

# MODIFIED

## COURSE FRAMEWORK

### INTRODUCTION

All programs of study for the ACT Year 12 Certificate should enable students to become:

- creative and critical thinkers
- enterprising problem-solvers
- skilled and empathetic communicators
- informed and ethical decision-makers
- environmentally and culturally aware citizens
- confident and capable users of technologies
- independent and self-managing learners
- collaborative team members

and provide students with:

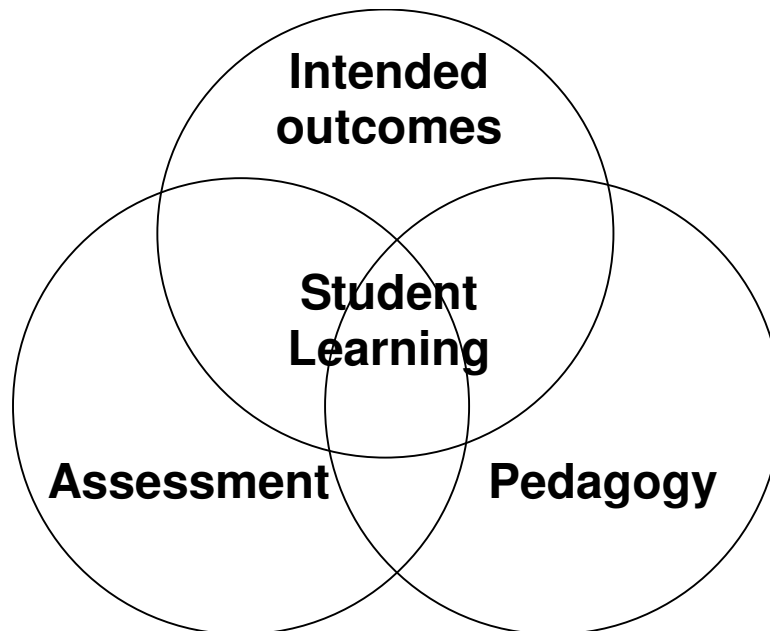
- a comprehensive body of specific knowledge, principles and concepts
- a basis for self-directed and lifelong learning
- personal attributes enabling effective participation in society

*Examples of these student capabilities are provided at **Appendix A**.*

### COURSE FRAMEWORKS

Course Frameworks provide the basis for the development and accreditation of any course within a broad subject area and provide a common basis for the assessment, moderation and reporting of student outcomes in courses based on the Framework.

Course Frameworks support a model of learning that integrates intended student outcomes, pedagogy and assessment. This model is underpinned by a set of beliefs and a set of learning principles.



### **Underpinning beliefs**

- All students are able to learn.
- Learning is a partnership between students and teachers.
- Teachers are responsible for advancing student learning.

### **Learning principles**

1. Learning builds on existing knowledge, understandings and skills.  
*(Prior knowledge)*
2. When learning is organised around major concepts, principles and significant real world issues, within and across disciplines, it helps students make connections and build knowledge structures.  
*(Deep knowledge and connectedness)*
3. Learning is facilitated when students actively monitor their own learning and consciously develop ways of organising and applying knowledge within and across contexts.  
*(Metacognition)*
4. Learners' sense of self and motivation to learn affects learning.  
*(Self-concept)*
5. Learning needs to take place in a context of high expectations.  
*(High expectations)*
6. Learners learn in different ways and at different rates.  
*(Individual differences)*
7. Different cultural environments, including the use of language, shape learners' understandings and the way they learn.  
*(Socio-cultural effects)*
8. Learning is a social and collaborative function as well as an individual one.  
*(Collaborative learning)*
9. Learning is strengthened when learning outcomes and criteria for judging learning are made explicit and when students receive frequent feedback on their progress.  
*(Explicit expectations and feedback)*

## **MODIFIED COURSES/UNITS ARE DESIGNED FOR STUDENTS:**

- who satisfy the ACT Department of Education and Training Disability Criteria accepted as a common definition for census and other system processes by all sectors, Government and non-Government.
- where the principal has deemed exceptional circumstances due to the students significant needs and previous levels of support.

It is important to note that Modified course units are not intended to replace the opportunity for students with disabilities to enrol in courses for which equitable assessment and special consideration in assessment could apply.

Courses written for specific groups may be more appropriately written under the Contemporary Transition framework.

This Modified Course Framework may cover any accredited unit(s) in any course (A/T/V). Modified T course units will not generate a unit score.

### **The Modified Course Framework has been informed by:**

- Student Guide: Equitable assessment and special consideration in assessment in Years 11 and 12
- Teacher Guide: Equitable assessment and special consideration in assessment in Years 11 and 12
- Disability Standards for Education 2005 document.
- Contemporary Transitions framework

## **RATIONALE**

Modified course units, written under the Modified framework, aim to provide opportunities for students to gain skills and knowledge at an appropriate level while participating in an inclusive learning environment. Modified course units will provide students with an equitable range of meaningful and effective learning options and should contain sufficient flexibility and options to suit individual needs, abilities, learning styles and complement the goals of Individual Learning Plans. Modified course units include a provision for students who require specific guidance and extended learning experiences to achieve a level of success in an accredited course.

## **GOALS**

All course units written under this framework should enable students equitable access to the curriculum. Modified course unit goals should focus on:

- engaging students in learning experiences that address their individual needs
- maximising each student's learning opportunities
- providing opportunities for students to achieve their potential
- maintaining the integrity of the course goals being modified

## **GUIDE TO THE SELECTION OF CONTENT**

Modified course units developed under this Framework will provide details of course content as based on the accredited course document identified for modification. While this content will differ according to the particular course classification (A, T, A/V or T/V or A/T/V), all content will be chosen to enable students to work towards the achievement of the common and agreed goals of the Framework.

### **Essential Concepts and Skills**

All units modified under this Framework will be based on the essential concepts and skills of the accredited course identified for modification.

### **Vocational Courses**

Colleges with Registered Training Organisation status (RTO) are eligible to deliver units of competence from Training Packages, or alternatively, they may develop vocational courses, classified as A or T based on the Training Packages, under the relevant Course Framework.

Vocational course units may be modified under the Modified framework to allow students with disabilities greater access to undertaking vocational qualifications. To be deemed competent students must still meet the competency requirements of the Training package.

# PEDAGOGY

## Teaching Strategies

It is important to have a sound understanding of the student's disabilities to ensure the most effective teaching strategies are used.

General teaching strategies that are particularly relevant and effective in Modified course units include:

- Some or all of the strategies as described in the course document
- Peer tutoring, assistance and/or mediation
- Relating topic to student's personal interests
- Cooperative group work
- Thematic studies
- Short term goals to make activities more achievable
- Varying style and mode of presentation
- Clarifying, shortening and repeating instructions
- Demonstrating and modelling
- Using open-ended questions and/or tasks
- Frequent reviews and revision
- Alternative presentation style
- Core plus extension – planning topics with resources and activities for extension work and practice items
- Working with a teacher assistant, if possible
- Planning a wide range of activities to cater for different abilities
- Using a reward system
- Providing assessment criteria for set tasks and definite word limits
- Amending printed material by:
  - Simplifying language
  - Pre-teaching vocabulary
  - Making response items self correcting where possible
  - Improving legibility and layout
  - Highlighting critical features
  - Reducing unnecessary detail
  - If necessary, providing a copy of the material on CD or USB
  - Providing clear instructions and diagrams

*A general model of effective instruction for student with special needs can be found in the **Appendix B**.*

## ASSESSMENT

The purpose of including assessment task types (with examples of tasks) and assessment criteria in Course Frameworks is to provide a common and agreed basis for the collection of evidence of student achievement. This collection of evidence enables a comparison of achievement within and across colleges, through moderation processes. This enables valid, fair and equitable reporting of student achievement on the Year 12 Certificate.

**Assessment Tasks** elicit responses that demonstrate the degree to which students have achieved the goals of a unit (and the course as a whole).

**Assessment Task Types** (with **weightings**) group assessment tasks in ways that reflect agreed shared practice in the subject area and facilitate the comparison of student work across different assessment tasks.

**Assessment Criteria** (the dimensions of quality that teachers look for in evaluating student work) provide a common and agreed basis for judgement of performance against unit and course goals, within and across colleges. Over a course, teachers use all of these criteria to assess students' performance, but do not necessarily use all criteria on each task. Assessment criteria are to be used holistically on a given task and in determining the unit grade.

**Assessment Rubrics** draw on the general course framework criteria to develop assessment criteria for a task type and a continuum that indicates levels of student performance against each criterion.

### Assessment Task Types

The task types are guided by the course unit and the needs of the student. Task types may be modified through:

- alternative assessment
- alternative format
- fewer assessment items than stated in the accredited course document identified for modification (no fewer than 3 in a standard unit)
- scaffolding

The minimum task weighting must be at least 10%. The maximum task weighting must be no more than 60%.

The Board recommends 3 – 5 assessment tasks across a full semester unit (1.0) and 2 – 3 assessment tasks for a 0.5 unit.

### Assessment Criteria

Assessment criteria (listed in the accredited course identified for modification) should be adapted to suit the needs of the student(s). Students will be assessed on the degree to which they demonstrate these criteria.

The modification of these criteria needs to maintain the integrity (of the accredited course identified for modification) whilst reflecting a balance of knowledge and understanding as well as application of skills.

**Assessment Rubrics** may be guided by the accredited course document identified for modification.

## **ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS**

Grade descriptors provide a guide for teacher judgement of students' achievement, based on the assessment criteria, over a unit of work in this subject. Grades are organized on an A - E basis and represent standards of achievement.

Grades are awarded on the proviso that the assessment requirements have been met. Teachers will consider, when allocating grades, the degree to which students demonstrate their ability to complete and submit tasks within a specified time frame.

The following descriptors are consistent with the **system grade descriptors** that describe generic standards of student achievement across all courses.

## Unit Grade Descriptors

| Grade   | Descriptor  |
|---|---|
| A student who achieves the grade <b>A</b> typically | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrates high level of ability in the modified assessment criteria</li> <li>• achieves all of the assessable goals of the unit</li> <li>• shows a consistent ability to transfer knowledge and apply skills in familiar and unfamiliar situations</li> </ul> |
| A student who achieves the grade <b>B</b> typically | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrates sound ability in the modified assessment criteria</li> <li>• achieves most of the assessable goals of the unit</li> <li>• shows an ability to transfer knowledge and apply skills in familiar situations</li> </ul>                                 |
| A student who achieves the grade <b>C</b> typically | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrates satisfactory ability in the modified assessment criteria</li> <li>• achieves some of the assessable goals of the unit</li> <li>• shows an awareness of the need to transfer knowledge and skills</li> </ul>   |
| A student who achieves the grade <b>D</b> typically | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrates limited ability in the modified assessment criteria</li> <li>• achieves few of the assessable goals of the unit</li> <li>• shows limited awareness of the need to transfer knowledge and skills</li> </ul>  |
| A student who achieves the grade <b>E</b> typically | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has met the minimum requirements for attendance and assessment.</li> </ul>   |

## **MODERATION**

Moderation is a system designed and implemented to:

- provide comparability in the system of school-based assessment
- form the basis for valid and reliable assessment in senior secondary schools
- involve the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies and colleges in cooperation and partnership
- maintain the quality of school-based assessment and the credibility, validity and acceptability of Board certificates.

Moderation commences within individual colleges. Teachers develop assessment programs and instruments, apply assessment criteria, and allocate Unit Grades, according to the relevant Course Framework. Teachers within course teaching groups conduct consensus discussions to moderate marking or grading of individual assessment instruments and unit grade decisions.

### **The Moderation Model**

Moderation within the ACT encompasses structured, consensus-based peer review of Unit Grades for all accredited courses.

### **Moderation by Structured, Consensus-based Peer Review**

Review is a subcategory of moderation, comprising the review of standards and the validation of Unit Grades. In the review process, Unit Grades, determined for Year 11 and Year 12 student assessment portfolios that have been assessed in schools by teachers under accredited courses, are moderated by peer review against system wide criteria and standards. This is done by matching student performance with the criteria and standards outlined in the Unit Grade descriptors as stated in the Course Framework. Advice is then given to colleges to assist teachers with, and/or reassure them on, their judgments.

### **Preparation for Structured, Consensus-based Peer Review**

Each year, teachers teaching a Year 11 class are asked to retain originals or copies of student work completed in Semester 2. Similarly, teachers teaching a Year 12 class should retain originals or copies of student work completed in Semester 1. Assessment and other documentation required by the Office of the Board of Senior Secondary Studies should also be kept. Year 11 work from Semester 2 of the previous year is presented for review at Moderation Day 1 in March, and Year 12 work from Semester 1 is presented for review at Moderation Day 2 in August.

In the lead up to Moderation Day, a College Course Presentation (comprised of a document folder and a set of student portfolios) is prepared for each A and T course and any M units offered by the school, and is sent in to the Office of the Board of Senior Secondary Studies.

## **The College Course Presentation**

The package of materials (College Course Presentation) presented by a college for review on moderation days in each course area will comprise the following:

- a folder containing supporting documentation as requested by the Office of the Board through memoranda to colleges
- a set of student portfolios containing marked and/or graded written and non-written assessment responses and completed criteria and standards feedback forms. Evidence of all assessment responses on which the unit grade decision has been made is to be included in the student review portfolios.

Requirements for M units and the evidence to be presented for each moderation day will be outlined by the Office of the Board of Senior Secondary Studies in a specific memorandum to Curriculum & Moderation Coordinators and senior secondary teachers of M units.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **References for Curriculum Development**

Special Needs Education Curriculum Support Paper, Australian Capital Territory Department of Education and Training 1997.

Student Guide: Equitable assessment and special consideration in assessment in Years 11 and 12.

Teacher Guide: Equitable assessment and special consideration in assessment in Years 11 and 12.

Disability Standards for Education 2003 document, DEST.

Every chance to learn: Curriculum Framework for ACT Schools, Preschool to Year 10, Department of Education and Training, 2007

### **Teacher References**

Teachers are expected to use the references from the specific unit resources and/or bibliography in the accredited course identified for modification.

## **COURSE FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT GROUP**

| Name           |                           |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| Patrick Kelly  | Catholic Education Office |
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The group gratefully acknowledges the work of previous groups who developed and revised the Modified Course Framework.

**All programs of study for the ACT Year 12 Certificate should enable students to become:**

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | The examples are indicative and not exhaustive. Those in <b>bold</b> relate particularly to the Employability Skills; those in <i>italics</i> to the Across Curriculum Perspectives.   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creative and critical thinkers</li> </ul>                | exploring, imagining, observing, predicting, <b>thinking laterally, generating ideas, inquiring and researching</b> , interrogating, conceptualising, collecting and <b>analysing data and information, classifying</b> , interpreting, formulating hypotheses, generalising, synthesising, <b>reflecting</b> , justifying conclusions, understanding different perspectives, <b>understanding and application of different thinking strategies, understanding of scientific and mathematical language, using scientific and mathematical techniques</b> (eg estimating, reading and interpreting data, interpolation and extrapolation) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enterprising problem-solvers</li> </ul>                  | showing <b>initiative, resourcefulness</b> , resilience, persistence, assessing and taking risks, <b>recognising and seizing opportunities, problem-posing, problem-identification, problem clarification</b> , being practical, <b>being innovative</b> , using mathematical techniques, <b>using appropriate technologies, working independently and/or collaboratively</b> to achieve a solution, testing assumptions and solutions, modifying approaches   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>skilled and empathetic communicators</li> </ul>          | <b>oral and written skills in Standard Australian English, matching communication to audience and purpose</b> , using terminology and style appropriate to particular disciplines, <b>using mathematical language</b> , creating and <b>communicating meaning</b> using multi-modal forms, <b>imagining the feelings and views of others</b> , respecting and valuing diversity  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>informed and ethical decision-makers</li> </ul>          | <b>finding information</b> and using evidence as the basis for judgements and decisions, <b>developing awareness of differing perspectives</b> , having integrity, taking action, <b>exploring and critically reflecting on own values, attitudes and beliefs</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>environmentally and culturally aware citizens</li> </ul> | understanding <i>the interconnectedness of the natural and constructed world</i> ; the <i>multicultural nature of Australian society</i> ; <i>Indigenous perspectives</i> ; and global economic, social and <i>environmental</i> issues; <i>respecting difference</i> , exercising rights and responsibilities, <b>acting in the public sphere</b> , understanding consequences of choices and decisions   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>confident and capable users of technologies</li> </ul>   | <b>having a range of IT skills</b> , accessing and evaluating <i>information</i> , <b>designing</b> and making, <b>communicating using technologies, choosing most appropriate technologies for the task</b> , refining processes, <b>willingness to learn new skills</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>independent and self-managing learners</li> </ul>        | eg <b>understanding self</b> ( <i>including gender</i> ), <b>having personal goals, evaluating and monitoring own performance, taking responsibility</b> , flexibility in adapting course of action, <b>openness to new ideas, managing time and resources, planning and organising</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>collaborative team members</li> </ul>                    | eg <b>contributing to group effectiveness, building trust, capacity to take different roles within a team, respecting differing strengths</b> ( <i>including contributions of boys and girls</i> ), <b>skills in negotiation and compromise, sustaining commitment to achieve group goals</b>  |

**and provide students with**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a comprehensive body of specific knowledge, principles and concepts</li> </ul> | through subjects, cross-disciplinary courses and/or projects, <b>work experience</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a basis for self-directed and lifelong learning</li> </ul>                     | <b>through understanding and managing self, developing capabilities and modelling an approach</b> ('taking stock, taking steps') <b>that prepares for a social and economic environment of greater individual responsibility</b> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>personal attributes enabling effective participation in society</li> </ul>     | <b>developing social skills</b> and capabilities for citizenship, <b>work experience and recognition of outside learning</b> ; through understanding of a globalised knowledge society   |

## **APPENDIX B**

### **CURRICULUM ADJUSTMENTS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS<sup>1</sup>**

Curriculum adjustments are measures or actions taken in relation to teaching, learning and assessment that enable a student with special education needs to access syllabus outcomes and content. A range of curriculum adjustments should be explored. These adjustments will vary according to the needs of the individual student.

The following information outlines possible curriculum adjustments for students with special education needs. (Other forms of adjustment, including to the physical access of buildings, may also be necessary to promote active participation in all aspects of school life by students with special education needs.)

#### **Adjustments to Teaching and Learning Strategies**

Some students may require:

- adjustments to classroom organisation, e.g. consideration may need to be given to positioning the student in the classroom to maximise participation and/or access to instruction
- adjustments to enable access to teaching and learning activities, eg: the use of technology
- alternative formats such as large print, disk or Braille, simplified texts, subtitled videos and DVDs; oral/sign interpreters or readers and scribes; adjustments or modifications to equipment or furniture; and adjustments to enable participation in field trips and excursions
- adjustments to the amount of content to be covered in a particular lesson or unit of work or the time allocated to complete work
- additional demonstration of key concepts and skills by the teacher, teacher's aide or a peer
- a range of appropriate learning activities with structured opportunities for guided and independent practice and effective feedback
- additional support through group work, peer or volunteer tutoring, and/or other individual assistance.

## Adjustments to Assessment

Some students may require:

- adjustments to the assessment process such as additional time, rest breaks, quieter conditions, or the use of a reader and/or scribe or specific technology
- adjustments to assessment tasks such as rephrasing questions, using simplified language, fewer questions or alternative formats for questions
- alternative formats for responses, e.g. written point form instead of essays, scaffolding
- structured responses, short objective questions, multimedia presentations.

The following are more specific examples of adjustments that can be made to teaching, learning and assessment activities. They identify alternative ways for students to participate in commenting and discussing, writing or recording, reading, listening and viewing. Some of these strategies may require additional support from the teacher, teacher's aide or a peer.

A student may participate in *commenting* and *discussing* by:

- oral contribution to class discussion
- answering closed questions on a topic
- using changes in facial expression, nod or gesture to respond to a closed question, eg 'Are you playing in a sports team at school?'
- selecting photographs, pictures or symbols, e.g. the student makes a choice between two photographs to express a preference (like/don't like)
- selecting symbols from a topic board or communication book to express an opinion
- using a communication device, e.g. the student leads a group discussion with pre-recorded questions or a peer records information on a communication device for the student to present to the class during group work.

A student may participate in *writing* or *recording* by:

- writing short answers to questions
- ticking pre-prepared checklists
- using photographs, pictures or symbols, e.g. the student sequences pictures to tell a story, combines symbols to convey meaning, circles a selection of symbols on a page to create a list using computer software, e.g. the student uses a drawing program and pictures to write, uses scanned pictures and/or digital photographs in a multimedia presentation, uses assistive technology to select text or pictures from the screen.

A student may participate in *reading* activities by:

- reading simplified texts
- reading transcripts
- following a text being read by a peer or adult
- following a text from audiotape, CD-ROM, multimedia presentation or video
- following a visual sequence of instructions, a visual recipe or a visual timetable.

A student may participate in *listening* activities by:

- listening to a text being read by a peer or adult
- listening to a text from audiotape, CD-ROM, multimedia presentation or video
- responding to tone of voice in conjunction with facial expressions, gestures and/or physical prompts.

A student may participate in *viewing* activities by:

- viewing subtitled videos, DVDs
- reading summaries/descriptions of the visual input from photographs, slides, multimedia presentations, films/videos/DVDs, pictures and posters
- listening to a peer or adult describe the visual input from photographs, slides, multimedia presentations, films/videos/DVDs, pictures and posters while they 'view' the visual media or multimedia together
- responding to sensory stimuli, facial expressions, gestures or physical prompts in conjunction with tone of voice.

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<sup>1</sup> This extract was taken from [http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus\\_sc/pdf\\_doc/lifes\\_kills\\_710\\_support.pdf](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus_sc/pdf_doc/lifes_kills_710_support.pdf) Life skills Advice on Planning, Programming and Assessment