Unit overview planning for multiple year levels

Australian Curriculum P–10 DRAFT

Unit overviews for multiple year levels identify specific curriculum content, approaches to assessment, and resources. The unit overview is informed by the whole school and year level plans. A unit overview for multiple year levels includes:

- the focus and context for learning specified content descriptions, ensuring the focus is on conceptual threads, that is, concepts underpinning content descriptions that carry through from one year level to the next
- identified inquiry questions that are common across the targeted year levels as well as those that relate to specific year levels
- relevant aspects of the achievement standards of the targeted year levels
- evidence of learning that will be gathered in the assessment and the strategies for making judgments
- teaching and learning strategies that are common across the targeted year levels as well as those related to specific year levels, and that are relevant to student interests to ensure that students have opportunities to demonstrate the achievement standard

- links to prior and future learning and to other learning areas, if appropriate
- · specific considerations to support individual learning and assessment
- bridging learning that students require (in a time of transition)
- time and resources to respond to students' learning needs.

Curriculum and assessment planning at the unit overview level is guided by five important elements of professional practice. These five elements are interdependent. The elements can be used in any sequence, but all should be considered.

Unit overviews for multiple year levels are reviewed regularly to inform future planning, teaching, learning and assessment. The five elements are essential in guiding the revision of unit overviews. During 2011, schools may choose to audit their current unit overviews against the Australian Curriculum. See the audit tools on the QSA website <www.qsa.qld.edu.au>.

Five elements of effective unit overview planning for multiple year levels

Use feedback

Feedback to both teacher and student, gathered throughout the teaching and learning cycle, informs future teaching, learning and assessment. The goal of feedback is to recognise, encourage and improve student learning. Assessment feedback is most helpful if the specific elements of the content (knowledge, understanding and skills) are identified and specific suggestions are provided. However, assessment alone will not contribute significantly to improved learning. It is what teachers and students do with the assessment and other available information that makes a difference.

When planning unit overviews for multiple year levels, teachers:

- consider how and when to give feedback to students, parents/carers and other teachers to determine what a student needs to be taught to improve learning, including:
 - using formative, self- and peer-assessment strategies
 - providing timely and specific comments about the ways students can improve
 - engaging in conversations with the student, parents/carers and other teachers to determine how to improve a student's learning
- use feedback to review the unit and inform future planning, teaching, learning and assessment to achieve continuous improvement.

Identify curriculum

The Australian Curriculum content descriptions and achievement standards for English, Mathematics and Science form the basis for developing teaching and learning programs in 2012. In 2013, the Australian Curriculum in History will also be used. For other learning areas, the Early Years Curriculum Guidelines (Prep), the Essential Learnings (Years 1–9) and the Year 10 Guidelines should be used.

When planning unit overviews for multiple year levels, teachers:

- select the Australian Curriculum content descriptions that will be the unit's focus and content descriptions from other learning areas (if planning an integrated unit) relevant to the span of targeted year levels with a focus on recognising the "build on" from one year to the next, referring to the Australian Curriculum elaborations as necessary
- analyse the achievement standard for each of the targeted year levels and identify the expected and valued qualities of student work
- determine the contexts for teaching the content descriptions
- consider and explicitly identify how general capabilities and cross-curricular priorities will be integrated within the unit
- link to prior, current and future learning across the span of targeted year levels
- review data and evidence about students to make decisions about catering for diversity, differentiation and the phase of schooling
- align with system and school priorities.

Make judgments

The achievement standards guide teacher judgment about how well students have achieved. Planned activities for teachers — in a partnership or team situation — to look at, discuss and analyse the quality of student work is the most effective way to build consistency of teacher judgment. When teachers apply standards through this process, they increase their awareness about the variety of ways in which students may respond to an assessment task. In this way, teachers gain valuable insights into what students need to learn for each level of achievement. They also develop a common understanding of the application of standards.

When planning unit overviews for multiple year levels, teachers:

- use the achievement standards to identify the taskspecific descriptors of expected and valued qualities of student work for each of the targeted year levels
- develop a Guide to making judgments for the assessment to make on-balance judgments about the standards that students have achieved across the span of targeted year levels
- use evidence in student responses and consider how judgments will be made about the quality of learning across the span of targeted year levels
- determine how students' achievements will be shared celebrated, profiled and recorded
- identify opportunities to participate in activities that promote consistency of teacher judgment, including social moderation.

Develop assessment

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. An assessment program planned at the same time as the teaching and learning will: guide and support targeted teaching and learning; provide regular feedback to students about how they can improve their learning; and clarify future teaching and learning needs.

When planning unit overviews for multiple year

- analyse the achievement standards to identify the expected and valued qualities of student

 work
- identify which elements of the assessment tasks are common to the span of targeted year levels and which relate to specific year levels
- identify how to collect evidence of student learning so that students have the best opportunity to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do
- determine the assessment purpose and design assessment instruments that fit the purpose
- check the QSA Assessment Bank to get ideas or resources to support teaching and learning.

Sequence teaching and learning

Learning experiences and teaching strategies are selected and sequenced to support active engagement in learning and to intellectually challenge. It is important to actively engage students in learning that is relevant and of interest to them. The focus or context for learning should connect with issues of personal or social relevance to students.

When planning unit overviews for multiple year levels, teachers:

- consider teaching strategies, learning experiences and content that are inclusive and socially and culturally
 responsive to students' learning styles, needs and interests, making any necessary adjustments to ensure all
 students gain opportunities to demonstrate what they know and can do, and experience success in learning
 common to the span of targeted year levels and specific to their particular year level
- check for continuity and connection between learning in the previous, current and next year levels across the span of targeted year levels
- consider time allocations for each part of the learning sequence to ensure depth of learning
- determine the resources needed to ensure successful delivery of the unit.



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