



The Board's syllabus development process

The Board of Studies is committed to a syllabus development process that provides opportunities for consultation, establishes achievable timelines and ensures quality syllabuses.

The process, using a project management approach, involves four phases:

1. Syllabus review
2. Writing brief development
3. Syllabus development
4. Implementation.

The process is described on the following pages.

Major features of the process are:

- Advice is sought at key points from teachers, significant individuals and organisations. In particular, professional teacher associations play an important role.
- The Board appoints Board Curriculum Committees to assist with its monitoring and quality assurance role. These committees report directly to the Board on the quality of the material produced by project teams and ensure the integrity of the syllabus development process.
- A project manager employed by the Office of the Board of Studies manages the syllabus development project, developing the initial proposal, establishing consultative networks, managing consultation, and drafting and revising syllabus documentation. Project teams will, at various stages of the syllabus development process, include curriculum, assessment and publications officers.
- Contracted writers are, at times, also included in the project teams. The Board maintains a register of writers. To be considered for appointment as writers, teachers from all syllabus areas with demonstrated writing expertise can submit an expression of interest to the Office of the Board. Advertisements for expressions of interest appear from time to time in Board Bulletins. Enquiries can be made to the Director of Curriculum, tel: (02) 9367 8315.

Phase 1: SYLLABUS REVIEW

Purpose

A review of the existing syllabus provision and a plan for the revision or development of the syllabus.

Following consideration of relevant data the Board determines whether a review of existing syllabus provision will be conducted. The review phase will typically involve

- establishment of a Board Curriculum Committee to monitor the syllabus development process and provide advice throughout the project
- establishment of the project plan which includes consultation and a timeline
- informing schools of the project plan including the timeline for consultation
- evaluation of the existing syllabus against the syllabus criteria approved by the Board of Studies
- consultation with teachers and key groups regarding the existing syllabus and the general directions for the syllabus development
- research, including a review of literature and practice in Australia and overseas
- recommendation by the Board Curriculum Committee of the broad directions for syllabus revision or development in response to the review findings to the Board
- Board endorsement of broad directions for syllabus revision or development

Outcomes

- endorsement by the Board of the broad directions for syllabus revision or development
- information provided to schools about the consultation and timeline for the syllabus revision or development.

Phase 2: WRITING BRIEF DEVELOPMENT

Purpose

The development of a writing brief for the draft syllabus that takes account of the broad directions established during the syllabus review phase.

This phase will typically involve

- preparation of a draft writing brief by a project team, taking into account information from consultation and research undertaken during the previous phase
- widespread consultation on the draft writing brief, involving:
 - teachers
 - key groups, including professional associations and school systems
 - the Board Curriculum Committee
 - other relevant Board committees
- preparation of a report that identifies issues emerging from the consultation and the action to be taken in response to those issues
- modification of the draft writing brief in response to consultation feedback
- consideration of the amended draft writing brief by the Board Curriculum Committee for recommendation to the Board
- submission of the draft writing brief, consultation report and Board Curriculum Committee recommendation to the Board for endorsement
- submission of the endorsed writing brief to the Minister for Education and Training
- a briefing session with school authorities
- Internet publication of the consultation report and endorsed writing brief.

Outcome

A writing brief which provides the detailed blueprint for the development of the syllabus, against which the final syllabus is judged.

Syllabus Development Process

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1. Syllabus Review
2. Writing brief development
3. Syllabus development
4. Implementation

Phase 4: IMPLEMENTATION

Purpose

Implementation of the syllabus is conducted by schools. The Board's role is the on-going collection of data on the use of the syllabus to ascertain whether the intentions of the syllabus are being achieved.

This phase will typically involve

- collection, collation and analysis of data on the use of the syllabus
- routine reports to the Board and / or the Minister
- identification and recording of issues that need to be taken into account in subsequent syllabus revision.

Outcome

Data on the use of the syllabus that can be used to inform a future syllabus review.

Phase 3: SYLLABUS DEVELOPMENT

Purpose

The development of the syllabus package as defined by the project plan.

This phase will typically involve

- preparation of a draft syllabus package, by a project team, according to the endorsed writing brief
- distribution of a draft syllabus package for consultation (via the Internet) to:
 - teachers
 - key groups, including professional associations and school systems
 - the Board Curriculum Committee
 - other relevant Board committees
- preparation of a report that identifies issues emerging from the consultation and the action to be taken in response to those issues
- preparation of a report that describes the extent to which board criteria for approval of syllabuses have been met
- modification of the draft syllabus package in response to consultation feedback
- consideration of the amended draft syllabus package by the board Curriculum Committee for recommendation to the Board
- submission of the draft syllabus package, consultation report and Board Curriculum Committee recommendation to the Board for endorsement
- submission of the syllabus to the Minister for approval
- Internet publication of the consultation report
- editing, design, layout and printing of the approved syllabus package
- briefing of school authorities to effect handover of syllabus package for implementation in schools
- distribution of the syllabus package to schools.

Outcomes

- A syllabus approved by the Minister
- Publication and distribution of the syllabus package.

Board Curriculum Committees

Membership

The Board Curriculum Committees for each syllabus development project will be appointed by the Board and include:

- 1-2 members of the Board of Studies
- 2 Tertiary sector nominees, nominated by the Committee of Chairs of Academic Boards
- 2 NSW Department of Education and Training nominees
- 1 NSW Department of Education and Training nominee with TAFE background (for Years 7-12 Committees only)
- 2 NSW Teachers' Federation nominees
- 1 Independent Education Union nominee
- 1 Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc nominee
- 1 Catholic Education Commission nominee
- 1 Parents and Citizens Association nominee
- 1 Association of Independent Schools nominee
- 1 representative with a background in Special Education
- 1 Council of NSW Professional Teachers' Associations nominee
- 1 NSW Parents Council / Council of Catholic Schools Parents nominee
- 1 Primary Principals' Council nominee (K-6 committees only)
- 1 Federation of School and Community Organisations nominee (K-6 committees only)

Role

The role of Board Curriculum Committees is to:

- provide advice to project teams at defined stages throughout the project;
- provide advice on the groups or individuals to be consulted during the development of the syllabus;
- review documentation prepared during the curriculum development process;
- recommend syllabus documents to the Board for endorsement.

Board Curriculum Committees will advise the Board on:

- whether the agreed processes have been followed;
- whether due attention has been given to the views identified during consultation;
- whether the syllabus development processes have been followed;
- the quality of the syllabus package in relation to the writing brief endorsed by the Board.

Project Teams

Project teams will comprise various personnel from the Office of the Board of Studies and contracted writers. Project managers, appointed by the Office of the Board for each syllabus development project, will:

- coordinate and manage the production of a syllabus development proposal, writing brief and draft syllabus package by the project team;
- inform the Board Curriculum Committee on issues identified during consultation;
- co-ordinate research to evaluate particular syllabuses and make appropriate recommendations to the Board;
- receive and act on advice from the consultative network, including:
 - teachers
 - key groups, such as professional associations and school systems
 - the Board Curriculum Committee.

Given the nature of the two roles, development and monitoring, members of the project teams cannot also be members of the Board Curriculum Committees.

Selection and appointment of project team members will be undertaken by the Office of the Board of Studies.