Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Education

During November, the Illustrations of Practice project team visited schools that will be participating in the project to develop illustrations of practice that show best practice in the use of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures Cross-Curriculum Priority. The schools that have offered to participate are Medina Primary and Balgo State High (Western Australia), Maitland Lutheran and Woodville High (South Australia), Sanderson Middle School (Northern Territory), St Andrews Primary (New South Wales) and Margate Primary (Tasmania). A two-day workshop is supporting participants to develop and plan their illustrations for filming.

A project has been initiated to consider how the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority in the Australian Curriculum can be strengthened. The first meeting of the newly formed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Working Group, consisting of members of ACARA’s Board, ACARA’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Advisory Group and ACARA’s Curriculum unit, has been held and plans are in place for 2017.

ACARA’s Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is being prepared for endorsement by Reconciliation Australia and the ACARA Board. Implementation and launch are planned for early 2017.

Alternative curriculum frameworks

The process of recognition of alternative curriculum frameworks is underway, with a workshop for the Recognition Committee, Review Panel and Curriculum Assessment Teams scheduled for December to consider submissions of an Australian ACE Curriculum Framework and revisions of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program and Middle Years Program. The workshop will also assess Steiner Education Australian and International Baccalaureate Organisation submissions for the addition of learning areas and subjects to alternative curriculum frameworks.

Australian Curriculum Website – Redevelopment project

The consultation process includes a survey posted on the current website that invites feedback from teachers, parents, students and all others who are interested in contributing to the usability and functionality of the redeveloped website. Design solutions are being proposed by user experience experts, and ACARA has invited website development specialists to quote for this project. The redeveloped website is to be ready by July 2017.

Curriculum Connections

A range of materials designed to highlight connections that can be made across the Australian Curriculum is being developed for publication on the Australian Curriculum website.

ACARA, the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) and the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) have formed a collaboration founded on the National Financial Literacy Strategy. ACARA will support teachers’ access to and delivery of the Australian Curriculum by developing curriculum connections in consumer and financial literacy that are directly linked to the ATO and ASIC education
resources. ACARA is also finalising curriculum mapping that connects learning in Outdoor Education, Nutrition, Health and Wellbeing, Home Economics and Food and Fibre Production.

It is anticipated that the curriculum connections under development will be published on the Australian Curriculum’s Resource Portal in early 2017.

**English**

The Australian Curriculum: English sets expectations around the acquisition of writing skills from Foundation, including the development of handwriting and word processing skills. A support document for teachers and parents is being developed collaboratively between Curriculum and Assessment and Reporting to ensure that the expectations are clear, and some expansion of the elaborations in some of the Handwriting and Using software threads of the English curriculum is being considered.

**Health and Physical Education**

In November, several ACARA staff met with six representatives from Outdoor Education Australia – the professional association for Outdoor Education teachers across states and territories. Participants explored current and future opportunities to support teachers to deliver relevant content from across the Australian Curriculum through Outdoor Education. The meeting included a discussion about the potential for the Australian Curriculum: Resource Portal to contribute to these opportunities. Links to HPE, Science, Geography, General Capabilities and Cross-Curriculum Priorities are now being documented and reviewed, ready for upload early in 2017. Both ACARA and OEA are committed to a renewed ongoing professional relationship.

ACARA also worked with a group of Catholic schools in SA to discuss how the Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum can be linked to Australian Curriculum learning areas and general capabilities.

**Humanities and Social Sciences**

Work samples in Geography (Years 7 to 10) are now available on the Australian Curriculum: Resource Portal. The samples represent achievement in assessment tasks at, above and below the achievement standards, and these assist teachers in making judgements about their students’ work.

**Languages**

A framework for Classical Languages, which includes curricula for Latin and Classical Greek, and a curriculum for AUSLAN are to be published on the ACARA Curriculum website before the end of the year. Video resources are being developed to support understanding of the Auslan curriculum.

**Mathematics**

The Mathematics Glossary has been revised and will soon be ready for uploading to the Australian Curriculum website. Revisions were made to improve usability for teachers and to ensure clarity of the terms used in the teaching and learning of the Australian Curriculum: Mathematics.

**Monitoring the Australian Curriculum (2015-2016)**

The annual report summarising jurisdictional and sectoral feedback on the Australian Curriculum is to be considered by the Board at its December meeting. For this monitoring cycle, respondents were asked to comment specifically on the effectiveness and quality of the Achievement Standards and the General Capabilities and to provide any other general feedback. The 2016 Monitoring Report will be published on the ACARA website.
NAPLAN – Literacy and Numeracy

The Curriculum Specialists for English and Mathematics are working with Assessment & Reporting to ensure the alignment of NAPLAN test items with the Australian Curriculum. This includes checking hundreds of reading items for item and text suitability.

National Literacy and Numeracy Learning Progressions

The National Literacy and Numeracy Learning Progressions will enable teachers to locate a student’s current literacy and numeracy knowledge, understanding and skills in order to determine the learning that should follow. The progressions amplify the detail of the Foundation to Year 10 Australian Curriculum and assist teachers to strengthen their understanding of the learning sequences for literacy and numeracy development.

In partnership with NSW, ACARA is leading the development of Version 1 of the Progressions during 2016 and 2017. Version 1 is based on the available evidence of students’ development of literacy and numeracy skills, this advice being provided through close consultation with researchers and experts in literacy and numeracy education.

During Semester 1 of 2017, the first version of the National Literacy Learning Progressions will be trialled in a range of Australian schools, in partnership with state and territory school and curriculum authorities. The trial will focus on the clarity, coherence and usability of the Progressions and will guide revision and publication at the end of 2017. Version 2 of the National Literacy and Numeracy Learning Progressions will be finalised and considered by Education Council in December 2017.

OECD Education 2030

ACARA is the lead agency representing Australia in the OECD Education 2030 Project. A key part of the Project is the development of a Conceptual Learning Framework which builds on research and contributions from experts from different disciplines, institutions and regions around the world to distil knowledge, skills, attitudes and values relevant to children graduating from school in 2030. ACARA’s participation in this work will assist the Curriculum team’s program of research over the next few years.

Primary education

The last edition of the Primary Matters newsletter for 2016 has been published and sent to stakeholders and is now available on the ACARA website. In 2017, a slightly updated format will include regular interviews with primary specialists, parents and others who can share their ideas on a range of issues relating to the effectiveness of the Australian Curriculum.

Student diversity

Illustrations of practice using the General Capabilities to plan for students with disability are being finalised and will be placed on the website by the end of 2016. Illustrations of practice for working with students who are assessed as gifted and talented are being updated and revised.

Technologies

The Australian Government Department of Education and Training has contracted ACARA to lead a project that will support the implementation of the Australian Curriculum: Digital Technologies. This project, known as the Provision of Peripatetic ICT Teachers, is an initiative with its origins in the 2015 National Innovation and Science Agenda. The project will run from November 2016 to June 2020 and is intended to provide support for disadvantaged schools across Australia. Preliminary planning and scoping of the project have begun, with advice being sought from the F-12 Curriculum Reference Group.
The Arts

The Year 7-10 samples in Dance, Drama, Media Arts, Music and Visual Arts have been annotated to assist teachers in the learning area to assess students’ work with greater accuracy and reliability. The work samples demonstrate performances that are considered to be at standard, above standard and below standard. The Curriculum Specialist, The Arts is in close touch with the National Advocates of Arts Education, discussing current themes in the Australian educational landscape and future research possibilities for arts education.

Teachers across the Northern Territory were recently involved in a ‘TeachMeet’ session organised by the NT Department of Education. The Curriculum Specialist: The Arts was invited to speak and assist teachers with programming lessons and units for the implementation of the new curriculum. All feedback was very positive.

Work Samples

ACARA has signed an agreement with Association of Independent Schools South Australia to work collaboratively on teacher professional learning in relation to understanding the Achievement Standards in English and Mathematics F-6, developing assessment tasks and producing work samples aligned to the standards. ACARA will publish these work samples on the Australian Curriculum: Resource portal during 2017.

Best wishes to you all for a safe and happy summer break. See you in 2017.