

Planning for teaching, learning and assessment

Prep–Year 10

Curriculum planning is essential for contextualising curriculum content and assessment to meet the needs of all students. Effective curriculum and assessment planning supports:

- high expectations for all students. High student expectations are built on differentiation of teaching and learning for all students in single and multiple year-level contexts
- alignment of teaching and learning with assessment and reporting. Purposeful curriculum and assessment planning ensures that what is taught, what is learned, what is assessed and what is reported on, is clear and aligned. Plans are reviewed regularly to inform future planning, teaching, learning and assessment
- school-based assessment for learning. Teachers use the Australian Curriculum achievement standards to develop a shared understanding of the qualities found in student work, and to communicate student achievement to students, parents/carers and the education system
- teachers' professional judgment. Teachers exercise their professional judgment and make decisions about teaching and learning in their school within the context of the Australian Curriculum, and system and sector priorities
- individualised learning. Schools and teachers are responsive to the needs, interests and previous achievements of all learners by providing opportunities to consolidate previous learning, extend, differentiate for, or support students as appropriate.

Elements for effective planning

Curriculum and assessment planning is guided by six interdependent elements. The six elements and their relationships are illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Elements for effective planning



The elements should be considered at all levels of curriculum and assessment planning and can be used in any sequence. All elements should be considered when planning to ensure:

- what is taught (curriculum) informs how it is taught (pedagogy), how and when students are given advice about how to progress (feedback), how students are assessed (assessment), what next steps are required (future learning) and how the learning is reported (reporting)
- feedback is closely linked to assessment, and informs decisions about how to improve teaching and progress learning
- what is assessed relates directly to what students have had an opportunity to learn
- what is reported to students, parents/carers and other teachers aligns with what has been learned and assessed from the intended curriculum.

Professional conversations

Professional conversations help to develop a shared understanding of curriculum and assessment expectations to support effective planning. The elements are continually reviewed through professional conversations to strengthen alignment between the Australian Curriculum, teaching and learning, and assessment.

Feedback

Feedback opportunities are planned for and embedded within the teaching and learning process. Teachers create feedback opportunities that are based on student assessment and use this information to plan future teaching and learning. Feedback provides students with information to help them progress towards achieving their established goals. Teachers also provide formal feedback to students and their parents/carers at the time of reporting.

Understanding the elements of effective planning

The six elements can be used in any sequence but all should be considered when planning to strengthen alignment of curriculum, teaching, learning, assessment and reporting.

Identify curriculum



The Australian Curriculum achievement standards, content descriptions, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities form the basis for planning teaching, learning and assessment. Teachers identify relevant aspects of the achievement standard to assess student understanding and skills, and the content descriptions, focus elements, and organising ideas that will support students to develop these understandings and skills.

Develop assessment



Assessment is an ongoing and integral part of teaching and learning. Assessment provides evidence for teachers to make judgments against the achievement standards and monitor student progress. To maximise student outcomes, teachers use ongoing assessment evidence to adjust the teaching and learning sequence.

Plan teaching and learning



Teachers select and sequence learning experiences and teaching strategies to support students to develop knowledge, understanding and skills. The sequence enables students to provide evidence of learning and achievement through assessment. Teachers select a range of resources to complement teaching, learning and assessment, and engage students in their learning. Discerning selection of resources provides opportunities to challenge all students.

Make judgments



Teachers make judgments about evidence of student learning against the Australian Curriculum achievement standard, which represents the C standard (or equivalent). The QCAA standard elaborations help teachers to make judgments across a five-point scale (A–E) and to identify the task-specific standards.

Moderate



During moderation processes, teachers engage in professional conversations to share their observations and judgments about evidence in student work. Schools and school clusters conduct moderation to improve the consistency, comparability and defensibility of teacher judgments, to ensure teacher judgments are as valid, reliable and fair as possible.

Evaluate and quality assure



Quality assurance processes help teachers to develop a shared understanding of the expected quality of students' performance. Prior to teaching, teachers engage in professional conversations about what the standards will look like in practice, and work together to design assessment, embedding the principles and attributes of quality assessment. Teachers also plan strategies for sharing task-specific standards (marking guides) with students, and for providing feedback. At the end of the teaching period, teachers reflect on the teaching, learning and assessment to make refinements and plan for the future.

Three levels of planning

Schools with students in Prep–Year 10 plan their curriculum, teaching and learning, and assessment using the Australian Curriculum. Curriculum and assessment planning within schools occurs at three levels:

Whole school curriculum and assessment planning

Whole school planning outlines the school's priorities in response to the broad policy contexts that influence teaching and learning. It informs and is informed by the year level plans.

A whole school curriculum and assessment plan:

- outlines how the teaching and learning supports system priorities and the school's vision, beliefs and context
- shows how learning is sequenced and develops within and across the year levels/bands
- shows how teaching, learning, assessment and reporting are aligned
- links to data and evidence about student achievement and progress to inform decisions about teaching and learning.

Year level curriculum and assessment planning

A year level plan identifies the specific teaching, learning and assessment within a learning area for each year level. It clarifies the curriculum intent and ensures coverage, balance and responsiveness across the year. It informs the whole school plan and guides the development of unit overviews.

A year level curriculum and assessment plan:

- outlines the sequence of learning and assessment for the year, ensuring that required content, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities are taught
- reflects the development of knowledge, understanding and skills within a year level/band
- includes how the program provides multiple opportunities to learn concepts and practise skills, and apply these to a range of contexts with increasing autonomy
- identifies how evidence of student learning is gathered, and how students have multiple opportunities to demonstrate the achievement standards
- shows how consistent judgments are made about student achievement and progress, and when feedback should be given to students and parents/carers
- links to other learning areas (where appropriate).

Unit overviews

Unit overviews identify the specific curriculum content, teaching strategies and assessment. They are informed by the whole school plan and the year level plan.

A unit overview:

- identifies the focus and context for learning
- identifies relevant aspects of the achievement standard
- identifies related content descriptions to support teaching and learning
- clarifies the evidence of learning that will be gathered in the assessment
- provides a marking guide illustrating the depth and breadth of learning across a five-point scale (A–E)
- links to prior and future learning and to other learning areas if appropriate
- outlines teaching and learning strategies that reflect the nature of the learning area
- aligns with the curriculum content and the specific demands of the assessment
- includes appropriate pedagogy to support and engage all students in their learning
- outlines adjustments necessary to cater for the varied needs, abilities and interests of students
- embeds feedback opportunities within the teaching and learning process.

Schools should ensure that plans at all levels are reviewed and refined regularly to inform future planning, teaching, learning and assessment.



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