



An Introduction to Portuguese Continuers Stage 6 in the New HSC

The new *Portuguese Continuers Stage 6 Syllabus* replaces the current syllabus in 2 Unit Portuguese (1994). The new syllabus is to be implemented with Year 11 in 2001 and will be first examined in 2002.

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 *Portuguese Continuers Stage 6 Syllabus* represents a minor change to the current 2 Unit syllabus. The new syllabus is similar in intent, structure, content and in method of assessment to the current syllabus. 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.

The prescribed themes and topics are similar to those suggested in the current 2 Unit syllabus.

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 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 Portuguese, and has a clear set of aims and objectives that 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 Portuguese; expressing ideas in Portuguese; analysing, processing, and responding to texts in Portuguese; and understanding aspects of the Portuguese 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 Portuguese 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 13–20)

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 Portuguese-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. While 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 recommended texts to support the prescribed themes (as in the current 2 Unit HSC course). 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 recommended for discussing a theme in the current 2 Unit syllabus.

Assessment (pp 22–33)

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 that require a response in Portuguese identify precisely what it is that students are expected to do by specifying the audience, purpose and context of each task. Written tasks require students to produce different kinds of writing for different communicative purposes. Students are expected to respond to a written text, and to produce an original text.

What will be needed to teach this subject?

- *Portuguese Continuers Stage 6 Syllabus.*
- Portuguese Continuers sample assessment items, 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 recommended (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>).