

Queensland response to the draft *Shape of Australian Curriculum: The Arts*

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Executive summary

The Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) in partnership with Education Queensland (EQ), Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC) and Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: The Arts*. Queensland supports the development of an Australian Curriculum that will provide consistent and explicit curriculum expectations across the nation.

This paper is a summary of the collated Queensland feedback from:

- representative curriculum and learning area committees of the QSA
- district review and state review panels for Dance, Drama, Film and New Media, Music, Music Extension and Visual Arts
- QSA and Department of Education and Training (DET) nominees who attended the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) national forum for the *Arts Initial Advice paper*
- Queensland teachers from the five art forms
- representatives of the three school sectors, representing and advocating for 1400 EQ schools, 288 Catholic schools and 188 Independent schools.

Queensland's consultation identified strengths and a range of issues and concerns for ACARA's consideration when redrafting *The Shape of the Australian Curriculum: The Arts* (the shape paper).

Strengths

The QSA, EQ, QCEC and ISQ agree that the draft shape paper shows the following strengths:

- the curriculum articulates the importance of arts learning through the five art forms for all young people* F–12 and as an entitlement in F–8. Queensland has included the five art forms in curriculum F–12 for a number of years and supports the continuation of this position
- the conceptual framework of generating, realizing and responding provides coherence to the study of the arts
- the paper captures the recursive nature of arts learning through the organisation of the strands
- the approach supports flexibility in the organisation and teaching of arts curriculum using a range of strategies including specialist teachers and artists-in-residencies
- the role of artists and partnership with the arts industries are included to enhance the delivery and outcomes of arts learning for young people and teachers
- it begins the development of a common terminology, which will build a shared language for teachers of the Arts in all states and territories.

* The term Foundation (F) has been used as a nationally consistent term for the year of schooling prior to Year 1 for the purpose of the Australian Curriculum.

Issues and concerns

The following key issues and concerns have been identified for consideration in the redrafting of the shape paper.

Clarity

The shape paper provides the educational community and the wider community with an answer to the questions:

- what are the Arts?
- what are the contributions of the Arts to the education of young people?

To answer both questions, the shape paper should use plain English so that it provides:

- clarity about the definition and purpose of arts learning for non-specialist teachers
- clear indication of the role of generalist, specialist and artist in the delivery of arts learning in schools
- clear direction on the shape of curriculum in each of the five art forms within this learning area.

Cohesion and consistency

- There is a lack of clarity and cohesion between the rationale, the organisation of learning, the definitions of key terms and the inclusion of general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities in each art form.
- Inconsistencies exist between definition of the art forms and description of learning in each art form. This reduces the overall clarity of the paper.
- The art form definitions are structured inconsistently. Each art form definition could introduce the organising processes (generating, realizing and responding) and personal, social, historical and cultural contexts more clearly and link them the definition and rationale of arts learning more directly.
- The paper could provide clearer descriptions of specific opportunities for deep and rigorous learning in each art form.
- The spelling of *realizing* should be changed to *realising*.

Contexts for learning

- The curriculum audience for this paper should be clearer. The relationship between the generalist, specialist and artist needs to be made explicit at the beginning of the paper.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures are positioned in the paper as historical studies. They are not adequately represented as important studies for the development of aesthetic knowledge in each art form.
- The inclusion of emerging technologies in arts practice and learning is uneven and inconsistently described throughout the paper.
- A feature of quality arts curriculum is its commitment to inclusion. An effective arts curriculum explicitly and deliberately provides for the full range of experiences and abilities and includes the diverse social, cultural and physical contexts of the learners. Inclusivity as a feature of arts learning has not been captured adequately in the shape paper.

1. Introduction

The Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) in partnership with Education Queensland (EQ), Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC) and Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: The Arts*. Queensland supports the development of an Australian Curriculum that will provide consistent and explicit curriculum expectations across the nation.

This paper is a summary of the collated Queensland feedback from:

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Queensland's consultation identified strengths and a range of issues and concerns for ACARA's consideration when redrafting *The Shape of the Australian Curriculum: The Arts* (the shape paper).

The Queensland response is organised in the following way:

- general comments addressing broad issues with suggested ways forward and examples:
 - consistency and coherence
 - definitions and terminology
 - contexts for learning
- specific comments providing feedback on each section of the shape paper with suggested ways forward and examples.

2. General comments

2.1 Consistency and cohesion

- Queensland supports the proposition that there are three processes — generating, realizing and responding — that can organise art form learning and the recursive nature of arts learning and arts processes. This reflects existing practice in Queensland.
- Practice as a means through which aesthetic knowledge and knowledge of how each art form is gained is common to existing approaches to curriculum design.
- There is a lack of cohesion between the rationale, the organisation of learning, definitions of the learning area and the general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities; this is complicated by the inconsistent definitions of the art forms and descriptions of learning in each art form. The general capabilities should act as a thread to improve cohesion throughout the paper.
- Addressing critical and creative thinking in each art form should be a priority. The current differentiation of responding as having two orders of thought does not reflect the complex processes involved in generating and realizing, nor the interrelationship of the three activities. It promotes a reading of the document that presupposes a linear approach, despite other sections claiming the arts to be recursive.

Way forward

- Clarify the rationale and definition of arts to make the links between arts, arts learning and the shared processes more evident.
- Emphasise more clearly the benefit of studying each art form. For example:
Young Australians are entitled to understand how and why the arts are central to all cultures, particularly their own. There is no time or culture in human history that is without symbolic, visual, musical, physical practices that inform, renew, reflect, celebrate, entertain, challenge or make sacred. The arts in all cultures connect people to their identity as individuals and their identity within and beyond their communities. The Australian Arts Curriculum will describe learning in five art forms (Dance, Drama, Media Arts, Music and Visual Arts). Each art form will be taught so as to enable students to become critical and creative thinkers, artists and citizens. Through a study of the five art forms young Australians have the opportunity to:
 - experience, appreciate and understand the impact of the arts on quality of life for individuals
 - value arts works, artists and artistic practices and understand they are central to and evidence of healthy and creative communities and cultures
 - develop mastery of art form specific knowledges, skills and processes through the shared arts processes of generating, realizing and responding to their own and others art forms and practices.
- Establish in the rationale the framework that links arts practice, aesthetic knowledge and arts learning more directly.
- Ensure this framework is evident in the section “Defining the arts”, the art form definitions and descriptions of learning in each art form. For example:
Studying arts works, arts practices and artists in a range of personal, social and cultural contexts is the foundation of aesthetic knowledge. Aesthetic knowledge is fully developed through understanding and experiencing three processes shared by all art forms, generating, realizing and responding.
Aesthetic knowledge is developed over time by generating as an artist, realizing arts processes and arts works, and responding to artists, arts processes and arts works, as an individual and in interaction with others. These three processes generating, realizing and responding become the strands through which arts learning in five art forms are organised

in the Australian Curriculum.

- Link the art form definitions and descriptions of learning more closely with the general capabilities.
- Establish a relationship between arts learning and the most significant general capabilities. For example:

Learning in the five art forms is particularly important to the development of the following general capabilities in each young Australian. A quality arts education in each of the five art forms will develop:

- literacy (with an strong emphasis on the notion of multi-literacies in real and digital contexts —visual, musical, kinaesthetic, language and oracy)
- critical and creative thinking (as producers and critical creators, appreciators, original and innovative thinkers)
- skills and techniques specific to each art form
- personal and social competence (by engagement with learning, deep concentration, joyful and intentional experimentation and play, kinaesthetic development, confidence and identity)
- intercultural understanding (through study of social, historical and cultural contexts within which art is created, those arts works and practices that transcend social and historical contexts, the purpose of art works in cultural contexts).

- Learning in the Arts requires students to understand and experience the related processes of generating, realizing and responding. However, aesthetic knowledge is best learned in art form specific contexts. Even when art forms are operating in a connected way, content — knowledge, skills and processes — specific to each art form must be foregrounded for aesthetic knowledge to be developed with depth and rigour. To this end, the paper could provide clearer descriptions of specific opportunities for deep and rigorous learning in each art form.
- Table 1 (page 9) attempts to exemplify how the definition of arts and the organising strands support specific learning in each area. However, there are too many inconsistencies in the use of language between and within each arts area. The table requires input from discipline writers, particularly for dance. The information in the table would be a useful guide for writers but this level of detail is not necessary in the shape paper.
- The key questions listed in the section on aesthetic knowledge (paragraph 18), while indicating deep personal, social, historical and cultural analysis, are linked to comprehending within the responding strand only and imply that critical thinking is predominantly connected to the responding strand. The questions therefore are not helpful and would be more useful as guides to writers or used to structure descriptions of knowledge in each art form.

Way forward

- Ensure art form specific content (knowledge, skills and processes) is foregrounded in the organisation of learning.
- Remove Table 1 from the paper.
- Remove the questions in paragraph 18.

2.2 Definitions and terminology

- A variety of terms are used to describe the contexts of art making and learning, including *perspectives*, *worlds*, *realms* and *dimensions*. The use of one overarching term, such as *context* could be used consistently throughout the document and elaborated in each art form (e.g. dramatic context).
- The structure of the definitions and descriptions of learning must be more consistent. The three strands provide a consistent framework for these definitions and descriptions. More detailed feedback about the definitions for the art forms is provided in the learning area specific feedback.
- Organising and definitional terminology is used differently in each art form and throughout the paper (e.g. *dimensions*, *strands*, *processes*, *elements*, *media*, *materials*, *instruments*). These terms need to be fully defined in the glossary for each art form and applied consistently.
- Key terms that require more careful definition and consistent use throughout the document include:
 - *Aesthetic*: The paper describes learning in the Arts as the development of aesthetic knowledge. However, the term *aesthetic* is also used to describe aesthetic pursuits (paragraph 70), aesthetic decisions and aesthetic voice (paragraphs 64 and 66).
 - *Audience*: The paper makes clear that the artist can be the audience. However the term is also used to define theatre, to position students as future consumers and to define responding. The term *audience* needs more consistent use throughout the paper in order to be inclusive of all the ways audience is involved in each art form. Greater interactivity, particularly co-creation between audience, artist and arts works should be reflected in the use of the term.
 - *Artistic*: Artistic is not defined in the glossary and its relationship with aesthetic knowledge, arts practices or creativity is not clear.
 - *Art work*: This term is most useful when described in the plural form, arts works. It should not appear only as if art work is the end product but rather it should be presented in all three strands.
 - *Creativity* (paragraph 10): The relationship between the general capability “Critical and creative thinking” and *creativity* in the Arts needs to be carefully explained. Currently creativity is inappropriately linked to a definition of design.
 - *Culture* (paragraphs 11–12): The current narrow definitions reflect on gender, race and “high culture”. This term should be defined more inclusively and position culture as integral to contemporary thinking about art making and learning. The discussion about culture should establish how culture will be viewed in this curriculum. Citing contemporary popular culture as examples of organically connected arts practice (paragraph 9) is not clear.
 - *Context*: The term *context* is used inconsistently throughout the paper. Queensland recommends the use of the term *context* instead of *realms*.
 - *Design*: Design thinking and practice can be learned in all art forms. However visual arts have a particular role to play in the teaching of design and design thinking. The current definition raises awareness of design in daily life but does not link design thinking and processes to learning through all the Arts. Definitions of creativity and design should be distinct.

- *Safety and safe practice*: This should include reference to emotional as well as physical safety for young people in arts learning environments and be consistently used throughout the document. The reference to caution in the general capability “Ethical behaviour” should be explained in light of this definition.
- *Connectivity, connected learning, organically connected and interconnected processes*: These are all important terms and concepts. They are used in the paper to describe both cultural and contemporary arts practices involving more than one art form, approaches to pedagogy in the arts particularly in the early years and the relationship of the strands to one another. The term *connectivity* is defined in the glossary as an alternative to integration. It needs to be defined and used more consistently throughout the paper.

Way forward

- Reduce the use of organising terms like *realms, perspectives, dimensions* and *worlds* and simplify these by using a term like *context*.
- Refine the definitions for key terms and apply them consistently throughout the document.

2.3 Contexts for learning

- The discussion of the relationship between the generalist, specialist and artist should be more explicit in the organisation of learning. The role of the artists and arts industry in the delivery of quality arts education is articulated towards the end of the paper. However, the partnership between artist and teacher is underdeveloped.
- The role of specialist arts educators is not adequately addressed in the paper.
- The curriculum beyond the core requires further detail and elaboration.
- Greater clarity about the development of art form specific achievement standards at the end of each band is required.
- Currently the scope of learning in each art form is defined in bands. Two-or three-year band structures are regarded as a positive. However the description of learning in F–2 is underdeveloped and in Years 3–8 is too broad.
- There is limited information about content, structure and how the strands will operate in senior courses.

Way forward

- Include more direct reference to the specialised or additional learning, which would be the domain of the specialist educator or artist in residence F–8.
- Indicate the difference between core and additional learning F–8 in the descriptions of learning in each art form.
- Write the overview of content in the bands (F–2, 3–4, 5–6, 7–8, 9–10 and 11–12) to make the differentiation between year levels clearer.
- Make it clear that there will be art form specific achievement standards.
- Give more detail about the purpose of the strands in Years 11 and 12.

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures are positioned as historical studies and are inconsistently referred to in the different art forms. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures could be better represented as central to the development of aesthetic knowledge in each art form in an Australian Arts Curriculum.

Way forward

- Include more direct reference to the reasons why Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures should be studied in each of the art forms F–12.
- Contextualise the study of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures with the studies of arts practices from other cultures and Asia. This should be introduced earlier in the paper and not only attended to in the cross-curriculum priorities.
- Ensure all art forms make direct reference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and culture in learning from F–12. For example:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples use artistic practices to communicate powerfully and continuously about country, place, people, identity and culture. They are the first people to do so in this country. This makes the learning about and through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practices significant to all young Australians' arts education. These continuous Australian arts practices have been expanded to include the arts practices of the cultural communities and individuals that have made this country their home.

Therefore a study of the arts works and practices from cultures that have had an impact on the Australian identity will also be a part of the Australian Arts curriculum. Australia is positioned in a geographical region that has ensured continuous and rich exchange between artists, arts works and practices in Asia. The Australian Arts Curriculum will provide opportunities for all students to understand and experience the impact of this on Australian and Asian arts practice.

- The shape paper should clearly outline the role of emerging technologies in arts practice and arts learning. Currently this is inconsistently described throughout the paper.

Way forward

- Present a more contemporary orientation for the role of emerging technologies in art making and Australian classrooms. For example:

In the 21st century, young Australians are connected to each other and to global communities in ways unique to this time. Therefore the Australian Arts Curriculum will include learning about and through arts practices central to the culture of digital exchange. Young people's roles as creators and producers have significant relevance to the identity of contemporary Australians.

- A feature of a quality arts curriculum is its commitment to inclusion. A quality arts curriculum provides for the full range of experiences and abilities and includes the diverse social, cultural and physical contexts of the learners. Inclusivity as a feature of arts learning could be captured more adequately in the shape paper.

Way forward

- Bring a focus on inclusion forward in the paper (i.e. Before paragraph 67) by embedding the principles of inclusion more clearly in the definition of arts learning and the description of learning in each art form.

3. Sections of the shape paper

3.1 Rationale

Strengths

- The rationale clearly describes the contribution of arts learning in all five art forms to the education of all young Australians.

Issues and concerns

The following issues were raised in consultations about the rationale:

- There should be more emphasis on the intrinsic value of learning arts knowledge, skills and processes for their own sake.
- The reference to arts as a pedagogical tool for other learning distracts from why it is important to develop an arts curriculum in five art forms for all young people.
- There should be more direct references to the 21st century context of this arts curriculum by referring to digital, virtual and mediated worlds alongside real and imagined ones.
- Indigenous cultural heritage should always be referred to as “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures”. The reference to cultural diversity and indigenous heritage being integral is not elaborated adequately.

Way forward

- Include specific explanations about the value of learning each art form.
- Establish the 21st century orientation of the curriculum more directly.
- Strengthen the reference to cultural diversity and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.

3.2 Defining the Arts

Strengths

- Defining the Arts is important as it clarifies the broad and interconnected nature of art forms.

Issues and concerns

- The intent to capture the broadest definition of arts experience, understanding and purpose is commended. However, convoluted language such as *dimensions of perception, realms of experience, representations of these realms* creates a conceptual layer that is unclear and inaccessible.
- The assertion that art making through the three strands comprises aesthetic knowledge is also difficult to accept. It is working in all three strands in five art forms F–8 that a core aesthetic knowledge is developed over time.
- The definitions of the three processes —generating, realizing and responding — are helpful as a framework for curriculum design. However the linear explanation —generate then realise then respond producing arts works and meaning — is difficult to reconcile with a recursive view of the three processes.

Way forward

- Synthesise key terms.
- Emphasise the importance of art form specific knowledge, skills and understandings to the development of aesthetic knowledge.
- Emphasise the recursive nature of the three processes in art making and learning.

3.3 Defining the art forms

Strengths

- An overview of each art form and its contribution to Australian culture is valuable and clarifies the unique contribution of each art form to student learning.
- Including adjectives that capture the experience of art making and learning in each art form, for example the creative, expressive, active and joyful nature of arts experiences is very positive.

Issues and concerns

- Consistency in the approach to the definitions should be improved. For example, terms like *creative* or *creating*, *expressive*, *collaborative*, *dynamic* and the roles of audience are in some, but not all definitions. All these descriptors have a place in every art form. The common aspects should be in an introductory statement about the quality of arts experiences and arts learning. The specific definitions for each art form should focus on the unique components.
- The definitions are too varied, for example:
 - music and dance have a strong behavioural and social emphasis while media has a strong industry focus
 - visual arts definition is the only one to include the spiritual
 - drama is the only definition to use the term audience.
- The use of language to indicate each art form's relationship with new media and digital or communication technologies is inconsistent. For example:
 - dance refers to multi-modal and new technologies
 - music and media arts refer to digital and communication technologies
 - visual arts refer to visual technologies and work in four dimensions
 - drama refers to technologies without any contemporary context for digital, virtual or mediated art making or learning.
- To improve the overall readability, the elements, instruments, processes and technology in each form should be signalled and introduced in a similar way.
- The critical and creative thinking skills and the depth of art forms specific content (knowledge, skills and processes) should be clearer.

Dance

The following issues were raised about the definition for dance:

- The use of the term *aesthetic understanding* is confusing given how the term *aesthetic knowledges* used throughout the paper.

- The inclusion of *emotional and cognitive meanings* when describing learning in dance contrasts to the established terminology of *perceptions, realms* and *experiences*. There should be greater consistency with the broad definition of arts and arts learning.
- *Choreography* is a term that should be mentioned in the definition of dance.

Drama

The following issues were raised about the definition for drama:

- Identifying the central activity of live enactment is appropriate to the unique nature of drama. However the notion of the audience as defining the difference between *theatre* and *dramas* artificial and not useful. The term *theatre* should only be used in reference to specific theatrical processes and styles.
- The use of taking on roles and characters is more specific than broad statements like stepping into imagined worlds.

Media Arts

The following issue was raised about the definition for media arts:

- The perspective and description of media arts aligns with the five concepts which are used in the construction of media curriculum in Queensland. However a clearer connection needs to be made describing how the five key concepts of languages, technologies, institutions, audiences and representations will be taught through the framework of generating, realizing and responding.

Music

The following issues were raised about the definition for music:

- The definition captures the essence and value of music. However, there is a difference between the depth of reference to knowledge and skills development over time in this definition compared with media.
- The values emphasis in the definition raises problems in terms of contemporary models of music learning and thinking. There could be greater reference to the unique mind processes and neurology that music involves.
- The use of additional terms like *creating* and *performing* appears to indicate another layer of organisational language.

Visual Arts

The following issue was raised about the definition for visual arts:

- The foregrounding of design within visual arts is commended. However more explicit description of specific knowledge and skill development is needed.

Way forward

- Put the shared features and terms of all art forms(e.g. creative, exploratory, audience expressive, dynamic, imagination, processes and performance)in a statement followed by the specific definitions for each art form.
- Make creative and critical thinking a thread throughout the document to emphasise the cognitive aspect to learning in, about and through the Arts.
- In the definitions, signal the place of elements, media, instruments and art form specific skills and processes in similar ways.

- Make the link between the definitions of each of the art forms and define learning in each art form clearer.
- Ensure a consistent approach to the language describing the role of contemporary, new, emerging, digital, visual, production technologies.

3.4 Organisation of the Arts curriculum

Strengths

- The organisation of the Arts curriculum explains the recursive and interrelated nature of the three strands.

Issues and concerns

- The reference to specialised learning in the opening paragraph is not elaborated and expanded throughout the section.
- Paragraph 18 does not clarify the relationship of aesthetic knowledge and the strands as parts of the organisational structure of the Arts curriculum.
- The statement, *teach aesthetic knowledge of art making and art works* is not aligned with the initial concept that aesthetic knowledge is developed over time through learning specific art form knowledges, skills and processes across the three strands.
- The following phrases need clarifying in the context of organisation in the Arts curriculum:
 - *arts provide a natural form of enquiry learning*— this does not assist understanding learning in each art form
 - *theoretical understandings* and *historical and cultural perspectives*— these are not linked closely to earlier statements about the Arts and art forms.
- Paragraph 19 poses a key question. This would be more useful if this question established the link between the art forms and learning in the art forms.
- Paragraph 20 adds little and should be deleted.
- Paragraph 21 establishes the relationship between art form specific terminology and the three strands but further clarification is needed.
- The definition of each strand has further elaboration in brackets e.g. *Generating*(by *artist/s*). This bracketed information does not assist teachers to understand their role in facilitating learning in each art form.
- Paragraph 22 is a very important paragraph for elaborating the approach to developing curriculum and should be towards the beginning of this section and before the diagram. It is not clear whether the opening statement, *The three strands may occur simultaneously* refers to art making or how the strands may operate in a teaching and learning context.
- The addition of *apprehending* and *comprehending* to clarify *responding* and capture the critical and cognitive domain of arts learning is unnecessary. Learning in all three strands is both experiential and cognitive and therefore the three strands should be explained with an emphasis on their contribution to aesthetic knowledge and critical and creative thinking.

Way forward

- Clarify the role of specialised learning in the opening paragraph and throughout the paper.
- Link the explanation of aesthetic knowledge more closely to the recursive processes of art learning, generating, realizing and responding.
- Link the key question to arts learning.
- Remove paragraph 20, this paper does not need to validate the processes but rather explain them confidently as a proposition.
- Present paragraph 21 before the diagram.
- Contextualise the strands as simultaneous but that teaching and learning at any one time in any art form may focus more on one or another as dictated by the intent of the learning.
- Remove apprehending and comprehending and explain how each strand acknowledges the experiential and develops the cognitive abilities of young people.

3.5 The Arts learning area

Strengths

- The Arts learning area provides a structure to guide curriculum development and supports flexible delivery of learning in each art form in F–8. It also highlights the importance of linking the arts to valued approaches to pedagogy in the Early Years and the need for specialist knowledge and experiences in the teaching of each art form F–12.

Issues and concerns

- Paragraph 23 introduces *wider social and intellectual contexts*, which is another way of describing the context in which art learning takes place and the impact of arts learning on the development of young people. This is a framework term that needs to be applied consistently throughout the paper.
- Paragraph 26 provides advice about the indicative hours. There needs to be clarity that the indicative hours are to guide writers only. It should also make clear that 160 hours is a minimum entitlement F–8 and acknowledge current practice that some F–8 programs may go beyond this. In Years 9–12, each art form will require more hours to ensure specialised content can be delivered. This variation needs to be clearer.
- The inclusion of *play* in paragraphs 28 and 29 is positive. However further clarification of *play* is needed to ensure understanding that it is one of range of teaching approaches. Play-based learning still requires intentional reference to art form specific content to ensure student learning is maximised. The relationship between play, experimentation, improvisation, transformation and responding could be elaborated further and then made apparent in the description of learning in each art form.
- In Years 9–12 (paragraph 30) each art form should be named, and more detail about the structure of the courses is required. The term *connectivity* requires explanation as an approach to pedagogy in the Early Years to strengthen learning through the Arts, and as a way of recognising that some arts practices, particularly culturally specific and contemporary practice, have seamless boundaries between art forms.

Way forward

- Ensure consistency in the use of terms such as *context*.
- Make clear that specialised programs are already in operation F–8 and acknowledge those programs as an ideal and that this curriculum will provide guidance for specialist teachers and the entitlement for all F–8 students.
- Explain play in the context of intentional teaching and art form specific curriculum.

- Explain *play*, *experimentation*, *improvisation*, and *transformation* and their relationship with responding at all year levels, and reflect this in the description of learning for each art form.
- Explain the term *connectivity* as an approach to pedagogy in the Early Years to strengthen learning through the Arts and as a way of recognising that some arts practices, particularly culturally specific and contemporary practice have seamless boundaries between art forms.

3.6 Learning in Dance, Drama, Media Arts, Music and Visual Arts

Strengths

- Providing a scope of each learning area gives an indication of the learning to take place.

Issues and concerns

- Generally, the definitions and framework established at the beginning of the paper need to be more closely related to the descriptions of learning in each art form.
- Creativity and critical and creative thinking need to inform all the descriptions of learning for each art form.
- If design is to be articulated across each art form, this should be made clearer in the descriptions of each arts area. The foregrounding of design in visual arts is supported.
- The learning described across the band Years 3–8 is too broad.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts practices, along with content about Asian and other local, national and global arts practices should be present at all year levels and in each art form.
- In acknowledging that in F–8 the curriculum will be written for all young Australians, it is important that an inclusive approach to content is followed, allowing for adjustments to reflect the fullest range of abilities.

Dance

- There is additional organising language in dance. Greater clarity is required about organising layers in each art form.
- The inclusion of anatomy and body type is a concern as the relationship between this content and the development of aesthetic knowledge is not clear.

Drama

- The inclusion of the term *theatre* with drama in the descriptions of learning is not required, and for consistency the term *drama* should be acknowledged as incorporating theatre.
- The shape paper states that learning in drama should focus on the development of aesthetic knowledge. Therefore the inclusion of production management skills including budgeting is inappropriate.
- The paper should acknowledge more directly drama produced by one person.

Media Arts

- Further clarification about the relationship between the five key concepts and the organising strands would be useful.

Music

- The performance of students own musical ideas and works (i.e. self-compositions) should be valued.
- Consistent terminology is required e.g. *performing* or *playing*.
- There needs to be greater reference to the development and sequential acquisition of skills and techniques of music.
- Notation is mentioned in Years 3–8 and aural skills in F–8, but neither are mentioned in Years 9–12. While it is clear these skills would be built upon in Years 9–12, a statement about how core content is developed further in specialised courses and higher grades should be included in all art forms.

Visual Arts

- Clearer articulation of visual arts content (knowledge, skills and processes) and consistent use of terminology would make the section a more useful guide to curriculum writers.
- The statements *public exhibition* in years 9 and 10 and *public exhibition standard* appears to imply that student work must be of an acceptable public standard. Whilst public exhibition is a common practice, it is not a requirement of learning in the visual arts.
- The contribution of visual arts to critical and creative thinking, design and literacy — particularly visual and multi-literacies — is required.

Way forward

- Refine each description with greater consideration of the following questions. How does the description of learning in each band:
 - contribute to aesthetic knowledge?
 - describe content (knowledge, skills and processes) in each of the three strands?
 - articulate the elements, media, instruments and processes?
 - contribute to critical and creative thinking, literacy, personal and social competence and intercultural understanding through art form specific content organised in three strands?
 - consider play, experimentation, improvisation and transformation?
 - reflect the 21st century orientation of the curriculum and the role of ICT arts works, processes and knowledges?
 - contribute to the understanding about cross-curriculum priorities, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures and Australian engagement with Asia?

3.7 The general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities

Strengths

- Learning in the Arts makes a significant contribution to the development of general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities.

Issues and concerns

- The overall relationship between the organising framework, definitions of arts and the strands and descriptions of learning in each art form needs to be more cohesively structured. By embedding key general capabilities (literacy, critical and creative thinking, ICT, personal and social competence, ethical behaviour) and cross-curriculum priorities, the impression that these are tacked on and not inherent to the Arts curriculum would be minimised.
- This section has examples of language used inconsistently. Paragraph 78 refers to understanding self, relationships and the world around them. This is not linked to the terms used throughout the document, such as *dimensions of perception*, *realms of experiences*, *worlds* or *contexts*.
- Australia's engagement with Asia does not foreground the rich cultural exchange in The Arts that has occurred between Asia and Australia. The statement re-imagine what we already are, that is, part of Asia (point 70) is contentious and not consistent with the intent of the Melbourne Declaration, that is Australians need to become 'Asia literate', engaging and building strong relationships with Asia (2008, p4) and active and informed citizens.
- Sustainability appears tokenistic. A more effective description may be inclusive of the concepts of social sustainability, sense of place/sense of community, art scapes, landscapes, recycled products and reuse and recycle within an Arts context.

Way forward

- Terminology in the general capabilities should be consistent with the rest of the document.
- Strengthen the statements about the Arts and the cross curricular priorities.
- The examples given in each general capability should include all art forms.
- ICT, Ethical behaviour and Numeracy need further development. Discussion of ICT needs to establish the language and approach to technology and maintain this throughout the document.
- Ensure that physical and vocal skills are incorporated in personal and social competence.

3.8 Arts industry and community

Strengths

- This section recognises the important relationship between arts learning in schools, community and the Arts industry.

Issues and concerns

- The role of the community and the Arts industry is significant in the delivery of a rich arts learning program. However the student and teacher are positioned as passive receivers of arts experiences created beyond the school, whereas training organisations are positioned as having the primary responsibility for preparation for careers in the Arts.

- There needs to be clearer articulation of possible partnerships between the Arts industry and educators to deliver and augment the curriculum. This section should outline how the curriculum encourages teachers, artists and arts organisations to work in partnership to facilitate learning across the three strands.
- Engaging community arts practice is central to teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures as well as the cultures and histories of other communities that influence Australian arts practices. The opportunity to build direct community involvement in the curriculum should be made clearer.

Way forward

- Emphasise the delivery of the curriculum across three strands as a strategy for partnerships with the Arts industry.
- Make clear the requirement for community partnership in developing authentic and meaningful learning about arts practices that are culturally specific, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts practices.

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