

# General capabilities

## Australian Curriculum Level 6 exit descriptors — excerpt

This resource provides a summary of Australian Curriculum Level 6 general capabilities, which may be useful for schools planning for Year 10 students who are moving into senior learning pathways.

There are seven (7) general capabilities embedded within the learning areas of the Australian Curriculum: **literacy, numeracy, ICT capability, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, ethical understanding, intercultural understanding** (ACARA, 2018).

Excerpt from Australian Curriculum — General capabilities <http://australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities>.

The general capabilities play a significant role in the Australian Curriculum in equipping young Australians to live and work successfully in the twenty-first century.

In the Australian Curriculum, capability encompasses knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions. Students develop capability when they apply knowledge and skills confidently, effectively and appropriately in complex and changing circumstances, in their learning at school and in their lives outside school.

### General Capabilities in the Australian Curriculum

In the Australian Curriculum, the general capabilities are addressed through the content of the learning areas. General capabilities are identified where they are developed or applied in the content descriptions. They are also identified where they offer opportunities to add depth and richness to student learning via the content elaborations, which are provided to give teachers ideas about how they might teach the content. Icons are used to indicate where general capabilities have been identified in learning area content descriptions and elaborations.

Teachers are expected to teach and assess general capabilities to the extent that they are incorporated within learning area content. State and territory education authorities will determine if and how student learning of the general capabilities is to be further assessed or reported.

The Australian Curriculum general capabilities continua align with Goal 2 of the *Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians*: 'All young Australian become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens' (MCEETYA, 2008).

## Identifying general capabilities key ideas, interrelated elements and sub-elements

| Literacy  | Numeracy  | ICT capability  | Critical and creative thinking  | Personal and social capability   | Ethical understanding  | Intercultural understanding  |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| Six interrelated elements   | Six interrelated elements   | Five interrelated elements  | Four interrelated elements  | Four interrelated elements   | Three interrelated elements  | Three interrelated elements  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehending texts through listening, reading and viewing</li> <li>Composing texts through speaking, writing and creating</li> <li>Text knowledge</li> <li>Grammar knowledge</li> <li>Word knowledge</li> <li>Visual knowledge</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Estimating and calculating with whole numbers</li> <li>Recognising and using patterns and relationships</li> <li>Using fractions, decimals, percentages, ratios and rates</li> <li>Using spatial reasoning</li> <li>Interpreting statistical information</li> <li>Using measurement</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applying social and ethical protocols and practices when using ICT</li> <li>Investigating with ICT</li> <li>Creating with ICT</li> <li>Communicating with ICT</li> <li>Managing and operating ICT</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inquiring – identifying, exploring and organising information and ideas</li> <li>Generating ideas, possibilities and actions</li> <li>Reflecting on thinking and processes</li> <li>Analysing, synthesising and evaluating reasoning and procedures</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-awareness</li> <li>Self-management</li> <li>Social awareness</li> <li>Social management</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding ethical concepts and issues</li> <li>Reasoning in decision-making and actions</li> <li>Exploring values, rights and responsibilities</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognising culture and developing respect</li> <li>Interacting and empathising with others</li> <li>Reflecting on intercultural experiences and taking responsibility</li> </ul> |

## Level 6 Literacy

| Key factors and elements  | Typically, by the end of Year 10, students:   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Comprehending texts through listening, reading and viewing</b> | navigate, read and view a wide range of more demanding subject-specific texts with an extensive range of graphic representations  | listen to a range of extended spoken and audio texts, including audio-visual texts, and respond to, interpret and evaluate ideas, information and opinions                          | interpret and evaluate information within and between texts, comparing and contrasting information using comprehension strategies  |
| <b>Composing texts through speaking, writing and creating</b>     | plan, research, rehearse and deliver presentations on more complex issues and learning area topics, combining visual and multimodal elements creatively to present ideas and information and support opinions and engage and persuade an audience | compose and edit longer and more complex learning area texts  | use pair, group and class discussions and formal and informal debates as learning tools to explore ideas, compare solutions, evaluate information and ideas, refine opinions and arguments in preparation for creating texts |
| <b>Text knowledge</b>   | use comprehensive knowledge of the structure and features of learning area texts to comprehend and compose complex texts in innovative ways, using conventions for citing others  | use knowledge of how the cohesion in texts is improved by strengthening the internal structure  |  |
| <b>Grammar knowledge</b>  | develop higher order concepts in academic texts through language features that compact and generalise ideas   | control a range of simple, compound and complex sentence structures to convey complex ideas, build and support arguments, and change emphasis                                       | use language that indirectly expresses opinions and constructs representations of people and events, and consider expressed and implied judgments  |
| <b>Word knowledge</b>   | use subject-specific vocabulary to express abstract concepts, and refine vocabulary choices to discriminate between shades of meaning   | use knowledge of a wide range of English spelling conventions to spell unusual and technical words correctly and to deduce the meanings of unfamiliar words and spell unknown words |  |
| <b>Visual knowledge</b>   | evaluate the impact of different visual choices in the composition of images, including symbolic images and movement of camera or light, to achieve different nuances   |   |  |

Source: [www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/literacy/learning-continuum](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/literacy/learning-continuum)

## Level 6 Numeracy

| Interrelated elements   | Typically, by the end of Year 10, students:   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Estimating and calculating with whole numbers</b>            | solve and model problems involving complex data by estimating and calculating using a variety of efficient mental, written and digital strategies | use different ways to represent very large and very small numbers including scientific notation   | evaluate financial plans to support specific financial goals |
| <b>Recognising and using patterns and relationships</b>         | explain how the practical application of patterns can be used to identify trends  |   |  |
| <b>Using fractions, decimals, percentages, ratios and rates</b> | illustrate and order relationships for fractions, decimals, percentages, ratios and rates   | solve problems involving fractions, decimals, percentages, ratios and rates   |  |
| <b>Using spatial reasoning</b>                                  | visualise, describe and analyse the way shapes and objects are combined and positioned in the environment for different purposes                  | create and interpret maps, models and diagrams using a range of mapping tools   |  |
| <b>Interpreting statistical information</b>                     | evaluate media statistics and trends by linking claims to data displays, statistics and representative data                                       | explain the likelihood of multiple events occurring together by giving examples of situations when they might happen  |  |
| <b>Using measurement</b>  | solve complex problems involving surface area and volume of prisms and cylinders and composite solids   | use 12- and 24-hour systems within a multiple time zone to solve time problems, use large and small timescales in complex contexts and place historical and scientific events on an extended time scale |  |

Source: [www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/numeracy/learning-continuum](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/numeracy/learning-continuum)

## Level 6 Information and communication technology capability

| Interrelated elements                                      | Typically, by the end of Year 10, students:   |   |  |   |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| <b>Applying social and ethical protocols and practices</b> | identify and describe ethical dilemmas and consciously apply practices that protect intellectual property   | assess the impact of ICT in the workplace and in society, and speculate on its role in the future and how they can influence its use                          | use a range of strategies for securing and protecting information, assess the risks associated with online environments and establish appropriate security strategies and codes of conduct | independently apply appropriate strategies to protect rights, identity, privacy and emotional safety of others when using ICT, and discriminate between protocols suitable for different communication tools when collaborating with local and global communities |
| <b>Investigating with ICT</b>                              | develop and use criteria systematically to evaluate the quality, suitability and credibility of located data or information and sources   | select and use a range of ICT independently and collaboratively, analyse information to frame questions and plan search strategies or data generation         |  | use advanced search tools and techniques or simulations and digital models to locate or generate precise data and information that supports the development of new understandings   |
| <b>Creating with ICT</b>                                   | design, modify and manage complex digital solutions, or multimodal creative outputs or data transformations for a range of audiences and purposes   | select and use ICT to articulate ideas and concepts, and plan the development of complex solutions  |  |   |
| <b>Communicating with ICT</b>                              | understand that computer mediated communications have advantages and disadvantages in supporting active participation in a community of practice and the management of collaboration on digital materials | select and use a range of ICT tools efficiently and safely to share and exchange information, and to collaboratively and purposefully construct knowledge     |  |   |
| <b>Managing and operating ICT</b>                          | justify the selection of, and optimise the operation of, a selected range of devices and software functions to complete specific tasks, for different purposes and in different social contexts           | apply an understanding of networked ICT system components to make changes to functions, processes, procedures and devices to fit the purpose of the solutions | manage and maintain data securely in a variety of storage mediums and formats  |   |

Source: [www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/information-and-communication-technology-ict-capability/learning-continuum](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/information-and-communication-technology-ict-capability/learning-continuum)

## Level 6 Critical and creative thinking

| Interrelated elements  | Typically, by the end of Year 10, students:  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Inquiring – identifying, exploring and organising information and ideas</b> | critically analyse independently sourced information to determine bias and reliability   | clarify complex information and ideas drawn from a range of sources   | pose questions to critically analyse complex issues and abstract ideas                            |
| <b>Generating ideas, possibilities and actions</b>                             | speculate on creative options to modify ideas when circumstances change  | assess risks and explain contingencies, taking account of a range of perspectives, when seeking solutions and putting complex ideas into action | create and connect complex ideas using imagery, analogies and symbolism                           |
| <b>Reflecting on thinking and processes</b>                                    | give reasons to support their thinking, and address opposing viewpoints and possible weaknesses in their own positions   | identify, plan and justify transference of knowledge to new contexts  | balance rational and irrational components of a complex or ambiguous problem to evaluate evidence |
| <b>Analysing, synthesising and evaluating reason and procedures</b>            | evaluate the effectiveness of ideas, products and performances and implement courses of action to achieve desired outcomes against criteria they have identified | use logical and abstract thinking to analyse and synthesise complex information to inform a course of action                                    | analyse reasoning used in finding and applying solutions, and in choice of resources              |

Source: [www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/critical-and-creative-thinking/learning-continuum](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/critical-and-creative-thinking/learning-continuum)

## Level 6 Personal and social capability

| Interrelated elements    | Typically, by the end of Year 10, students:   |   |   |   |  |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Self-awareness</b>    | evaluate the effectiveness of commonly used learning strategies and work practices and refine these as required   | reflect critically on their emotional responses to challenging situations in a wide range of learning, social and work-related contexts       | assess their strengths and challenges and devise personally appropriate strategies to achieve future success  | reflect on feedback from peers, teachers and other adults, to analyse personal characteristics and skill set that contribute to or limit their personal and social capability |  |
| <b>Self-management</b>   | evaluate, rethink and refine approaches to tasks to take account of unexpected or difficult situations and safety considerations                              | consider control and justify their emotional responses, in expressing their opinions, beliefs, values, questions and choices                  | establish personal priorities, manage resources effectively and demonstrate initiative to achieve personal goals and learning outcomes                  | critically analyse self-discipline strategies and personal goals and consider their application in social and work-related contexts   |  |
| <b>Social awareness</b>  | explain how relationships differ between peers, parents, teachers and other adults, and identify the skills needed to manage different types of relationships | articulate their personal value system and analyse the effects of actions that repress social power and limit the expression of diverse views | plan, implement and evaluate ways of contributing to civil society at local, national, regional and global levels                                       |   |  |
| <b>Social management</b> | propose, implement and monitor strategies to address needs prioritised at local, national, regional and global levels, and communicate these widely           | develop and apply criteria to evaluate the outcomes of individual and group decisions and analyse the consequences of their decision making   | generate, apply and evaluate strategies such as active listening, mediation and negotiation to prevent and resolve interpersonal problems and conflicts | critique their ability to devise and enact strategies for working in diverse teams, drawing on the skills and contributions of team members to complete complex tasks         | formulate plans for effective communication (verbal, nonverbal, digital) to complete complex tasks |

Source: [www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/personal-and-social-capability/learning-continuum](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/personal-and-social-capability/learning-continuum)

## Level 6 Ethical understanding

| Interrelated elements                                | Typically, by the end of Year 10, students:                                       |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| <b>Understanding ethical concepts and issues</b>     | distinguish between the ethical and non-ethical dimensions of complex issues      | critique generalised statements about ethical concepts  |   |
| <b>Reasoning in decision making and actions</b>      | evaluate diverse perceptions and ethical bases of action in complex contexts      | analyse the objectivity or subjectivity behind decision making where there are many possible consequences | investigate reasons for clashes of beliefs in issues of personal, social and global importance          |
| <b>Exploring values, rights and responsibilities</b> | evaluate the merits of conflicting rights and responsibilities in global contexts | analyse and explain the interplay of values in national and international forums and policy making        | use reasoning skills to prioritise the relative merits of points of view about complex ethical dilemmas |

Source: [www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/ethical-understanding/learning-continuum](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/ethical-understanding/learning-continuum)

## Level 6 Intercultural understanding

| Interrelated elements  | Typically, by the end of Year 10, students:   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <b>Recognising culture and developing respect</b>                        | understand the importance of mutual respect in promoting cultural exchange and collaboration in an interconnected world | critically analyse the complex and dynamic nature of knowledge, beliefs and practices in a wide range of contexts over time   | analyse how membership of local, regional, national and international groups shapes identities including their own                             |
| <b>Interacting and empathising with others</b>                           | present a balanced view on issues where conflicting views cannot easily be resolved                                     | analyse the complex relationship between language, thought and context to understand and enhance communication  | recognise the effect that empathising with others has on their own feelings, motivations and actions   |
| <b>Reflecting on intercultural experiences and taking responsibility</b> | reflect critically on the effect of intercultural experiences on their own attitudes and beliefs and those of others    | recognise the challenges and benefits of living and working in a culturally diverse society and the role that cultural mediation plays in learning to live together | critique the use of stereotypes and prejudices in texts and issues concerning specific cultural groups at national, regional and global levels |

Source: [www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/intercultural-understanding/learning-continuum](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/intercultural-understanding/learning-continuum)

## References

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority 2018, *Australian Curriculum v8.3*, <http://australiancurriculum.edu.au>.

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority 2018, *Australian Curriculum — General capabilities*, <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities>.

Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) 2008, *Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians*, [http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/\\_resources/National\\_Declaration\\_on\\_the\\_Educational\\_Goals\\_for\\_Young\\_Australians.pdf](http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/National_Declaration_on_the_Educational_Goals_for_Young_Australians.pdf)

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