

Overview

In 2012, Queensland schools will be required to plan Prep to Year 10 (P–10) teaching and learning programs using the Australian Curriculum for English, Mathematics and Science. In 2013, schools will also be required to plan teaching and learning programs using the Australian Curriculum for History.

Schools will continue to plan for other learning areas where the Australian Curriculum is not yet approved, using the Queensland curriculum: *Early Years Curriculum Guidelines* (Prep), *Essential Learnings* (Years 1–9) and the *Year 10 Guidelines*.

The Queensland Studies Authority (QSA), with school sector representatives and practising teachers, has developed draft P–10 curriculum and assessment planning resources for the Australian Curriculum in English and Mathematics. These resources complement sector-specific requirements and build on current QSA curriculum materials. The QSA will use feedback to develop final resources for publication.

In this document:

- **Australian Curriculum** refers to the content descriptions and achievement standards developed by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)
- **Prep** describes the year before Year 1. In ACARA curriculum materials, this year is referred to as “Foundation”.

Why plan?

The purpose of planning is to achieve the teaching and learning aims of both system and school. Through planning, school leaders and teachers decide how to organise the school’s curriculum — the sum total of the learning and development experiences that are offered by a school, formally and informally and in class and out of class.

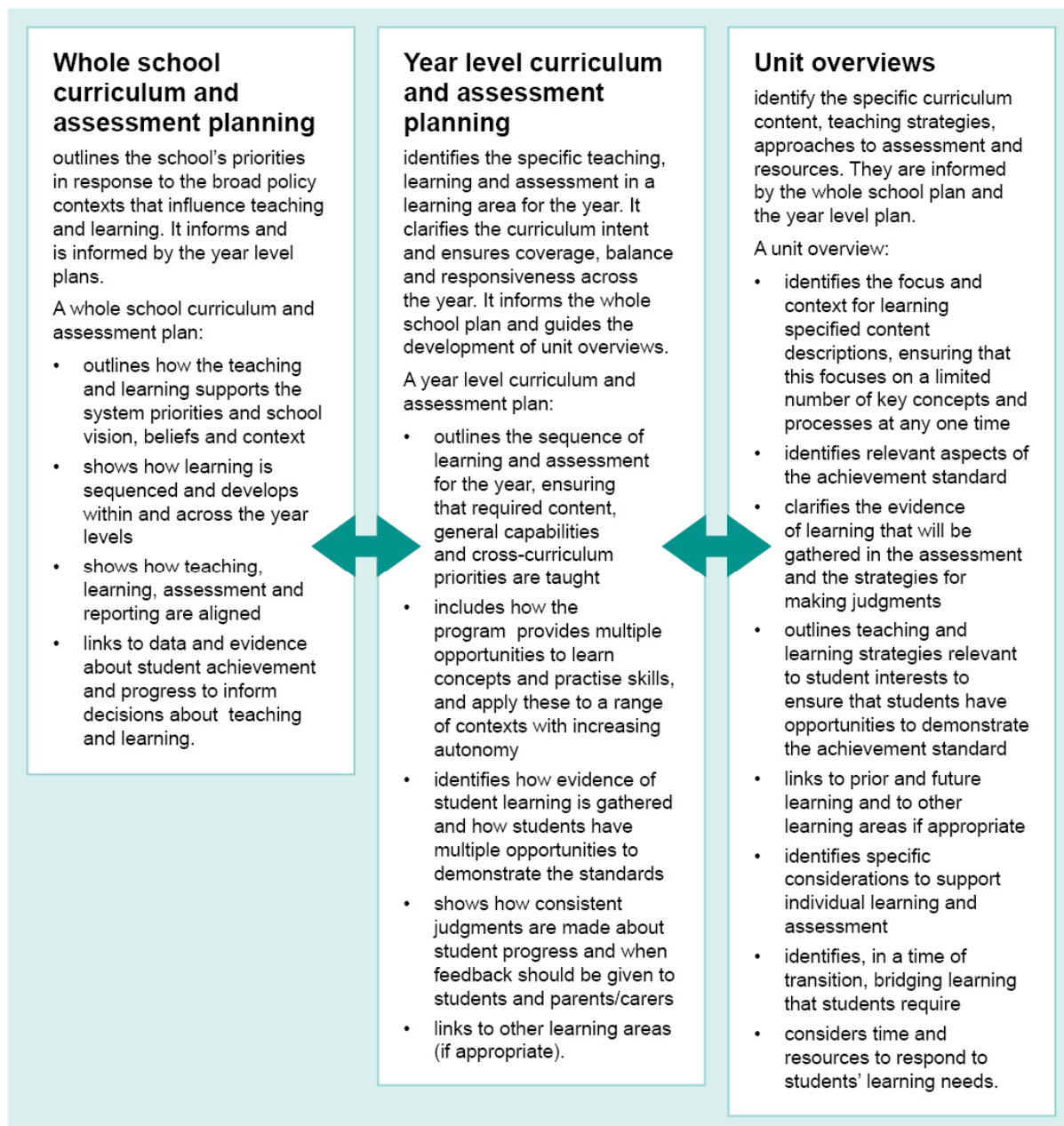
Planning:

- improves student learning by ensuring that the required knowledge, skills and understandings are included in the learning programs; that there is depth of learning; and increasing sophistication of learning as students progress through their schooling
- establishes, for a range of audiences (administrators, teachers, students and parents), a clear and shared understanding of the intentions for learning and achievement at whole school, year and unit levels
- promotes educationally principled decisions that support students’ learning across and within learning areas
- demonstrates how each year plan and unit overview contributes to the whole school goals and builds a culture of high expectations, engaged learning and focused teaching
- identifies opportunities for professional conversations and professional development.

Curriculum and assessment planning

Curriculum and assessment planning within schools occurs at three levels: whole school, year and unit. Each plan complements the others as they work together to support student learning.

Figure 1: The three levels of curriculum and assessment planning



Principles for effective planning

The principles that underpin effective curriculum and assessment planning at the whole school, year and unit level match the approach to teaching and learning, and assessment and reporting in *Building Student Success* (2008). These principles were validated by teachers and curriculum leaders from the three schooling sectors during the P–10 exemplar project for English, Mathematics and Science (June to December 2010).

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.

The *QSA Equity Statement* (August 2006) sets out challenges to ensure that all students can succeed by:

- recognising that teaching and learning should be socially and culturally responsive and inclusive
- developing an understanding of diversity within and among groups
- identifying and minimising structural barriers to access and participation
- acknowledging the diversity of students and each individual's life circumstances, and the need for particular strategies which can enhance engagement and equitable outcomes among all students
- recognising and acknowledging the diverse bodies of knowledge and backgrounds of all students, including marginalised groups
- acknowledging the relationship between valued knowledge and the participation of students in society.

Alignment of teaching and learning, and assessment and reporting

Curriculum and assessment planning is thoughtful and uses a systematic process for continually checking to ensure that all parts are connected.

Alignment, sometimes called seamless curriculum, is integral to the development and maintenance of a high-quality education system that caters for the diverse range of students and schools. It means that, to produce the best learning outcomes for students:

- what is taught must inform how it is taught, how students are assessed and how the learning is reported
- what is assessed must relate directly to what students have had an opportunity to learn
- what is reported to students, parents/carers and other teachers must align with what has been learnt.

Specific feedback, based on what has been learnt and assessed, is essential for students to improve and provides a basis for decisions about continuous improvement in teaching and learning.

Standards- and school-based assessment for learning

Teachers use standards to build a shared understanding of the qualities of student work, and to communicate student achievement to students, parents/carers and the system.

An awareness of what learning is assessed and how it is assessed helps both students and parents/carers develop an understanding of what is valued and where to focus attention.

Teachers are in the best position to make these decisions using clear and specific content and achievement standards to design continuous school-based curriculum and assessment programs.

Balance of informed prescription and teacher professional judgment

Teachers exercise their professional judgment and make decisions about student learning in their school within the context of the specified curriculum requirements and system and sector priorities.

The content descriptions (knowledge, understanding and skills) and the achievement standards provide clarity about what must be taught and what is important for students to have opportunities to know, understand and be able to do.

Professional judgments and decision making are developed by engaging in regular and structured opportunities to plan, review and reflect on teaching, learning and assessment.

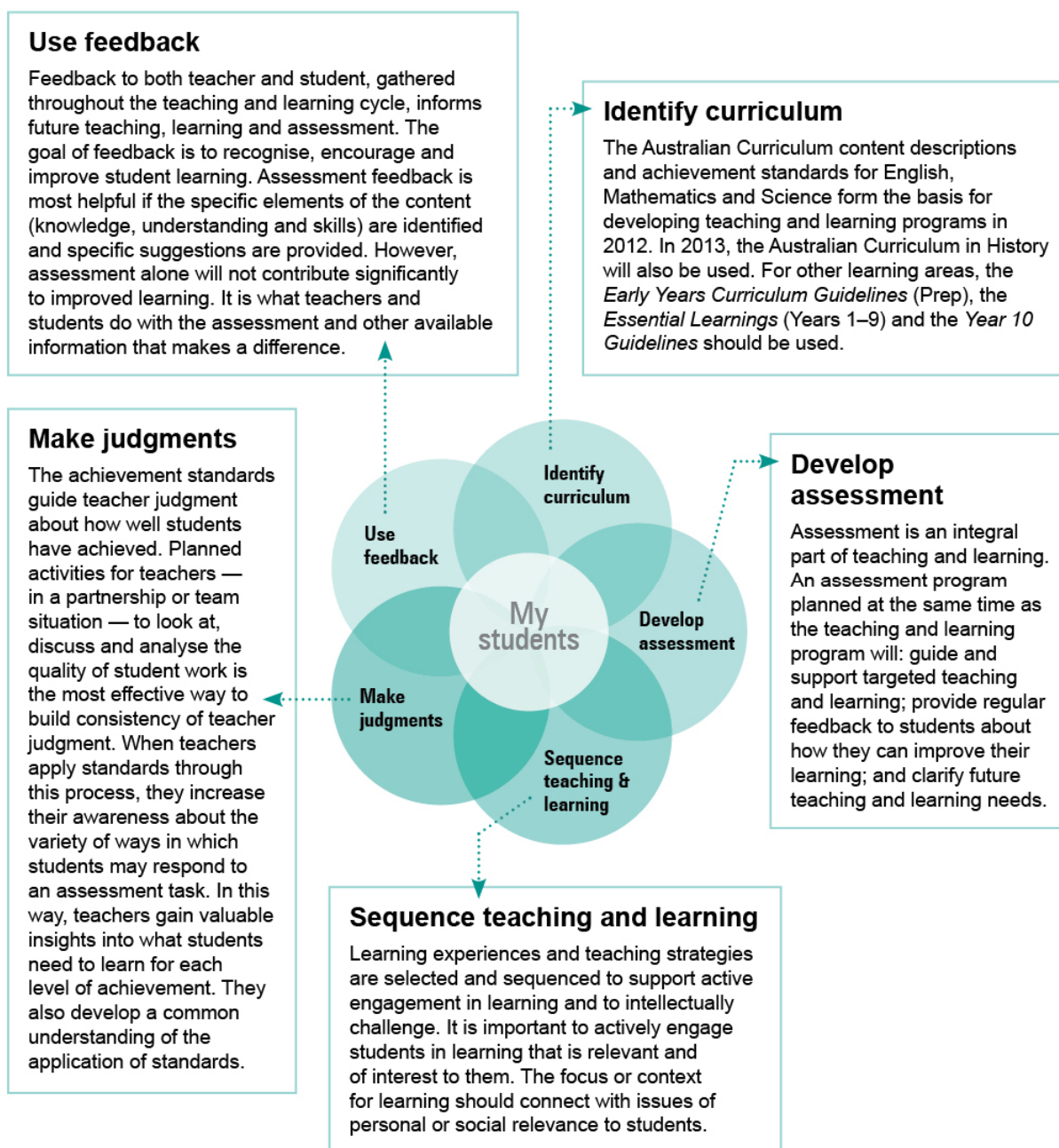
Elements of effective planning

Curriculum and assessment planning at the whole school, year and unit 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.

Plans are reviewed regularly to inform future planning, teaching, learning and assessment. The five elements are essential in guiding the revision of these plans.

During 2011, schools may choose to audit their current school, year level and unit plans against the Australian Curriculum. See the audit tools on the QSA website <www.qsa.qld.edu.au>.

Figure 2: The five elements for effective curriculum and assessment planning



Planning resources

The QSA has developed Australian Curriculum and planning resources for P–10 English and Mathematics for whole school, year level and unit overview planning. These are available from the QSA website <www.qsa.edu.au>.

Similar resources for P–10 Science will be available during Term 1, 2011.

More information

If you would like more information, please email australiancurriculum@qsa.qld.edu.au, or phone (07) 3864 0462. Or visit the Australian Curriculum section of the QSA website <www.qsa.qld.edu.au>.