
The BOSTES syllabus development process

The Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) 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

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.
- BOSTES appoints Board Curriculum Committees to assist with monitoring and quality assurance. These committees report directly to BOSTES on the quality of the material produced by project teams and ensure the integrity of the syllabus development process.
- A project manager employed by BOSTES manages the syllabus development project, establishing consultative networks, managing consultation, and drafting and revising syllabus documentation. Project teams will comprise various personnel from BOSTES as well as external writers.
- BOSTES maintains a register of writers from which project writers are appointed. To be considered for appointment as writers, teachers from all syllabus areas with demonstrated writing expertise can submit an expression of interest to BOSTES. Advertisements for expressions of interest appear from time to time in the Board Bulletin e-newsletter. Enquiries can be made to the Director, Curriculum and Assessment Standards, tel: (02) 9367 8313.

¹ Revisions and amendments to syllabuses undertake a compacted version of these phases.

Syllabus development process

The BOSTES syllabus development process involves four phases:

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

Phase 1: SYLLABUS REVIEW

Purpose

A review of the existing syllabus provision and a plan for the redevelopment of the syllabus.

Following consideration of relevant data, BOSTES determines whether a review of the existing syllabus provision will be conducted. This phase will typically involve:

- establishment of the project plan, which includes consultation and a timeline
- informing schools of the project plan, including the timeline for consultation
- establishment of a Board Curriculum Committee to monitor the syllabus development process and provide advice throughout the project
- evaluation of the existing syllabus against the syllabus criteria approved by BOSTES
- consultation with teachers and key groups regarding the existing syllabus and the general directions for syllabus development

- research, including a review of literature and practice in Australia and overseas
- recommendation by the Board Curriculum Committee to BOSTES of the broad directions for syllabus development in response to the review finding
- BOSTES endorsement of broad directions for syllabus development.

Outcomes

- Information provided to schools about the consultation and timeline for syllabus development.
- Endorsement by BOSTES of the broad directions for syllabus 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 the project team, taking into account information from consultation and research undertaken (if applicable) 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 BOSTES 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 BOSTES
- submission of the draft writing brief, consultation report and Board Curriculum Committee recommendation to BOSTES for endorsement
- submission of the endorsed writing brief to the Minister for Education
- dissemination of the endorsed writing brief.

Outcome

- A writing brief, noted by the Minister, which provides the detailed blueprint for the development of the syllabus and against which the final syllabus is judged.

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 and initial support materials by a project team, according to the endorsed writing brief
- draft syllabus available for consultation to:
 - teachers
 - key groups, including professional associations and school systems
 - the Board Curriculum Committee
 - other relevant BOSTES committees
 - interested members of the public
- 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 syllabus in response to consultation feedback
- development of initial support materials, as specified in the syllabus package
- consideration of the amended draft syllabus by the Board Curriculum Committee for recommendation to BOSTES
- submission of the draft syllabus, consultation report and Board Curriculum Committee recommendation to BOSTES for endorsement

- submission of the syllabus to the Minister for Education for approval
- publication of the consultation report, syllabus and initial support materials
- communication to schools in relation to the publication and implementation of the syllabus and initial support materials
- briefing of school authorities, teacher training institutions and professional teacher associations to effect handover of the syllabus for implementation in schools
- development of additional support materials, as specified in the syllabus package
- publication of additional support materials, if required
- communication to schools in relation to the publication of additional support materials.

Outcomes

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

Phase 4: IMPLEMENTATION

Purpose

Implementation of the syllabus is conducted by schools. The role of BOSTES in this is the ongoing collection of data on the use of the syllabus and related resources 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
- collection, collation and analysis of data on the use of related resources, such as interactive online syllabuses, support materials and Program Builder
- identification and recording of issues that need to be taken into account in subsequent syllabus revision

- evaluation of syllabus provision presented to BOSTES.

Outcome

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

Board Curriculum Committees

Membership

The Board Curriculum Committee for each syllabus development project will be appointed by BOSTES and include:

- 1–2 members of BOSTES
- 2 tertiary sector nominees, nominated by the NSW/Territories Committee of Chairs of Academic Boards/Senates
- 2 NSW Department of Education and Communities nominees
- 1 NSW Department of Education and Communities nominee with a TAFE background
- 2 NSW Teachers Federation nominees
- 1 NSW/ACT Independent Education Union nominee
- 1 NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc nominee
- 1 Catholic Education Commission NSW nominee
- 1 NSW Federation of Parents and Citizens Association nominee
- 1 Association of Independent Schools of NSW nominee
- 1 representative with a background in Special Education
- Nominees from the learning area professional association, nominated by the Professional Teachers' Council NSW, as required:
 - 1 nominee for K–6 (K–10 committees only)
 - 1 nominee for Years 7–12 (K–10 committees or senior years committees)
- 1 NSW Parents' Council nominee
- 1 Council of Catholic Schools Parents NSW nominee
- 1 NSW Primary Principals' Association Inc nominee (K–10 committees only)
- 1 NSW Federation of School Community Organisations Inc nominee (K–10 committees only)
- 1 Early Childhood Australia NSW nominee (K–10 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 document
- review documentation prepared during the curriculum development process
- recommend syllabus documents to BOSTES for endorsement.

Board Curriculum Committees will advise BOSTES on:

- whether the agreed processes have been followed
- whether due attention has been given to the views identified during consultation

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- whether the syllabus development processes have been followed
 - the quality of the syllabus in relation to the writing brief endorsed by BOSTES.

Project teams

Project teams will comprise various personnel from BOSTES as well as external writers. Project managers, appointed by BOSTES for each syllabus development project, will:

- manage all financial resources to ensure completion of all tasks within the specific budget
- assemble the project team necessary to carry out the process
- 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
- coordinate the research to evaluate particular syllabuses and make appropriate recommendations to BOSTES
- 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 Committee.

Selection and appointment of project team members will be undertaken by BOSTES.