What is collaborative curriculum planning?

Collaborative curriculum planning is the process undertaken to determine the most appropriate curriculum options and adjustments for a student with special education needs.

Who is involved in the collaborative curriculum planning process?

These decisions need to involve those who have significant knowledge and understanding of the student. Participants should include the student and parents/carers. In addition, the principal, subject/classroom teachers, learning support personnel and professionals with specific expertise may be involved. It might be necessary to provide the student with additional assistance or encouragement to enable them to be actively involved in the process.

What is the purpose of collaborative curriculum planning?

Team members meet to design and implement an appropriate program of study for the student, considering curriculum options and goals to enable the student to meet curriculum requirements.

When making decisions about curriculum options it is important to consider:

- the student’s learning needs, strengths, goals and interests
- the support and/or adjustments that may be necessary for the student to fully access the curriculum
- the transition needs of the student between stages of schooling, and from school to adult life
- how the student’s overall study pattern will meet the requirements for the award of the Record of School Achievement or Higher School Certificate.

What is decided during the collaborative curriculum planning process?

Through the collaborative curriculum planning process, the following can be determined:

- The outcomes and content most appropriate for the student in each key learning area, including earlier Stage outcomes and Life Skills outcomes and content. For example, it may be more appropriate for a student in Stage 2 to be working on one or more Stage 1 outcomes in the English KLA. Alternatively, a student in Stage 4 may work on one or more Stage 3 outcomes in the Mathematics KLA. When working with outcomes from different stages, it is important to ensure age-appropriate content is used to address the outcomes.

- The adjustments or support required for particular teaching, learning and assessment opportunities. For example, scaffolds or visual organisers may be required to accompany multi-step or complex instructions.

- The learning goals for the student.

Figure 1 provides a suggested process that may be used to select appropriate syllabus outcomes for students with special education needs.

How is the collaborative curriculum planning process undertaken?

School systems and individual independent schools are responsible for the manner in which this collaborative planning process is managed. Figure 2 provides a suggested model.

Consultation with the respective support personnel in schools is important when making decisions about the most appropriate curriculum options for students with special education needs. Schools do not need to send planning documentation to the Board of Studies NSW.
Collaborative curriculum planning

Figure 1: Process for selecting appropriate syllabus outcomes

Can the student access syllabus outcomes at the stage identified with his/her chronological age without adjustments/other support?

Yes

- Select outcomes at the stage identified with his/her chronological age in one or more strands

No

Can the student access syllabus outcomes at the stage identified with his/her chronological age with adjustments/other support?

Yes

- Identify a prior stage at which the student can access syllabus outcomes
- Select outcomes at the identified stage in one or more strands
- Plan relevant adjustments/other support for teaching and learning experiences and assessment opportunities

No

- Plan relevant adjustments/other support for teaching and learning experiences and assessment opportunities

Figure 2: Collaborative curriculum planning model

1. Participants gather to discuss the needs of the student.

2. Curriculum options are considered and an appropriate pattern of study decided.

3. Relevant adjustments and/or support are selected.

4. Additional goals beyond the curriculum are set if required.

5. Review of planning process is negotiated.