reasonable knowledge of the likely nature of these findings, the BOSTES is not in a position to offer the Minister for Education any specific advice. Given the iterative, formal and cooperative nature of syllabus development in NSW, the support the syllabuses have received from NSW education stakeholders, the exhaustive work schools have undertaken to prepare for the implementation of the curriculum, and the imperative of assuring stability in learning expectations, the BOSTES does not believe it is appropriate to advise the NSW Minister for Education that further changes are required to the newly approved syllabuses for NSW schools for English, Mathematics, Science and History for Kindergarten to Year 10.

All curriculum should be open to review and public discussion. New South Wales therefore welcomes the opportunity to discuss the Australian Curriculum and to engage with the review on its terms of reference. Insights gained from the process will inform the BOSTES in its future curriculum development work, including subsequent phases of the Australian Curriculum, and future reviews of English, Mathematics, Science and History. The timing of such processes is determined by the NSW Government on advice of the BOSTES within a context of support from NSW education stakeholders.

The BOSTES will continue to work with other jurisdictions and agencies to support and shape ACARA’s work with regard to the Australian Curriculum.

1. The nature and role of school curriculum in NSW

School education in Australia is the remit of the states and territories. In NSW, the Minister for Education is responsible for the overarching approach to achieving effective educational outcomes for all NSW school students.

In NSW, the learning entitlement for all students is premised on the existence of a high-quality school curriculum. School curriculum in NSW typically refers to:

- the knowledge and skills that students are expected to acquire in discrete content areas
- the standards and outcomes that students are expected to meet in school
- the stimulus material used in a course of study
- assessment and related materials used to evaluate student learning.
School curriculum in NSW is underpinned by detailed content. The outcomes students are expected to achieve are based on content statements organised into subject disciplines.

The Education Act (Part 3) establishes the BOSTES as the statutory authority responsible for developing syllabuses for courses of study or for endorsing syllabuses developed by schools or other educational bodies (section 14(1)).

The Minister for Education may approve particular syllabuses or give a general approval for syllabuses which are endorsed by the BOSTES (section 14(2)). The representative nature of the BOSTES ensures that curriculum design (including content) in NSW is collaborative and effective.

The approved curriculum provides the foundation for the award of the Record of School Achievement (RoSA) and the Higher School Certificate (HSC) credentials for students in both government and non-government schools.

In addition to developing the syllabuses, the BOSTES also has a statutory role in developing initial support material and resources for teachers (section 102(2)(f)).

Teachers, working with parents and academic specialists, are the main authors of NSW syllabuses, working within a charter that recognises the broad public and community purposes of curriculum.

The thorough process of curriculum development, evaluation and review in NSW ensures that the curriculum is a common reference point for the development of essential knowledge and skills that students are expected to learn in school, as well as a reflection of community expectations, priorities and intent. Parents and the community recognise the BOSTES’ role in developing the curriculum.

Parents participate in the development process, and support materials are developed to ensure that parents and community members generally have the opportunity to become familiar and engaged with the syllabuses.

The BOSTES syllabus development and review process is detailed at <www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/manuals/#syl_develop_handbook>.

Syllabus design (including content) enables NSW schools and teachers to develop teaching and learning programs which assist students to demonstrate the achievement of the syllabus outcomes. In many cases, the syllabuses either explicitly or implicitly support indicative teaching pedagogies within the context of each school’s right to determine their choice of
appropriate pedagogy. Syllabuses are among the most essential of professional tools for teachers.

The success of any curriculum is predicated on its clarity and its utility. The new NSW K–10 syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum are a foundational pillar of, and professional tool for, effective teaching and learning in NSW. They provide substantial clarity of purpose for schools, teachers and students.

The legislative features, development processes and the close involvement and support of teachers and the NSW education community assure the stability of curriculum in NSW. Importantly, the NSW Parliament is also assured that the requirements of the Education Act have been carried out. The new NSW K–10 syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum are accepted and valued by schools, teachers and professional associations and have the confidence of parents and the wider community.

The BOSTES is also responsible for the registration and accreditation of non-government schools (Part 7 of the Education Act). This requires the monitoring of teaching and learning programs to ensure that schools address the mandatory curriculum content and learning outcomes as described in the endorsed curriculum and syllabus documents.

Although the BOSTES has a legislative role in developing syllabuses and support materials, it is primarily the responsibility of the government, Catholic and independent school sectors, their schools and their teachers, to implement the syllabuses.

2. The national agreement

The National Education Reform Agreement (NERA), and its predecessor the National Education Agreement (NEA), are consistent with the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Fiscal Relations (IGAFFR) established in 2008. Together with other national agreements, the NERA seeks to ensure that all Australian school students acquire the knowledge and skills to participate effectively in further education, employment and society.

Non-government schools received funding from the Australian Government under the Schools Assistance Act 2008 subject to the conditions which were set out in the Act. To receive funding, schools or school systems signed a funding agreement with DEEWR covering the Commonwealth Programs for Non-government Schools 2009 to 2013/14.

The implementation of the Australian Curriculum was a condition under the Act. The NERA and the NSW Bilateral Agreement signed on 13 April 2013 reaffirmed the NSW commitment
to the implementation of Australian Curriculum content. The objectives of the NERA and the
NSW Bilateral Agreement are reflected in the NSW 2021: A Plan to Make NSW Number One
Goal 15 and its priority actions, to which the BOSTES contributes.

The government and non-government schools sectors in NSW complied with these
requirements in the interests of stability and certainty and in a spirit of cooperation designed
to benefit all NSW schools, teachers, parents and students.

3. Developing the Australian Curriculum

The establishment of ACARA in May 2009 provided the opportunity for the Australian
Government and jurisdictions to develop agreed essential curriculum content – the
Australian Curriculum – for Australian school students, as set out in the Melbourne
Declaration. This position was endorsed and is currently, within defined parameters,
supported by NSW.

New South Wales (through the then BOS) worked collaboratively with ACARA to develop
iterations of its Australian Curriculum products. The primary role of the BOS in relation to the
final Australian Curriculum was, however, to provide advice to the NSW Minister for
Education regarding the appropriateness of its design (including content and structure) for
NSW and a process for its implementation. In discharging this statutory role, the BOS
continued to assure the high quality of curriculum in NSW.

There is a general view among NSW education stakeholders that the consultative process
conducted by ACARA for the Australian Curriculum was uneven, often unresponsive to
concerns and focused on deadlines at the expense of collaboration. In particular, there is a
view among participants that the final source of authority and a rationale for decisions on
curriculum material was not transparent.

It is fair to say that a federal structure necessarily mitigates the capacity of any such process
to assure transparency. From a NSW perspective a range of concerns were addressed
through the BOSTES process.

3.1. Relative roles and responsibilities

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority Act 2008 outlines the
organisation’s functions as including responsibility to ‘develop and administer a national
curriculum’. The terms ‘develop’ and ‘administer’ in this context are broad terms, and their
meaning was not adequately explicated elsewhere. This resulted in a lack of clarity which
remains especially challenging for the BOSTES given its legislative mandate. ACARA was and is aware of the legislative remit of the then BOS and current BOSTES.

It is the view of the BOSTES that partly as a consequence of this lack of clarity on remit and process, some subsequent issues were not foreseen, jurisdictional issues were not resolved and concerns arose as each aspect of the Australian Curriculum was developed and released. In particular, there was insufficient consultation with jurisdictional authorities in the early stages and, as a consequence, it was unclear as to whether Australian Curriculum content was intended to be adopted and implemented with no augmentation or contextualisation by all jurisdictions, or if it was to be core or common content that could or should be complemented with additional materials. New South Wales would have opposed the former view if the issue had been properly addressed. While Australian Curriculum policy statements recognised the potential for jurisdictions to complement the Australian Curriculum material, the materials were structured so as to leave little space for input consistent with jurisdictional responsibilities and accountabilities.

It is the general view in NSW that the ACARA curriculum development process was not designed to complement the necessary role of the NSW authority and was therefore not as efficient or effective as it should have been. The respective responsibilities of the BOSTES and ACARA were not established and agreed.

New South Wales retains legislative authority to contextualise and augment nationally developed material. This position has been frequently expressed to ACARA after the initial phase of the Australian Curriculum development process.

Decisions to exercise this authority were only made in the context of the BOSTES’ judgements about the nature of the curriculum material that was produced and its suitability to the specific needs of NSW schools. Every effort was made to limit the extent of amendments to the Australian Curriculum and to maximise the alignment of NSW syllabuses. Ultimately decisions in this regard were made through careful and detailed consultations with NSW school, teacher and parent representatives.

Notwithstanding the ongoing debate with regard to roles and remit, ACARA sought and received extensive assistance from the then BOS. The BOS provided all K–10 curriculum and support materials to ACARA. BOS curriculum officers were also released into secondment positions with the National Curriculum Board (and later ACARA) to support curriculum development. In addition, the BOS convened and facilitated stakeholder meetings and consultations regarding the Australian Curriculum content.
3.2. ACARA's relationship with schools

As a national body without authority under NSW legislation, ACARA does not have a direct relationship with schools in NSW regarding curriculum content. Communication by ACARA directly to NSW schools creates significant confusion with regard to the status of the Australian Curriculum in NSW at each successive point of its development and implementation.

Presentations and communications, including announcements and publication of new Australian Curriculum materials, lead to uncertainty in NSW schools which are often unsure of the status of the new materials.

It is recognised that this may not be an issue in other jurisdictions with alternative models of curriculum development, and particularly where the Australian Curriculum is regarded as available for implementation directly from the ACARA website. In NSW the lack of recognition of these relative responsibilities continues to create frustration and some confusion in NSW schools. There is a need to ensure that all communications from ACARA are shaped around recognition of jurisdictional authority with regard to curriculum.

3.3. Lack of an overarching framework for the Australian Curriculum

The Australian Curriculum was not conceived originally through an overall curriculum blueprint. This meant that a ‘total curriculum’, including time allocations for each subject, was not conceptualised at the beginning of the curriculum development process.

This was partly a result of the original remit limiting national curriculum to English, Mathematics, Science and History.

In some cases ACARA’s curriculum writers produced a volume of content that required continuous adjustment in relation to structure and design as implications for other curriculum areas were subsequently considered.

New South Wales stakeholders have frequently put the view that the lack of a blueprint early in the process has resulted in some lack of cohesion across the entire curriculum, despite ACARA publishing overarching framework documents and guidance for writers. There is a general view among NSW stakeholders that the strict timelines for the development of curriculum have resulted in a limited capacity for ACARA to assure consistency and coherence across all the material produced.
In particular there is a view that there has been inadequate regard to the amount of time required to achieve the learning described. Australian Curriculum for some subjects is still considered to include excessive content and has insufficient regard for indicative time allocations. It is possible to reasonably interpret that curriculum documents were designed for more teaching hours in total than was available within the school teaching year. Explanations offered by ACARA that curriculum can be achieved within available time through effective integrated programming have not been convincing to NSW stakeholders.

Since 1990, New South Wales schools and teachers have had indicative time allocations provided by the BOSTES and BOS for each learning area. This, coupled with a longer tradition of external assessment, has made schools and teachers aware of their responsibility to judge the utility of curriculum.

Some of the NSW changes to the Australian Curriculum material are intended to address this concern.

In addition, NSW syllabuses attempt to define the learning scope of content more precisely in order to facilitate realistic expectations of teaching and student learning in the time available. The effect of the additional detail is to more properly define the depth of treatment required and avoid expansion of the scope of the content.

4. The integration of the Australian Curriculum in NSW

Following endorsement of Phase 1 of the Australian Curriculum content by education ministers at the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) in December 2010, the BOSTES commenced its syllabus development and review process.

The BOSTES involved NSW education stakeholders at all stages of this process. The BOSTES organised a NSW coordinating group and the work stemming from this cross-sectoral group in identifying and releasing teachers for ACARA and BOSTES consultations allowed a collaborative approach. The BOSTES was accompanied by representatives from all sectors at meetings with ACARA and led a shared NSW position.

As required by the Act, resource implications for curriculum implementation were also considered and provided stakeholders with a sense of assurance regarding the implementation of the curriculum in practice.

The new NSW K–10 syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum are recognised and supported by NSW education stakeholders, including parents. Schools and teachers generally have a clear understanding of the intent of the curriculum.
4.1. The NSW process

As part of the process of integrating the Australian Curriculum for use in NSW schools, the BOSTES engaged curriculum specialists to form a national projects team. The national projects team worked in close consultation with the Board curriculum committees (BCCs) which were established in each learning area to:

- monitor consultation structures, consultation questions, mapping and analysis of curriculum materials
- monitor the analysis of consultation feedback gathered through meetings with key stakeholders, teachers and the online survey facility on the BOSTES website
- advise the BOSTES about the quality of the draft curriculum, and whole school curriculum and assessment and credentialling matters
- advise the BOSTES regarding the suitability of the draft curriculum for implementation in NSW schools, including resourcing considerations
- advise the BOSTES on future directions and project plans including the development of the NSW curriculum package.

The BCCs include parent representation, as well as teachers, and are chaired by members of the BOSTES with a recognised background in the subject area.

The BOSTES undertook two distinct phases of consultation to develop the new NSW K–10 syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum. The process was undertaken over two years and is generally regarded as having been transparent and consultative.

This process helps assure the robustness, independence and balance of the Australian Curriculum in NSW.

The new NSW K–10 syllabuses were developed in an interactive, online format. The online presentation of the syllabuses is new and provides NSW teachers with a high-quality product as well as additional features and functionality.

In addition, online support materials were developed through the use of a purpose-designed online facility called Program Builder, which enables NSW teachers to customise views of the syllabuses, and access online resources and information anywhere on any digital device. Program Builder was launched in April 2013 and all NSW teachers have been provided with free access. To date approximately 300,000 units of work have been created by 50,000 teachers using Program Builder.
5. The new NSW K–10 syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum

5.1. Stages versus Years

The NSW K–10 syllabuses are presented in a two-year stage structure and not the single year structure developed by ACARA. This is a preferred and supported model in NSW. By enabling maximum flexibility, it allows the NSW curriculum to appropriately cater for the full range of student learning needs. This is of particular importance to small schools which are often organised into multi-grade classes.

It also allows schools to disaggregate the stages into year levels and therefore program teaching and learning in year levels where considered appropriate by schools. Importantly, schools can assess and report in year levels.

5.2. Content descriptions and elaborations

There was a general view in NSW that the Australian Curriculum content descriptions were too broad and the elaborations too uneven for the purpose of assuring teaching and learning expectations.

The new NSW K–10 syllabuses include the mandatory Australian Curriculum content descriptions and supplement these with additional explication for teachers as well as additional content direction. The BOSTES also reviewed the illustrative non-mandatory elaborations, and in some instances used them to further clarify the intent of the curriculum.

From a NSW perspective, this approach rectified instances where the ACARA content descriptions relied on illustrative non-mandatory elaborations or were considered to be too broad to establish the intended teaching and learning. This process of amendment was essential if the NSW emphasis on clarity with regard to curriculum content was to be retained. This process was also required in relation to the ACARA achievement standards which in some cases relied on non-mandatory elaborations.

Again BOSTES recognises that this perspective, and custom and practice in NSW with regard to explicitness in curriculum content, is not a shared perspective nationally, or even by all sections of the teaching profession in NSW. Nonetheless, the BOSTES and NSW stakeholders generally felt that a reduction of emphasis on clear, explicit learning expectations would be an inappropriate and unnecessary compromise for the sake of national consistency.
5.3. General capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities

The BOSTES and the NSW education community generally do not consider there to be a contradiction between the aim of good curriculum to achieve broad and complex learning for all students, and the need for the same curriculum to assure the attainment of basic and other crucial or fundamental knowledge and skills. Indeed the relationship between these two aims underpins the imperative for clarity in NSW syllabuses.

It is the perennial challenge of any curriculum development process to determine the key or essential learning entitlement for all students. The BOSTES syllabuses, presented as subjects in key learning areas, are a clear indication of the jurisdiction’s priorities. It is within subject content that schools and teachers are assisted to find points of connection and broader relevance. This is both for effective student learning and to underpin subsequent learning challenges.

Among the general capabilities, literacy and numeracy are considered key and mandatory learning requirements for all students in NSW. Specific continuums of learning are used to support the approach to these areas. Syllabuses are designed so that at least 50% of time is dedicated to literacy and numeracy in Kindergarten to Year 2.

The other general capabilities developed by ACARA as part of the Australian Curriculum, such as creativity or intercultural understanding, are not as precisely defined and in NSW have no status as an alternative organisational frame to the subject disciplines. Rather than being available as an alternative organisation or prism through which learning can be presented, the general capabilities are embedded where appropriate within the NSW content. They are also available for teachers as useful reference points for thematic programming and as illustrative material to assist in contextualising the content learning.

The cross-curriculum priorities are also subsequent to content but more precisely delineated to assure their presence, where appropriate, through the curriculum.

The NSW education community also strongly supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and cultures as crucial features in any curriculum that is defined as national or Australian. This content should be included in an authentic and substantive way, wherever appropriate. Engagement with, and knowledge of, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and cultures is integral to the education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and essential for the education of all Australian students.
The process for the inclusion of this content must have close and careful regard to the views of Aboriginal communities, and the organisations that represent them.

An understanding of Asia and our relationship to the region as well as issues of sustainability are also strongly supported by stakeholders in NSW as important contextual dimensions to subject-specific learning.

Nevertheless, it cannot be overstated that in NSW, learning is organised into subject disciplines, with a particular emphasis on literacy and numeracy continuums within that learning. The BOSTES does not endorse general capabilities and cross-curriculum perspectives as frames for delivery of mandatory curriculum content and outcomes.

It must also be recognised that the BOSTES school registration process involves the monitoring of teaching and learning programs to ensure that schools address the mandatory curriculum content and learning outcomes as described in approved NSW curriculum documents.

This comprehensive or defining approach to formal curriculum content through syllabuses facilitates the centrality of curriculum content in teaching.

### 5.4. Assessment and achievement standards

It is a Commonwealth requirement that student achievement is reported in A–E grades. Each jurisdiction, however, has its own method for awarding A–E grades. In the Australian Curriculum for Kindergarten to Year 10, the achievement standards are presented through a model where C represents the very broad centre of a normal range of achievement against the standard.

The NSW assessment and reporting model does not align directly with ACARA’s model. In the NSW standards-referenced approach, A–E grades are awarded against course performance descriptors; there is no assumed distribution of grades for any year level. The NSW approach compares student achievement against defined standards, not an abstracted range of students. The judgement is, however, informed by an understanding of what a normal range of achievement against each standard would be. The approach is supported by a more detailed analysis of the nature of normal student achievement against each standard with specific descriptors for each A–E level.

The NSW model allows for the same curriculum content to be effectively utilised at different levels of student ability. For example, the most able students may be required to hypothesise
questions with regard to the same content that other students are only just learning to describe or recount, while still others are beginning to analyse. This approach is regarded as allowing for the wide range of abilities that might be located in any classroom while maintaining the centrality of the learning content in the syllabus.

The NSW model supports consistency of teacher judgement across the jurisdiction. The BOSTES Assessment Resource Centre (ARC) produces materials to support the A–E grading process.

The BOSTES Life Skills outcomes and content for Years 7–10 also helps provide age-appropriate learning opportunities for the full range of students and the ability to assess and report achievement of selected outcomes that are part of the student’s individual learning plan.

5.5. Implementation

The schedule of implementation of the new NSW K–10 syllabuses in NSW schools, including the order of implementation across subject areas, was developed in consultation with the three education sectors and other NSW education stakeholders. This consultation included recognition of the availability of education sector resources necessary for teachers' professional learning if the curriculum is to be successfully implemented.

At its 26 June 2012 meeting, the BOS endorsed the new NSW K–10 syllabuses for approval by the NSW Minister for Education. The minister approved the syllabuses on 9 August 2012 for a phased implementation from 2014.

A preparatory year of professional development and familiarisation is a standard BOSTES process for any new syllabus. This occurred in 2013 and enabled all NSW teachers the opportunity to acquaint themselves with the new syllabuses and support materials including Program Builder.

The development and finalisation of the new NSW K–10 syllabuses represents a significant collaboration between the BOSTES, the education sectors, schools, teachers, teacher professional associations, academics, teacher unions and parent bodies.

In integrating and adapting the Australian Curriculum content into the new NSW K–10 syllabuses, the BOSTES considers that significant enhancements have been made which improve the existing high quality of school curriculum in NSW.
6. The way forward

It should be recognised that the Australian Curriculum is a substantial achievement and that it establishes common and recognised points of learning in Australian schools. This has facilitated the establishment of a range of support materials and processes to assist teachers, students and parents nationally.

The BOSTES will continue to implement the new NSW K–10 syllabuses for English, Mathematics, Science and History for the Australian Curriculum according to a schedule determined by the NSW Government, on advice of the BOSTES in consultation with stakeholders. This will provide certainty and stability for the NSW education community and most importantly for students, parents and teachers. In addition, as a part of the BOSTES syllabus review process, the curriculum will be subject to rigorous ongoing appraisal once it has been fully implemented.

BOSTES also recognises the readiness of the remaining areas of curriculum developed by ACARA.

As indicated previously in this submission, because of the lack of an overarching blueprint at the beginning of the process and the consequent scope and content burden within the initial subjects, subsequent iterations of the Australian Curriculum should include proper consideration of the curriculum as a whole.

With regard to ACARA’s ongoing curriculum role, it is likely that jurisdictions will have different views according to their own legislative and policy settings. In NSW, where the objective of the Australian Curriculum project has been to identify and implement a national common learning entitlement for adaptation and adoption by jurisdictions, the key work in this iteration is considered essentially complete. ACARA is well placed to provide ongoing liaison and support.

Any proposed monitoring and review of the Australian Curriculum by ACARA should be defined by, and limited to, analysis consistent with the ACARA charter to develop agreed Australian Curriculum content. It is not in the remit of ACARA to review the implementation processes adopted by state and territory governments or agencies such as the BOSTES. Nor is it legitimate or appropriate to monitor student progress in order to judge the effectiveness of the curriculum given the multiplicity of personal, professional, schooling and environmental factors that impact on student performance, and the accountability of states for achieving effectiveness.
In addition, as previously indicated, ACARA does not have a recognised status with schools in NSW regarding curriculum content. Communication by ACARA directly to NSW schools continues to create significant confusion with regard to the status of the Australian Curriculum content in relation to NSW K–10 syllabuses. All communications between ACARA and NSW schools should occur via the BOSTES.

New South Wales supports the identification and establishment of common and agreed national curriculum content but it is imperative that the role of ACARA and the roles and responsibilities of jurisdictional curriculum development authorities be clarified before further Australian Curriculum development work occurs. Future curriculum development processes by ACARA should recognise and respect the legislative imperatives within jurisdictions and lessons learned by the Australian Curriculum process.

The BOSTES will continue to work with other states, territories and the Australian Government through SCSEEC and COAG to shape and support the process of monitoring and maintaining the Australian Curriculum.