

Board Bulletin



BOARD OF STUDIES NSW

April 2000 – Vol 9 No 2

Refinements to the Board's syllabus development process

In 1998 the Board introduced a new syllabus development process which increased opportunities for consultation, set achievable timelines and placed greater emphasis on monitoring and quality assurance. The process was successfully used for the development of all New HSC syllabuses and for the new Stages 4 and 5 Science, History and Geography syllabuses.

The syllabuses were developed using a project management approach that involved wide consultation with teachers at key stages of the process. By establishing firm timelines with clearly identified opportunities for consultation, the Board was able to receive the highest quality advice from across the education community. Teacher professional associations, in particular, were able to contribute directly to the process more fully than in the past.

Board Curriculum Committees (BCCs) have played an essential role in the development of the syllabuses, assisting the Board in monitoring the quality of material produced

by project teams and ensuring the integrity of the syllabus development process undertaken by these teams. In 1998–99, twenty-five BCCs were established. In addition, a Vocational Education and Training Advisory Committee (VAC) and its associated Industry Curriculum Committees (ICCs) were established to assist in the development of the seven new industry curriculum frameworks.

As part of their monitoring of syllabuses for the New HSC, BCC members have had the opportunity to:

- recommend final writing briefs and syllabuses to the Board for approval, noting any ongoing issues for the Board's consideration
- examine work in progress on sample examination papers
- comment on support material developed for the new syllabuses
- comment on the compliance of specimen papers with the Board's principles for documents setting.

continued page 3



Update on Creative Arts K–6

The consultation report on the Creative Arts K–6 Draft Syllabus and support documents, was considered by the Board of Studies recently. While the draft documents were generally well received some issues were required that further development of aspects of the draft syllabus and draft units of work. Issues raised by teachers during the consultation included:

• Language

Some of the language used in the syllabus and support documents was considered to be 'jargonistic'. There was also an expressed need to make the documents more 'user friendly'.

• Consistency with other K–6 syllabuses

Classroom teachers would like the syllabus and support documents made consistent with the primary syllabuses developed recently. Aspects highlighted in the consultation included the need for indicators and stage statements, coding of the outcomes, a glossary in the syllabus, and concerns about the design and layout of the content section of the syllabus and the units of work.

• Outcomes

The response to the outcomes was generally positive. Aspects that were highlighted in the consultation included the need for indicators and stage statements, more specific advice about assessment in the Creative Arts and the need to reorganise the values and attitudes outcomes.

The number of Dance outcomes for the primary curriculum (considering those in this syllabus and those in the PDHPE syllabus) is something that needs to be examined further. It should also be recognised that Dance and Drama are new art forms in the primary curriculum and, as a consequence, the outcomes for these areas are somewhat tentative compared to those in Music and Visual Arts.

• Content

A strong theme was the need for more direction and guidance in what to teach in each stage in each art form. Though this request was made by classroom teachers, subject specialists who commented on the syllabus recognised that classroom teachers would need such guidance.

continued page 5

HSC and SC Important Dates

Year 10

- 29 Mar** Latest date for all SC entries received either electronically or by entry form
Schools using Schools Online can produce confirmations as entries are processed
- 7 April** Latest date for submission of applications for special exam provisions for Year 10 students
- 14 April** Submit Presiding Officers' nominations for HSC
- 1 May** Confirmation of entries:
– Schools using BOSCentral or Schools Online confirm entries by this date and retain signed confirmation at school
– printed confirmation sent to other schools
- 16 June** Final date for Board Endorsed Course applications to Board of Studies Liaison Officer for processing

Year 11

- 5 April** All Preliminary entries received either electronically or by entry form
Schools using Schools Online can produce confirmations as entries are processed
- 1 May** Confirmation of entries:
– Schools using BOSCentral or Schools Online confirm entries by this date and retain signed confirmation at school
– printed confirmation sent to other schools
- 16 June** Final date for Board Endorsed Course applications to Board of Studies Liaison Officer for processing

Year 12

- 22 Mar** Latest date for all HSC entries to be received either electronically or by entry form
Schools using Schools Online can produce confirmations as entries are processed
- 7 April** Latest date for submission of applications for special exam provisions for Year 12 students
- 10 April** Confirmation of entries:
– Schools using BOSCentral or Schools Online confirm entries by this date and retain signed confirmation at school
– printed confirmation sent to other schools
- 14 Apr** Submit Presiding Officer's nominations for HSC
- 19 May** Return HSC practical option collection forms
- 16 June** Final date for submission of Board Endorsed Course application to Board of Studies Liaison Officer for processing
- 23 June** Dispatch of project certification forms
- 30 June** Last date for receipt at the Board of changes to HSC Music and Drama course options

Contents

Refinements to the Board's syllabus development process.....	1
Update on Creative Arts K-6	1
President's Message.....	3
Primary Matters	4
<i>Official Notices centre liftout</i>	
Board Publications Column	6
Incorporating Vocational Education and Training (VET) Modules into Stage 6 Languages Continuers Courses	7
1999 SC and HSC Results on the Web	8
HSC Order of Merit Lists and 'All-Rounders' List.....	8
Board of Studies on display at the Royal Easter Show.....	8

CHECK YOUR MAILBOX



- ❖ MYDA Flyer
- ❖ SC Standards Pack CD-ROM – English
– Mathematics
- ❖ Music 7–10 CD-ROM
- ❖ BEC Guidelines/Application forms

The *Board Bulletin* is a regular publication by the Board of Studies NSW. Principals are requested to circulate it among teachers and members of the School Council, P & C and parents. One copy should be filed for reference. Schools may only photocopy this publication for use by teachers, students and parents. Contributions or suggestions for articles are welcome.

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President's Message



There is a broad consensus that education plays a central role in social and economic change. However a key aspect of current change is that our educational institutions themselves are being made the focus of attention.

In the 21st century, what do we mean by a 'school'? At one level this seems to be an unnecessary question. All of us have experience of schools.

However the question asks us to reflect on judgements about what constitutes the essence of this experience.

The moment we ask the question it is inevitable that we will get divergence of opinion. Indeed, one of the current catch-cries in education is diversity and the celebration of difference. While not wanting to counter this trend, it is still necessary to consider what common understanding we have about what constitutes a school and schooling.

Last year both State and Federal Ministers for Education endorsed a new statement of 'National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century'. The goals will assist our common understanding and represent an important statement that will help us think about the changes in the organisation and structure of education.

The goals stress the importance of the full development of the talents and capacities of all students, the attainment of high standards of knowledge, skills and understanding through a comprehensive and balanced curriculum, and outcomes that are socially just.

It is vital that our thinking and reflection about schools and schooling embody these fundamental goals. They are useful in helping us to ask appropriate questions about the directions of change in education.

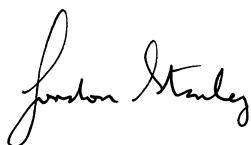
* * *

One of the most interesting and enjoyable aspects of my work is the opportunity to visit schools and participate in significant education events.

This month I was privileged to participate in the opening of The Middle School at the Armidale School (TAS), which has generated a lot of enthusiasm among teachers, students and parents. How we handle the transitions between primary and secondary school and address the specific needs of early adolescence is an important challenge for all schools.

* * *

Finally, I was present at the spectacular Jubilee 2000 Celebration for Students of Sydney Catholic Schools. This event recognised the contribution of Catholic educators past and present in seeking reconciliation and promoting justice and hope for the future.



(Professor) Gordon Stanley

Refinements to the Board's syllabus development process *continued from page 1*

With the distribution of specimen examination papers, Stage 6 syllabus development projects will be completed and BCCs will have concluded their work with these projects. In 2000 some work will continue in Stage 6, particularly with Languages and Content Endorsed Courses (CECs), but the focus of the Board's syllabus development activity will now move to the K–10 area. BCCs are currently operating for the K–6 Creative Arts syllabus, the Content Endorsed Courses (CEC) evaluation and Stage 6 Languages. Later this year BCCs will be established to monitor the development of K–6 Mathematics, Stages 4–5 English and Stages 4–5 Mathematics.

Once a syllabus is completed school authorities have primary responsibility for its implementation in schools. During implementation the Board's key role is to collect and analyse data and monitor any issues identified by the BCC as the syllabus is being developed. This data will be routinely provided to the Board and will be used to help the Board make decisions about when syllabuses need to be reviewed and/or revised. At the time the Board decides that a syllabus is to be reviewed it will establish a BCC to monitor the project.

Nominating organisations will be given advance notice of the establishment of BCCs. These organisations will be able to nominate new representatives or nominate individuals who have been involved in previous BCCs.

Throughout 1999 the Board closely monitored how effectively the new syllabus development process was assisting it to deliver quality syllabuses on time. At its February 2000 meeting the Board endorsed some refinements to the process to enhance efficiency and clarify roles and responsibilities. At the same time the Board confirmed its commitment to a process that is:

- flexible enough to respond to particular needs
- transparent and accessible to all interested groups
- consultative
- capable of producing the highest quality curriculum.





Primary Matters

Primary Curriculum Issues

This is the third in a series on primary curriculum issues. In previous editions of Primary Matters, the notion of the crowded curriculum (December, 1999) and the impact of learning technologies on curriculum development (February 2000) have been discussed. In this edition, the issue of values in the primary curriculum is considered.

Values in the Primary Curriculum

The promulgation of standards (syllabus content and outcomes) over the last decade has focused primarily on two aspects of teaching and learning: what students will know and what students will be able to do.

Though it could be argued that the very selection of content incorporates particular sets of values, it could be said that gestures in the direction of articulating what students will value have been comparatively equivocal compared to other aspects of learning.

There are probably two main reasons why this is so. The first is that it is well recognised that the assessment of values is an undertaking that is not only different from assessing knowledge and skills but is also inherently more difficult to undertake. The second is that obtaining agreement on the kinds of values that the community would expect schools to teach is considered to be particularly challenging – something that many have decided is best left to school systems and individual schools and the communities.

Though some values would appear to be unchallengeable and relatively easy to state, the dilemma is more with the detail. Few people in society, for example, would disagree with the teaching of values such as honesty, justice, caring, responsibility and respect. Opinions differ considerably, however, on what would constitute standards in relation to:

- what teachers would actually teach
- how teachers would teach these values
- what students would have to do and say to demonstrate achievement, and
- how progress in these areas would be described from stage to stage.

School systems state the values they hold and expect to see reflected throughout their schools. Indeed, it could be argued it is the articulation of specific values that distinguishes one system from another.

Schools in particular appear to have little concern with setting standards of behaviour directly related to

some specific values. For example, the majority have rules and report to parents referring to certain desirable codes of behaviour that make it clear what they see as being appropriate. Most schools also expect their students to develop and exhibit certain social skills related to particular values. Though these are rarely documented, modelling and experience reinforce behaviours that are expected and accepted in schools and those that are not.

The extent to which these and other values should be expressed in syllabus standards is a key question in curriculum development. Though it is now easier to identify what we expect students to learn about and learn to do in the compulsory years of schooling, is what we expect students to value just as clear?

Please send your comments on this issue, or suggestions for other issues, by email to: lambert@boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au

Linkages

The linkages website has had a face lift and has been graphically re-developed. At the same time the 'site map' has been changed to an alphabetical index to enable easy access to items on the site.

Additional material mapping computer-based technology has also been added in the section called 'content links'. This section will have further material added during 2000, in particular mapping possibilities for Aboriginal perspectives and fine motor skills within and across key learning areas.

Further case studies are also being added. 'Information Literacy through an Integrated Curriculum' outlines a collaborative planning process for developing an integrated unit of work using Information Skills. The site will also include five units of work, some samples of student work and a variety of support material including Internet sites, planning pro formas and resources.

Another case study shares the process used at Beaumont Road Public School to map their curriculum and develop integrated units of work. These units have been developed by the school to cater for the range of abilities of the students and to assist teachers in programming for their across-stage class groupings.

The Linkages webpage can be found at:

www.bosnsw-k6.nsw.edu.au

Further information on Linkages projects can be obtained from Suzanne Ziems at ziems@boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au or phone (02) 9367 8274 or fax (02) 9367 8476.

continued page 5

Update on Creative Arts K–6 *continued from page 1*

Scope and Sequence

The need for guidance in the development of skills and understanding in Visual Arts and Music was also a concern.

Units of Work

Some concern was expressed about the duration of some of the units of work. Some teachers commented that they would have to adjust the units and would appreciate having some units that last for only a few weeks. It was also felt that some units overestimated the skills and prior knowledge of techniques that students would bring to some learning experiences, particularly in the early years.

Resources and references

The feedback on references and resources (eg artworks, songs, music) referred to in the syllabus and units of work centred on the need to ensure that these are readily available. Schools in rural NSW, in particular, commented on the difficulty of tracking down and obtaining resources. Classroom teachers commented that it would be helpful if alternative resources were listed and visuals or explanatory notes about the works were included to assist in the selection of alternatives.

Craft

The place of craft in the creative arts was raised by some classroom teachers during the consultation. Some commented that the development of skills in the use of materials and tools was not sufficiently addressed. Classroom teachers of students in Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 commented that the time spent on the development of technical skills and understanding was considerably more than what was reflected in the syllabus and units of work.

Response to issues arising from the consultation

A set of proposed solutions and strategies developed to address all of the issues was endorsed by the Board at its February meeting.

The solutions and strategies include the redevelopment of the draft documents and a 'checking out' process involving systems representatives, consultants and groups of classroom teachers from various types of primary schools.


Some changes to the syllabus in response to the consultation will include:

- the development of indicators and stage statements
- coding of the outcomes
- the further development of the content section to provide guidance for teachers in what could be taught in each art form in each stage
- some suggested assessment strategies for each art form
- a glossary.

Some changes to the draft units of work in response to the consultation will include:

- a reduction in the length of some units
- additional information or advice about resource material
- adjustments in accordance with changes to the syllabus (stage statements, outcomes, indicators and content).

As a result of the strategies outlined above, it is now expected that the syllabus package will be released to schools in Term 3 this year.


Further information on the Creative Arts K–6 Syllabus can be obtained by contacting Phil Lambert at lambert@boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au or by phone on 9367 8199, or Kerry Thomas at thomas@boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au 

Primary Matters *continued from page 4*

Science and Technology K–6 Outcomes and Indicators on the web

The revised outcomes (and accompanying indicators) for Science and Technology K–6 are now available on the Board of Studies website (<http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au>). These outcomes were developed in response to a limited evaluation of the syllabus undertaken in 1996. Findings from this evaluation resulted in a reduction in the number of outcomes for Science and Technology K–6 and the development of indicators and stage statements.

The Office of the Board of Studies is currently developing a CD-ROM of student work samples for Science and Technology K–6. The CD-ROM, which is expected to be released to schools in July, will also include the revised outcomes and indicators. A printed copy of the outcomes and indicators will also be distributed at this time.

For further information regarding these items or K–6 curriculum matters in general, contact Phil Lambert, Inspector, Primary Education, on lambert@boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au, phone (02) 9367 8199 or fax (02) 9367 8476. 



BOARD PUBLICATIONS COLUMN

K-6 Mathematics Resources

There are four excellent K-6 Mathematics resources available from the Board of Studies.

Book 1:

Problem Solving Through Chance & Data \$16

Book 2:

Calculators in K-6 Maths \$16

Book 3:

Outdoor Activities \$16

Book 4:

Patterns in Mathematics K-6 \$16
(postage of \$4 for one item/\$8 for two or more applies)

Upon production syllabus documents are printed and copies sent to schools in accordance with permanent teacher numbers that have been supplied by the school. A copy will be provided to the school for each permanent teacher who may be required to teach the course. In addition, one copy of each syllabus will be provided for the principal and one copy for the library. These documents are also placed on the Board's website. Schools should check the version of

the syllabus on the web site as this, together with any amendments, are posted on the Board's site.

The Board will regularly survey schools to ascertain the number of permanent teachers. Schools can be provided with the number of copies of new syllabuses required.

Notices, newsletters and bulletins provide schools with information regarding the Board's policies, initiatives, and strategic directions. These documents are placed on the Board's website.

Contact Information

To place an order or to enquire about products and services you can contact the Office of the Board by:

Fax: (02) 9262 6270

e-mail clientservices@boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au

or write to Client Services, Office of the Board of Studies, GPO Box 5300 Sydney 2001.

Purchases can be made on official purchase order, using a credit card or by sending a cheque. There is a postage charge of \$4 for one item or \$8 for two or more items.



Aerial Photography on the Web

Aerial Photographs of New South Wales are now spatially stored on a new website called 'Air View'. More than 50000 digital images can be found at www.lic.gov.au.

The website, constructed by the Land Information Centre, uses electronic search facilities to provide the latest information on aerial photography coverage of the State.

Students are finding aerial photographs a valuable educational aid to study boundaries, crop plantings, drainage works, buildings and cultural features for efficient land management.

Digitally scanned images allow the user to manipulate and customise the topography of the land as you've never seen it before. Alternatively, with a stereoscopic viewer, the contours of the land, mountains, views, valleys and ridges can be seen clearly in 3D.

For a free catalogue and information brochure contact:

The Land Information Centre
Panorama Avenue
BATHURST NSW 2795
Phone: (02) 6332 8200
Fax: (02) 6332 8296
E-mail: market@lic.gov.au

The Sydney Map Shop
23-33 Bridge Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000
Phone: (02) 9228 6465
Fax: (02) 9221 5980

CHECK OUR WEBSITE

<http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au>

- * 1999 School Certificate Test Statistics
- * 1999 HSC Examination Statistics
- * Profiles of Student Achievement for Students with Special Education Needs
- * Science and Technology K-6 Outcomes and Indicators
- * Performance Bands for Amended Beginners Languages Syllabuses
 - Arabic
 - Chinese
 - French
 - German
 - Indonesian
 - Italian
 - Japanese
 - Korean
 - Modern Greek
 - Spanish
- * Dance Support Document
- * Tourism Support Document



Incorporating VET Modules into Stage 6 Languages Continuers Courses

Language teachers have the option of integrating Vocational Education and Training (VET) modules into their HSC programs of study for Continuers Courses in languages.

Why integrate a VET module into a teaching and learning program?

Students may gain an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate III in Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean and Spanish by completing a relevant module, which may be studied at school, and an additional module undertaken at TAFE.

A Certificate III in particular languages leads to advanced standing at a number of universities, including the University of Western Sydney, the University of Newcastle, and Wollongong University, in the relevant tertiary course in selected languages. Students have also been offered advanced standing at other institutions on an individual basis. Formal arrangements are currently being negotiated by TAFE with other tertiary bodies including the University of NSW and the University of Sydney.

The content of the VET language modules delivered by TAFE is compatible with aspects of the content of the Preliminary and HSC Continuers courses. Minimal adaptation will be required to include the module in your program.

Who is eligible to teach VET modules in language?

Teachers who are qualified to teach Years 11 or 12 in the relevant language are eligible to teach the relevant module.

Which languages have VET modules?

Modules are available in Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean and Spanish. TAFE is currently producing modules for Arabic and Vietnamese and these will be available in Term 3, 2000.

Which module do I teach?

All the TAFE Certificates in languages consist of a number of modules labelled alphabetically.

Modules A, B, C and D in the sequence of the TAFE languages courses in French, German, Italian and Spanish are assumed knowledge for Year 11 students in these languages.

Modules A, B, C, D, E and F in the sequence of the TAFE languages courses in Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean are assumed knowledge for Year 11 students in these languages.

For Stage 6:

French, German, Italian and Spanish students study Module E.

Chinese, Indonesian and Korean students study Module G.

Japanese students study Module J.

When is the module to be taught?

The relevant module can be taught in Years 11 and/or 12.

How are resources obtained?

To obtain the module descriptors that are in competency-based training format and contain a number of learning outcomes, assessment criteria, conditions statements as well as suggested assessment methods, teachers will need to contact Kate McDonald at the Curriculum Resourcing and Operations Unit by telephoning (02) 9244 5069.

To obtain the teaching materials needed to teach the course, teachers need to contact Sandra Mackay, SEO Publications at Access Educational Services Division by telephoning (02) 9846 8165 or by email sandra.mackay@tafensw.edu.au

What is the cost of the descriptors and teaching materials?

The cost of the teacher resource materials needed to deliver the module is \$12.00 per language.

Who assesses the students?

Teachers will assess their own students. The teacher resources contain assessment guidelines and samples of assessment. TAFE must be informed of each student's assessment results by the end of Term 3 in Year 11 or 12. A form to record student results will accompany the resources. Assessment is competency-based and referenced to standards.

What recognition do students receive at the end of the course?

Teachers will need to contact the Program Manager, Languages at TAFE NSW – phone (02) 9846 8170 – to register the students who have successfully completed the module by the beginning of Term 4 in the year the module was completed.

Students receive a Statement of Achievement in the relevant language on successful completion of the module. This will be made available for collection in schools in Term 4.



1999 SC and HSC Results on the Web

Principals are reminded that the up-to-date versions of the 1999 SC and HSC results are available on the Board's website through the Schools Online service using your ID code and P.I.N.


Schools that submitted students for the trial SC tests in Australian History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship will find that these results are now available. Separate marks have been reported for the History and Geography components. Summary comparisons between the school's performance and the state performance are also provided.

Board of Studies on display at the Royal Easter Show

Once again this year the Board of Studies is participating in the Royal Easter Show, displaying products on a stand with the Department of Education and Training and TAFE. Staff members will be available to answer questions from the public.

The Board of Studies will be displaying information about the New Higher School Certificate and the School Certificate, as well as syllabus and catalogue information. Each agency will have interactive computers on the stand and there will also be demonstrations throughout the day.

This is the third year that the show has been held at Homebush and it is a great opportunity for teachers, parents, students and the general community to gain some first-hand information about the New HSC and all that's happening in education throughout NSW.

Order forms will be available for saleable items on display by the Board. 

HSC Order of Merit Lists and 'All-Rounders' List

This article explains the criteria used to place students in the HSC Order of Merit and All-Rounders' Lists.

To be placed on an Order of Merit list a student must obtain a composite mark of at least 90% of the maximum possible mark for the course. This value must be exactly 90.0 or greater for a 2 unit course or 135.0 or greater for a 3 unit course. The composite mark is the average of the student's scaled examination mark and their moderated assessment.

In calculating the Order of Merit list for a 3 unit course the sum of the students' performances on the 2/3 unit common and the 3 unit additional components are taken into account. A 3 unit student cannot receive a place on the 2 unit Order of Merit list by virtue of their performance on the 2/3 unit common component.

Students are placed on the 'All-Rounders' list if they are on the Order of Merit lists in courses totalling a minimum of 11 units.

Students can accumulate the 11 units worth of Order of Merit list placements over two or more years.

Common Misconceptions

- Some students believe they have gained a place on an Order of Merit list based solely on their examination marks or their assessment marks. *Answer* – the determination is based on their composite mark.

- Some students believe they have gained a place on an Order of Merit list when the average of their reported examination and assessment marks is 90%. *Answer:* The reported marks are rounded for ease of interpretation. The determination of whether the student has achieved a place on the Order of Merit list is made by using the more precise marks held to one decimal place in the computer system. A student who has an examination mark of 89.6 and an assessment mark of 90.2 will not be placed on the Order of Merit list for that course even though an examination mark of 90 and an assessment mark of 90 would be reported on their Record of Achievement.

- Some students who accumulate the requirements for a 3 unit course over two years believe they should be on the Order of Merit list for the 3 unit course in the second year. *Answer:* A 3 unit course is an integrated course consisting of the 2/3 unit common component and the 3 unit additional component. A student who splits the study of the two components over two years is eligible for inclusion on the Order of Merit list for the two unit course in the initial year. They are not then eligible for inclusion on the Order of Merit list for the 3 unit course in the second year as they will only have done the additional component in that year. That is, to be on the Order of Merit list for a 3 unit course a student must complete both components in the same year. 