Shape of ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies Curriculum: Frameworks

Board Endorsed April 2018

Key Terms

Learning areas are broad areas of the curriculum, for example, English, mathematics, science, the arts, languages, health and physical education.

A **subject** is a discrete area of study that is part of a learning area. There may be one or more subjects in a single learning area.

Frameworks are system documents for years 11 and 12 which provide the basis for the development and accreditation of any course within a designated learning area. In addition, frameworks provide a common basis for assessment, moderation and reporting of student outcomes in courses based on the framework.

The **course** sets out the requirements for the implementation of a subject. Key elements of a course include the rationale, goals, content descriptions, assessment, and achievement standards as designated by the framework.

Discipline based curriculum outlines canonical knowledge that is included in school curricula within disciplines such as physics, mathematics, history and literature.

Integrated curriculum makes connections across disciplines. There are three approaches to integration – multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary. Students not only look at concepts for in-depth understanding, but also make connections through using real life examples.

Multidisciplinary integration approach focuses primarily on the disciplines. Teachers who use this approach organise standards from disciplines around a theme.

Interdisciplinary integration approach refers to skills and concepts in disciplinary standards.

Transdisciplinary integration approach organises curriculum around student questions and concerns.

Computational Science refers to analytical and qualitative thinking to tackle problems in science, industry and society. Increasing data size and availability, enhanced computational power, and progress in algorithms and software is an emerging area.

Note:

This is a guide on the proposed configuration of Frameworks and may be subject to change.

Purpose

In 2015, the Review of ACT Senior Secondary Curriculum committee recommended that frameworks be consolidated where there is an educational rationale.

The *Shape of BSSS Frameworks* provides direction on the purpose and organisation of frameworks and courses.

It is intended to guide the development of Frameworks and courses for Years 11 and 12. This paper has been prepared following analysis of curriculum across jurisdictions, mapping BSSS achievement standards and current research on curriculum.

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

Vision and principles of ACT senior secondary curriculum

Vision

The Board is committed to a curriculum that:

- promotes quality teaching and learning;
- is flexible by enabling ACT colleges and teachers to determine how best to plan, teach and assess students according to needs of those students;
- inspires young adults to learn and become confident, creative, active and informed citizens who make a valuable contribution to society;
- reflects coherence and cohesion.

Principles

The Board is committed to a curriculum that:

- provides a platform for high quality learning;
- upholds high expectations for achievement of all young adults and makes provision for diverse learners;
- is rigorous and displays consistency, purpose, and quality design;
- is responsive to community expectations and developed collaboratively;
- provides opportunities for all young adults to develop ethical and intercultural understandings;
- ensures multiple pathways for all young adults to attain functional literacy and numeracy skills.

(Board Endorsed 2015)

Introduction

A framework is a system document which provides the basis for development and accreditation of any course within a designated learning area. Frameworks provide a common basis for assessment, moderation and reporting of student outcomes in courses. Courses are written under frameworks.

This paper will propose a conceptual model for organising frameworks. The proposed model for frameworks will make provision to develop discipline based courses and increase the senior secondary system's capacity to develop integrated courses.

A curriculum that makes provision for integrated courses will prepare students with the skills and attributes needed for life and work in the 21st Century. Furthermore, the proposed framework model will streamline processes and procedures.

Currently, the BSSS senior secondary system has a total of 26 frameworks including:

Behavioural science	Commerce	Community learning	Cultural Studies
Design & Technology	English	English as a Second Language	Fashion & Textiles
Food and Resource Management	Geography	Health, Outdoor and Physical Education	History
Industrial Technology Trade	Business & Client Services	Information Technology	Integrated Learning
Languages	Latin	Mathematics	Philosophy
Politics & Law	Religious Studies	Science	the Arts
Tourism & Hospitality	Modified		

Proposal

The proposed model consists of 12 frameworks (refer to Figure 1). The guiding principle underpinning this model of frameworks is provision to develop discipline based and integrated courses.

Discipline based curriculum outlines narrow canonical knowledge that is included in school curricula within disciplines such as physics, mathematics, history and literature. Integrated curriculum makes connections across disciplines. One of the features of integrated curricula is that the knowledge that is taught and learned is determined by issues and contexts that are relevant to the students.

Under this model, frameworks make provision for development of courses with their own discrete knowledge, symbols, language, processes and skills. In addition, frameworks will also make provision for courses that draw knowledge, symbols, languages, processes and skills across or within disciplines. This model allows for broader contextual knowledge to be valued.

The organisation and structure of frameworks will not affect course areas or scaling and meshing processes.

Figure 1: Proposed model for frameworks

Mathematics	English	Humanities & Social Science	Transdisciplinary Learning
Science	Languages	Commerce	Technology
the Arts	Health, Outdoor & Physical Education	Industry & Services	Community Learning

Major changes

The *Technologies* Framework combines *Information Technology, Design & Graphics and Fashion and Textiles* frameworks.

The *Humanities & Social Science* Framework combines *Geography, Politics and Law, Behavioural Science, Cultural Studies, Religious Studies, Philosophy, Food Science & Management and History* frameworks.

The *English* framework will include *English as a Second Language* (ESL). The *Latin* Framework will be combined with the *Languages* Framework.

The *Industry Services* framework combines Industrial Trades Technology, Business and Client Services, Tourism and Hospitality frameworks.

Under the proposed model, frameworks will be developed for a learning area as opposed to a subject. They must recognise both the distinctiveness of a subject and possible connections. The Arts Framework 2014 Edition is a good example of this model. The rationale and goals are written for each subject. Conceptual understandings, that underpin the learning area guide development of the Achievement Standards. The Achievement Standards are identical across the subject areas. Provision for an integrated study has been made through inclusion of an arts rationale and goals and achievement standards. Refer to Appendix 1 for information on the impact of the proposed model on current BSSS accredited courses.

Background

In 2015, the Review of ACT Senior Secondary Curriculum committee recommended that frameworks be consolidated where there is an educational rationale.

An analysis of the current framework model indicates the absence of a coherent and consistent principle for organising frameworks and duplication of concepts across frameworks.

Currently, frameworks that are limited to provision for discipline based courses include Hospitality & Tourism, Information Technology, Philosophy, Geography, Religious Studies, Fashion & Textiles, Food Science & Management, English as a Second Language and Latin.

Frameworks that make provision for both discipline based and integrated courses include English, Mathematics, Science, Languages, Commerce, the Arts, Health, Outdoor & Physical Education, Industry Services, Integrated Studies, Community Learning, Behavioural Science, Community Learning and History.

Under the current model, some frameworks duplicate concepts. For example, the design process underpins the Fashion & Textiles, Information Technology and Design and Graphics frameworks (refer to Appendix 2).

The number of frameworks with only one course attached includes Cultural Studies, Fashion & Textiles, Integrated Learning, Religious Studies, Latin, Information Technology, Philosophy, Food & Resource Management (refer to Appendix 2). This has developed over time in a random manner.

Frameworks are a lever for the education community to think about curriculum in a different way. They organise how we think about knowledge. A comparison of how the ACT BSSS organises knowledge into learning areas with that of other jurisdiction indicates that the ACT has 26 compared to 9-10 in other jurisdictions (Appendix 3).

A framework is a system document which provides the basis for development and accreditation of any course within a designated learning area. It is evident that the current configuration of BSSS frameworks has deviated from the original intent. The impact of the current BSSS framework approach on course development has profound implications. Nineteen out of eighty-seven Board endorsed courses can be classified as interdisciplinary.

Provision for development of integrated courses is important for developing quality curriculum that prepares students for life and work in the 21st Century. According to Masters (2016), solutions to societal challenges and the nature of work are becoming increasingly cross-disciplinary. Masters (2015) advocates that integrated curriculum enables students to apply deep understandings of key disciplinary concepts and principles to real-world problems. They promote creativity and the ability to develop innovative solutions to entirely new problems. A senior secondary curriculum needs to focus on the collaborative solution of real, complex problems.

To prepare students for life and work, the school curriculum needs to include a focus on the collaborative solution of real, complex problems. For example, in the senior secondary school, rather than teaching, assessing and reporting student learning only in the context of traditional disciplines, students could be required to work in teams on cross-disciplinary challenges. Through these challenges they could be taught to apply disciplinary knowledge and understandings in new contexts and assisted to develop skills in working as a team, creating innovative solutions, communicating, solving problems and using technology.

Masters 2016, Five Challenges in Australian School Education

Frameworks organise knowledge. The approach adopted for configuring frameworks influences opportunities to develop a range of courses. The proposed model for frameworks will make provision for courses that are innovative and future focused. Under the proposed model a diverse range of integrated courses could be developed, for example, subjects such as Sustainability, Gender Studies, Environmental Studies, Urban Studies, Race & Ethnicity, Mathematical & Computational Science, Archaeology, Applied Ethics, Global Development, Human Action for World Futures and Human Resources.

The consolidation of frameworks proposal positions the ACT senior secondary system to be responsive to changes in how knowledge is used in an information and technologically rich global economy. Currently, any proposal to develop integrated courses that does not fit under the current model for frameworks will be delayed by development of a new subject framework.

The consolidation of courses will create consistency and coherence. Frameworks defined by a broader learning area will reduce duplication and repetition of concepts and ensure an efficient use of human resources (college teachers & BSSS Officers) and time.

All curricula include some form of disciplinary knowledge; it is the structure of the curriculum and the underpinning issues that drive the curriculum that determine whether the curriculum can be considered disciplinary or integrated.

The BSSS does not have a view on the primacy of discipline based and integrated curriculum. It is the job of the Board to make provision for both schools of thought. Colleges can make a decision which courses they would prefer. The proposed framework model allows for both discipline based and integrated courses.

A draft schedule for Curriculum Review and Course Development has been created to reflect the proposed model (refer to Appendix 4).

Proposed model of BSSS Frameworks with possible subjects

APPENDIX 1

Frameworks	Mathematics	English	Humanities & Social Science	Science	Languages	Commerce	the Arts	Health, Outdoor & Physical Education	Industry & Services	Transdisciplinary Learning	Technologies	Community Learning
Courses	Contemporary Mathematics	Contemporary English	Australian and Global Politics	Biology	Chinese	Accounting	Dance	Physical Education	Furniture Making	Interdisciplinary Inquiry	Information Technology	Pathways for Work & Learning
	Essential Mathematics	Essential English	Geography	Chemistry	Spanish	Business	Drama	Health and Wellbeing	Automotive Technology	Food for Life	Engineering	Big Picture
	Mathematical Applications	English	Legal Studies	Physics	German	Economics	Music	Outdoor & Environmental Studies	Business Services		Fashion & Textiles	Life, Leisure & Learning
	Mathematical Methods	Literature	Psychology	Earth & Environmental Science	Hindi		Photography	Sports Development	Construction Pathways		Design, Technology & Graphics	Connected Learning
	Specialist Methods	EALD	Sociology	AC-IB Biology	Indonesian		Visual Arts	Exercise Science	Hospitality			
	Specialist Mathematics	English/Literature integrated	Religious Studies	AC-IB Chemistry	Korean		Media		Social & Community Work			
	AC-IB Specialist Mathematics		Philosophy	AC-IB Physics	Italian				Sport, Recreation & Leadership			
	Future Mathematics		Global Relations	Forestry	Japanese				Metal Technology			
			Food Science & Management	Oceanography	French				Tourism			
			Ancient History	Integrated Science	Polish							
			Pre Modern History	Senior Science	Latin							
			Modern History	Agriculture								
			History Integrated	Flight								
			Indigenous Language & Culture	Electronics & Mechatronics								

Current model of BSSS Frameworks **APPENDIX 2**

Frameworks	Mathematics	English	Science	Languages	Commerce	the Arts	Health, Outdoor & Physical Education	Industry & Services	Integrated Learning	Technology	Community Learning	Latin
Courses	Contemporary Mathematics	Contemporary English	Biology	Chinese	Accounting	Dance	Physical Education	Furniture Making	Interdisciplinary Inquiry	Engineering & Technology	Pathways for Work & Learning	Latin
			Human Biology									
	Essential Mathematics	Essential English	Chemistry	Spanish	Business	Drama	Health	Automotive Technology		Design, Technology & Graphics	Big Picture	
	Mathematical Applications	English	Physics	German	Economics	Music	Outdoor & Environmental Studies	Business Services		Fashion & Textiles	Life, Leisure & Learning	
	Mathematical Methods	Literature	Earth & Environmental Science	Hindi		Photography	Sports Development	Construction Pathways			Connected Learning	
	Specialist Methods	English/Literature integrated	AC-IB Biology	Indonesian		Visual Arts	Exercise Science	Hospitality				
	Specialist Mathematics		AC-IB Chemistry	Korean		Media		Social & Community Work				
	AC-IB Specialist Mathematics		AC-IB Physics	Italian				Sport, Recreation & Leadership				
	Further Mathematics		Forestry	Japanese				Metal Technology				
			Oceanography	French								
			Integrated Science									
			Senior Science									
			Agriculture									
			Flight									
			Electronics & Mechatronics									

Frameworks	Hospitality & Tourism	Information Technology	Design & Graphics	Philosophy	Geography	Behavioural Science	Community Learning	Cultural Studies	History	Food Science & Management	Religious Studies	Fashion and Textiles	Modified	ESL
Courses	Tourism	Information Technology	Design, Technology & Graphics	Philosophy	Geography	Psychology	Pathways for Work & Learning	Global Relations	Ancient History	Food Science & Management	Religious Studies	Fashion and Textiles		EALD
	Hospitality					Sociology	Big Picture		Pre Modern History					
							Life, Leisure & Learning		Modern History					

APPENDIX 3

Analysis of key learning areas across Australia

SA	WA	QLD	NSW	VIC	TAS	ACT	NT
Arts	Arts	Arts	Creative Arts	No key learning areas listed	Creative Arts	The Arts	Art
Business, Enterprise and Technology		Business and Economics			Management & Commerce	Business and Client Services	Business, Enterprise and Technology
						Commerce	
	Technology	ICT and Design	Technology		Information Technology	Information Technology	
						Design & Technology	
						Fashion and textiles	
English	English	English	English			English	English
						English as a Second Language	
Humanities and Social Science	Humanities and Social Science	Humanities & Social Sciences	Human Society and Its Environment		Society And Culture	Cultural Studies	Humanities and Social Science
						History	
						Legal Studies and Political Studies	
						Behavioural Science	
						Geography	
						Religious Studies	
						Theory of Knowledge	
Health and Physical Education	Health and Physical Education	Health & PE	Personal Development Health Education		Health	Health Outdoor and Physical Education	Health and Physical Education
Science	Science	Sciences	Science		Natural and Physical Sciences	Science	Science
Languages	Language	Languages	Languages			Languages	Languages
Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics			Mathematics	Mathematics
Cross - disciplinary						Connected Learning	Cross disciplinary
					Agriculture and Building		
Modified Subjects		Career Development	Life Skills		Mixed Field Programs	Community Learning Contemporary Transitions	
					Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	Food and Resource Management	
			VET			Tourism and hospitality	
					Engineering and Related Technologies	Industrial Technology Trades	
						Latin	

APPENDIX 4

Proposed Schedule for Curriculum Review and Course Development 2018-2030

Review Date	Course Framework	Courses Developed & Accredited	Courses Implemented	Courses Expire
2018	Technology	2019	2020	2026
	Languages	2019	2020	2026
2019	the Arts	2020	2021	2027
	Integrated Studies	2020	2021	2027
	English	2020	2021	2027
2020	Humanities & Social Science	2021	2022	2028
	Mathematics	2021	2022	2028
2021	Science	2022	2023	2029
	Community Learning	2022	2023	2029
2022	Health, Outdoor & Physical Education	2023	2024	2030
	Commerce	2023	2024	2030
	Industry and Services	2023	2024	2030

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