

*Board Endorsed 2018*



**Shape of the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies  
Curriculum: Modern Languages**

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## Acknowledgment of the cross-sector working party

A cross-sector working party of teachers of European and Asian languages provided advice on the development of courses written under the Modern Languages framework.

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## Purpose

The *Shape of the BSSS Senior Secondary Curriculum: Modern Languages* provides broad direction on the purpose, structure and organisation of courses written under the Languages Framework.

It is intended to guide the writing of senior secondary courses for Years 11 and 12. This paper has been prepared following analysis of the *ACARA Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Languages* paper, an environmental scan of curriculum across jurisdictions and mapping of BSSS accredited courses for duplication of content.

This paper should be read in conjunction with the BSSS Shape of the ACT Senior Secondary Curriculum available at (<http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/curriculum>).

## Rationale for learning languages

Learning additional languages widens horizons, broadens cognitive and cultural experience, and develops communicative and intercultural capabilities. It also opens up new perspectives for learners, not only in relation to other cultures and languages, but also in terms of their own language and cultural practices.

Learning languages strengthens intellectual and analytical capability and enhances creative and critical thinking. Students develop an understanding of the nature of language (including linguistic and stylistic features), of culture, and of the process of communication. They develop understanding of how values and culture shape a learner's world view. Learning languages extends the learner's understanding of themselves, their heritage, values, culture, and identity. Students develop intercultural capability; they develop understanding of, and respect for, diversity and difference, and openness to different perspectives and experiences. Learning languages contributes to strengthening the community's social, economic, and international development capabilities.

Students learn to reorganise their thinking to accommodate the structure of another language. They develop cognitive flexibility and problem-solving ability, which can be applied when problems and solutions are not evident, as well as when critical thinking and creative approaches are required.

## Languages courses

The BSSS is committed to working with experienced teachers of languages to ensure that curriculum and assessment enable students to study a senior secondary language.

Currently, 10 beginning, 10 continuing and 10 advanced language courses are accredited for delivery in ACT senior secondary schools. Content varies across language courses. This shape paper proposes a consistent and coherent approach. Beginning (A/T/M), continuing (A/T) and Advanced (A/T) will have common content descriptions (i.e. knowledge, understandings and processes) across languages. All BSSS Modern Languages course will comprise of 4 units plus a negotiated study unit.

Each language course remains unique, with its own discrete knowledge, symbols, language, and processes. The unique nature of each language will be accommodated by its own adoption form and guidelines for grammatical items in the appendix of the course at the appropriate level for beginning, continuing and advanced. Students will be assessed using beginning, continuing and advanced Achievement Standards which are common across all languages.

Curriculum documents give coherence to the language area, with a common purpose for languages learning regardless of the language. In addition, it enables the ACT senior secondary system to respond to a growing diversity of languages as only the guidelines for grammatical items will need to be developed.

Students will still be able to study a range of languages. The language studied will be recorded on their senior secondary certificate.

## **Design specifications for all BSSS accredited courses**

The foundation of a course comprises of four core 1.0 standard units. Core units provide students with the breadth of the subject. Units 1-4 are not sequential. Content descriptions state specific subject-based knowledge, understanding and skills. The point of difference between core units will be defined in the unit description and content descriptions. Units will not be organised by activity, instead, units will be organised around a specific focus, concept or issue.

A negotiated study unit is decided upon by a class, group(s) or individual student in consultation with the teacher and with the principal's approval. This unit may be undertaken after the completion of two standard units.

Content descriptions will be written for each unit. Content descriptions specify the knowledge, understanding and skills that students are expected to learn and that teachers are expected to teach. Teachers are required to develop a program of learning that enables students to demonstrate all of the content descriptions. The lens which the teacher uses to demonstrate the content descriptions will be determined by the teacher when developing their program of learning. A program of learning is what a college provides to implement the course for a subject.

Proposal	Rationale for Courses			
	Proposed suite of courses written under the Modern Languages Framework			
Course Title	Beginning Modern Languages (A/T/M)	Continuing Modern Languages (A/T)	Advanced Modern Languages (A/T)	Translating & Interpreting (A/T)
Course Description	<p>The Modern Languages courses will make provision for Beginning (A/T/M), Continuing (A/T) and Advanced (A/T).</p> <p>Common content descriptions for Beginning, Continuing and Advanced languages.</p> <p>Achievement Standards are differentiated for each classification.</p>			<p>Students will develop skills pertinent to translating and interpreting. It will increase students' language abilities and cultural knowledge, building their confidence as a global citizen who can communicate effectively in diverse local and international contexts.</p>
Draft Proposed Unit Titles				
Unit 1	The Individual			Australian Society
Unit 2	Society and Community			Australian Government
Unit 3	The Changing World			Community Life
Unit 4	Diverse Perspectives			The Future of Work
Negotiated Unit	<p>A negotiated study unit is decided upon by a class, group(s) or individual student in consultation with the teacher and with the Principal's approval. The program of learning for a negotiated study unit must meet all the content descriptions as appears in the unit. A negotiated study unit may replace one of the 4 units.</p>			
Appendix	For each language there will be language specific appendices which provide guidance for linguistic features and grammar.			

END