



An Introduction to Arabic Continuers Stage 6 in the New HSC

The new *Arabic Continuers Stage 6 Syllabus* replaces the current syllabuses in 2 Unit General (1992) and 2 Unit Arabic (1992). The new syllabus is to be implemented with Year 11 in 2000 and will be first examined in 2001.

The syllabus provides information that was formerly available in the *Languages KLA Handbook*. This includes descriptions of course requirements, assessment weightings for internal and external assessment and examination specifications.

What is similar?

The new *Arabic Continuers Stage 6 Syllabus* represents a minor change to the current 2 Unit General and 2 Unit syllabuses. While the new syllabus varies in its structure and elaboration of content, it is similar in intent and in method of assessment to the current syllabuses. The macro skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking are implicit in the four objectives and are assessed in both the internal and external assessment.

What are the overall improvements?

- The syllabus makes explicit what students are required to know and do.
- The syllabus objectives represent the communicative use of the language, and integrate the macro skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking.
- The language content is specified by prescribing themes and topics with suggested approaches to the study of these, listing texts and text types, and grammatical items.
- Assessment, both internal and external, is linked to the syllabus objectives and content.
- The syllabus includes criteria for judging performance.
- The syllabus provides the option of integrating VET modules into the content.

The following changes have been made to particular sections of the course

Rationale, Aims and Objectives (pp 6, 9)

The syllabus provides a comprehensive rationale for studying Arabic, and has a clear set of aims and objectives, which provide statements of the overall purpose and the intent of the syllabus.

Objectives focus on the knowledge, skills and understanding involved in exchanging information, opinions and experiences in Arabic; expressing ideas in Arabic; analysing, processing and responding to texts in Arabic; and understanding aspects of the Arabic language and culture.

Outcomes (p 11)

This syllabus supports an outcomes based approach to teaching and learning. The outcomes are designed so that students of Arabic can demonstrate what they know and can do as a result of teaching and learning in the course. The outcomes are derived from the objectives.

Content (pp 13–17)

The syllabus prescribes both themes and topics as the organisational focus of the language content.

The three themes in the new syllabus are:

- The individual
- The Arabic-speaking communities
- The changing world.

Each theme has a number of prescribed topics that demonstrate the particular focus of the themes. Advice is provided as to how these themes and topics may be treated by suggesting sub-topics and indicating how texts on these themes and topics may be used to support the productive or receptive use of the language.

Texts and text types which students are expected to read, view, or produce are listed. Whilst students may encounter a wider range of texts and text types than those listed in the content section, the syllabus makes explicit those text types students may be expected to produce in the external examination.

Grammatical items which students are expected to know are identified, with examples provided.

There are no prescribed texts (as in the Options for the current 2 Unit General and 2 Unit HSC courses). However, the syllabus makes specific the need for students to read, view and listen to texts that are appropriate to their needs and interests and which support the content themes and topics.

Texts which support the themes and topics may be selected from those currently prescribed for literary study in the current 2 Unit syllabuses.

Assessment (pp 22–31)

The assessment is aligned to the syllabus objectives and content. Students will be required to demonstrate achievement of the full range of outcomes across the internal and external assessment components.

The internal assessment specifies the components to be assessed and their weightings, as well as suggesting a variety of tasks that may be undertaken. This ensures that a student's achievement can be measured against a wider range of syllabus content and outcomes than may be covered by the external assessment alone.

In the external assessment students will be assessed on their ability to:

- exchange information, opinions and experiences in an oral conversation and in a written response to a written text
- express ideas through the production of two short written texts
- analyse, process and respond to aural and written texts by responding to questions of comprehension on the texts.

All written tasks which require a response in Arabic identify precisely what it is that students are expected to do by specifying the audience, purpose and context of each task. Written tasks are short and require students to produce different kinds of writing for different communicative purposes. Students are expected to respond to a written text, and to produce two original texts, one of a straightforward 'descriptive/informative' nature and one a more challenging 'evaluative/imaginative' text.

What will be needed to teach this subject?

- *Arabic Continuers Stage 6 Syllabus.*
- Arabic Continuers specimen examination paper, marking guidelines, and draft performance scale.

Current resources are appropriate for use with the new syllabus although there may need to be some adjustment in the way teachers use them.

Texts currently prescribed (for the 2 Unit HSC course) may be used to support various aspects of the syllabus content rather than analysed as works of literature. For example, these texts may illustrate themes and topics, the use of particular linguistic elements or vocabulary items, or demonstrate the conventions of a particular text type or discourse form.

Text books and resource materials that support language learning will continue to apply as the themes and topics, grammatical items, text types and tasks are similar to those in current syllabuses.

A list of a limited number of resources are on the Board's website <http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au>.