LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH

Years 4 to 10 Syllabus

Italian

QUEENSLAND
SCHOOL
CURRICULUM
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Contents

OUTCOMES 12

ASSESSMENT 29

*R*ationale

Nature of the key learning area

Languages other than English (LOTE)

Languages other than English are a means of communicating across cultures and promoting sociocultural understanding and competence. Languages prepare learners for meaningful, productive lives in a culturally and linguistically diverse society and world and help learners relate positively to the richness of human diversity. Languages are important as a medium of interpersonal relationships, of thought and of learning about the world. People and communities meet many of their personal, social and cultural needs through language.

Language use establishes in individuals a sense of self and cultural identity, develops social relations in particular ways, and defines ways of knowing. In these ways, languages help users to develop self-concepts and shape thought in a personal dimension and to negotiate and express shared meanings in a social dimension. The cultural dimension of language differentiates, maintains and transforms identities. These dimensions are interdependent and impact on each other as people interact with other users of the language for a variety of purposes. These dimensions are evident when language is used:

- to process and refine personal knowledge, experience and thought;
- to engage in social interaction;
- to construct meanings about the world within particular cultural contexts;
- for creative and imaginative purposes.

This view of language acknowledges that another language is learned, not just to talk and read about the language, but to talk, read or write about the world and to negotiate one's place in it. This is reflected in Languages other than English programs when students communicate by engaging in purposeful and active use of language in tasks that contribute to students' understanding of many diverse issues and concepts and that involve negotiation and socialisation with peers.

Communication skills

Learning a language other than English, then, is about communication. Communication is about negotiation of meaning, and in terms of this key learning area, this involves comprehending and composing a language other than English in written and spoken modes. These modes include the four

macroskills — listening, speaking, reading and writing — that have nonverbal as well as verbal aspects. Learners will communicate with real language for real purposes within the fields of human knowledge and endeavour that provide the contexts for languages other than English learning and that are detailed later in this book. Students demonstrate communicative ability when they are able to use process skills and strategies to deploy linguistic features in culturally appropriate ways.

In addition to the learners' achievement of communication skills in another language, cognitive development, appreciation of cultures, and economic benefits are enhanced through the learning of a language other than English.

Cognitive development

General cognitive development is enhanced by the study of another language. Students need to monitor their thinking more consciously to make the mind shift required for communicating in a different language. In so doing they develop cognitive flexibility. This flexibility can lead to a greater capacity for creative and divergent thinking, which is a vital skill for the future.

Learning a language requires a disciplined mind to recognise the patterns and connections of words and structures in the language. This provides students with a better facility for concept formation and a higher level of verbal skills. It is particularly beneficial to English language and literacy development for students to learn about an alternative linguistic system and be able to make explicit comparisons between languages. The enhancement of cognitive skills achieved through the learning of another language means that students are better able to solve problems, to think logically and to express themselves with clarity.

Appreciation of cultures

The learning of a language other than English allows students to appreciate that cultures have different ways of perceiving and expressing reality. At the same time a new language gives these students a wider perspective from which they might view the world and their places in it. Language study can promote an appreciation of the diversity and richness of a pluralist society such as Australia and can promote in students a feeling of being participants in the global community. A critical appreciation of one's own culture can be obtained by viewing the attitudes, beliefs and values of others as expressed through their language. Where the home language is not English, self-esteem can be enhanced because of the recognition by others that languages other than English have a validity of their own.

Economic benefits

Benefits of learning languages other than English accrue not only to the individual in terms of cognitive and cultural skills, but also to the nation as a whole. Australia's trade, cultural and tourist links with other countries are enhanced if we have a pool of varied language expertise including Australians from an English-speaking background as well as those from a non-English-speaking background. The ability to use a language other than English can enhance students' post-school options in a community with strong international links.

Italian as a valuable language

Italian is an international as well as an Australian community language, second only to English. Italians and people of Italian descent make up approximately 30 per cent of the modern Australian population. Learners of Italian are in the fortunate position of not having to go abroad to hear Italian spoken since the language is maintained and fostered in many communities throughout Australia. As well, there are Italian newspapers, and Italian can be heard on television and radio.

As well as being the national language of Italy, Italian is one of the four official languages of Switzerland and is spoken by many people in southern Europe, northern Africa, the United States of America and South America.

Since Italian and English are related languages, Italian is one of the easiest languages for English speakers to learn. It has the least linguistic distance from English of other languages taught in Australian schools. A knowledge of Italian facilitates access to other languages.

A study of Italian provides learners of Italian origin with the opportunity to develop their linguistic skills and to deepen their understanding of the cultural traditions of the country of their parents and grandparents. It enhances the status of their cultural heritage, their self-esteem and their sense of identity.

Italy is a member of the European Union. Because of Australia's trade links with Italy, facility with the Italian language is a practical tool in business.

Italy is a popular destination for Australian travellers. The ability to communicate in Italian enriches the travel experience and provides practical benefits.

A good knowledge of Italian can be advantageous in the public service, social welfare organisations, education, business, industry and tourism.

(Adapted from the *Italian Senior Syllabus*, Board of Senior Secondary School Studies, Brisbane, 1995, by permission.)

Contribution of the key learning area to lifelong learning

The Queensland school curriculum is designed to assist students to become lifelong learners. The overall learning outcomes of the curriculum contain elements common to all key learning areas and collectively describe the valued attributes of a lifelong learner.

A lifelong learner is:
- a knowledgeable person with deep understanding;
- a complex thinker;
- a creative person;
- an active investigator;
- an effective communicator;
- a participant in an interdependent world;
- a reflective and self-directed learner.

Second language learning develops the attributes of a lifelong learner. It fosters the development of the student, not only as a language user, but as a person. It

extends and enriches the individual's capacity for self-development by suggesting other ways of knowing. It offers opportunities to develop a world view and to interact with others who may perceive, categorise and express the world in different ways. Language learning gives access to alternative meanings through interaction with another culture and exposes the individual to a broader range of knowledge as defined by that culture. This encourages an openness to new ideas and ways of knowing. It provides students with an alternative way of expressing themselves and an opportunity to participate more fully in the global community. It enables students to widen the sphere within which they interact and to access information directly from the cultures which use the language.

Specifically the Languages other than English key learning area provides many opportunities for students to develop the following characteristics of lifelong learners.

Knowledgeable person with deep understanding

Learners understand the nature and role of language and culture and how the Italian language embodies the Italian culture. They become aware of language as a system that is a major means for meeting the personal, social and cultural needs of the users of the language. In learning another language students access a new system of language. They are able to interact in new and varied social situations and acquire new conventions of linguistic and cultural behaviour.

Complex thinker

Learners think when they make decisions about the language needed to effectively meet the needs of communicative situations. This involves many different thinking levels. Students develop strategies for memorisation and comprehension of new language. They analyse texts for meaning and for language patterns that convey those meanings. They apply and manipulate known structures to create original utterances. Learners evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of particular language forms for given settings. Students use language to think about tasks. They collect, analyse and organise information and use it to create new products and solve problems.

Creative person

Learners create language products when they generate their own utterances to bridge information gaps in unpredictable situations. Students can also be involved in tasks that require the application of imagination and disciplined thinking processes. They use these processes to develop solutions, proposals, alternatives and plans that they present and describe in Italian.

Active investigator

As learners attempt to comprehend and negotiate meaning in Italian, they actively construct their own understanding of the language as a system. They use this as the basis for formulating messages in the language. This understanding is a learner's internal grammar. Through feedback and continued experimentation and deliberate and subconscious processes of acquisition, learners constantly refine and extend their internal grammars. A task-based language approach within an embedded program encourages learners to apply their mastery of another language to actively pursue knowledge and understanding about their world and the cultures within it.

Effective communicator

Learners communicate in diverse contexts for many purposes. They compose and comprehend spoken and written texts in Italian to develop relationships, share information and for enjoyment. To do so, they combine linguistic features into discourse that accommodates the roles and relationships of the participants in any given setting. They enhance this discourse through the use of culturally specific nonverbal and verbal communication.

Participant in an interdependent world

Learners participate in class and group communication tasks, negotiating and cooperating to meet joint goals. Through such participation, students recognise and value the different contributions that fellow participants offer. They also become engaged in the learning opportunities afforded by genuinely communicative interactions. Students are more prepared for participation in the global community.

Australia is a culturally and linguistically diverse nation in a world community that is increasingly interdependent. Schooling prepares students for meaningful, productive lives in a pluralist society and world. It assists students to relate positively to the richness of human diversity. Languages other than English are an essential component of such an education. Through learning languages, students develop the capacity to communicate across cultures. They develop knowledge and understanding of another culture and how its members use language. All students need the opportunity to acquire enough communicative ability and sociocultural understanding to enable them to experience another way of thinking and knowing. They then begin to see events from the point of view of another culture.

Reflective and self-directed learner

Learners reflect on their language learning and its role in a culturally diverse society and world. Through reflection on what and how they have learnt, students become strategic language learners able to consciously direct and monitor their own learning. They are equipped, therefore, for lifelong independent learning.

Cross-curricular priorities

In an embedded Languages other than English program, where tasks are based on concepts and topics in other key learning areas, learning affords an opportunity to consolidate and reinforce core concepts and skills across the curriculum. In addition, the Languages other than English key learning area incorporates the cross-curricular priorities of literacy, numeracy, lifeskills and a futures perspective.

Literacy

Literacy involves an understanding of how language works, and an ability to apply language skills in a range of school and everyday social situations. Learning other languages gives deeper knowledge and understanding of the structures and

processes of communication. It expands capacity in the students' first language literacy through reinforcement of their understanding of language as a system with rules and conventions to be applied in socially appropriate ways.

Learners develop literacy skills through reading, writing, speaking, viewing and listening. They seek and critically appraise information, make choices and acquire independence in learning. Students are encouraged to become critical consumers of texts, to view texts from a variety of perspectives and to interpret various levels of meaning. They understand that literacy is a means for shaping how people view themselves, their identities and their environments. Learners practise and develop these skills as they engage with spoken and written texts in Italian, leading to a rich, cross-cultural understanding of language and literacy.

Numeracy

Numeracy involves the ability to choose from known mathematical concepts and skills and to apply them to cope with the demands of school work and everyday life. Numeracy skills are developed as students solve problems by applying numerical and spatial concepts and techniques.

Languages other than English learning involves learners in real-life applications of, and communication about, key mathematical concepts, such as measurement, graphing, statistics and the presentation and interpretation of information in tables and maps, giving and following directions and telling time. In addition, through solving communication problems, students develop skills of pattern reading, analysis and creative thinking, which can potentially reinforce and enhance numeracy.

Lifeskills

'Lifeskills' is a term used to describe the mix of knowledge, processes, skills and attitudes that are considered necessary for people to function adequately in their contemporary and changing life roles and situations. Demonstration of lifeskills takes place in two overlapping dimensions: practical performance of, and critical reflection on, those skills.

It is possible to identify at least four sets of lifeskills that enable students to participate in the four life roles. The lifeskills, and related life roles, are:

- personal development skills — growing and developing as an individual;
- social skills — living with, and relating to, other people;
- self-management skills — managing resources;
- citizenship skills — receiving from and contributing to local, state, national and international communities.

Communication is a skill that is central to our lives. Communication in Italian develops the ability to solve problems and make decisions about how to communicate most effectively in a given situation to achieve results. It enables students to develop and refine personal perceptions and to negotiate social relationships throughout the global community. It enhances the intellectual, social and cultural development of students and has the potential to influence their level of participation in a rapidly changing and increasingly interconnected world. In these ways language learning contributes to lifeskills.

Futures perspective

'Futures' perspective involves a variety of methodologies that aids the development of insights and knowledge about the past and present. It leads to consideration of the consequences of personal and collective actions. The promotion of a futures perspective helps students to identify possible, probable and preferred individual and communal futures. To deal with the changes that futures will bring, learners need a disciplined and sympathetic imagination. Through language studies students are encouraged to develop the capacity to imagine, construct, experience and evaluate alternatives. The study of Italian provides opportunities for students to look outward to understand and to experience the worlds of others. The syllabus promotes an international perspective in students' outlooks and preparedness for preferred global futures.

Skills developed through a learner-centred approach provide a sound basis for the critical and creative thinking, problem solving, decision making and strategic planning required to create a preferred future. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and decisions, to think ahead, and to enact with optimism their visions of preferred futures.

Understandings about learners and learning

Learners and learning

The following assumptions about learners and learning are made in the Languages other than English key learning area:

Learners

- Learners are unique individuals and thinkers with divergent views about the world.
- Learners have a broad range of knowledge and experience, shaped by their gender, socioeconomic status, cultural and linguistic backgrounds and geographical location, and by other aspects of their background, which form part of their learning environment. These prior experiences and knowledge then influence the meaning they make of any new learning experience.
- Learners learn in different ways, in different settings and at different rates.
- Learners grow and develop at different rates.
- Learners have a range of language learning backgrounds that will impact differentially on their study of other languages.

Most language learners will bring to the learning process some resources based on acquisition of their first language and possibly others. They know that language use is based on the selection of linguistic features in ways determined by the context. They will also have experienced the interaction of language with new knowledge and ideas.

Learning

- Learning is a lifelong process.
- Learning occurs within particular social and cultural contexts.
- Learning is most effective when it involves active partnerships, focusing on students, with collaboration and negotiation between parents and caregivers, teachers, school and community members.

- Learning contexts should acknowledge social justice principles by being inclusive and supportive and by celebrating diversity.
- Learning requires active construction of meaning and is most effective when it is developed in meaningful contexts and accommodates, acknowledges and builds on prior knowledge.
- Investigative and learner-centred strategies are most effective in enabling learners to make informed choices.
- Learning is enhanced by the use of a range of technologies.
- Competence in thinking and performance can be demonstrated in a variety of ways.

Learning a language other than English

Second language learning includes learning to use language as well as learning about language and how to use it. It is necessary therefore to consider the content of communication (**what** is talked or written about) as well as its linguistic presentation (**how** it is discussed). This syllabus integrates the **what** and the **how** in an holistic view of language, which is realised in a task-based approach. Tasks engage learners in using real language for real or lifelike purposes. They are sequenced to achieve some central purpose within a context that has relevance for students in terms of their social, school and personal lives. Students become involved themselves and are able to invest personal meanings into what they comprehend and compose.

Fields of human knowledge and endeavour offer a framework for organising the potentially infinite range of content of any language program. They are:

personal and community life;
leisure and recreation;
the natural world;
the built world;
the international world;
the imaginative world.

These fields make it possible for language and subject matter to be used by students in an upwardly spiralling fashion. As a result, they consolidate and expand their language repertoires in a systematic way. The fields enable students to consider issues of social and academic interest and accommodate the social contexts within which learners could be expected to use their language other than English. They encourage an embedded program that involves content based on concepts and topic areas in other key learning areas while always allowing for content to be interpreted as appropriate for language learning. Within the fields, there is scope for developing topics of inquiry that incorporate lifeskills and a futures orientation. There is also the flexibility to develop topics and relevant learning experiences to ensure inclusion of learners with particular needs. At times topics may be developed that relate to several fields.

Through engagement in tasks with adequate support through comprehensible input, learners are exposed to language holistically and will usually draw their own language information from the learning activities to form their own understanding of how the language works. This understanding is progressively refined as students receive feedback on their language use. It is still necessary, however, for teachers to identify linguistic features, text features and strategies

that could be used to achieve the central purpose of any module or unit of work and to focus students' attention on these.

While there is an emphasis on comprehending and composing, it is helpful for learners to practise language in integrated sessions of form-focused instruction. It can be expected that form-focused instruction will speed up the rate of acquisition of linguistic features and improve accuracy of usage. It is also necessary that language be recycled as often as possible since students are not usually able to use language accurately and consistently as a result of a single instructional or other experience. They need exposure to language and opportunities for practice and use in a number of contexts.

A number of elements are involved in meaningful, purposeful language learning experiences and programs. These elements include the **what** and the **how** of language learning and interact to achieve socioculturally appropriate communication for real purposes. The content is determined by the topic or context within a chosen field and the kinds of tasks. This is dependent on the band of schooling. Cultural content should be infused as appropriate into any topic. Learners need to know and understand the perspective that the Italian culture has on any topic or body of knowledge. The linguistic features and process skills and strategies determine how students will achieve tasks within the topic. Linguistic features will also reveal aspects of culture by highlighting the ways in which meaning is encoded in language, values and social relationships and conventions. In this sense, the sociocultural element is part of the **what** and the **how** and underpins all the students' learning. This interaction of elements with sociocultural understanding filtering through the **what** and the **how** is shown in Diagram 1.

Diagram 1 Elements when designing opportunities for communicative language use
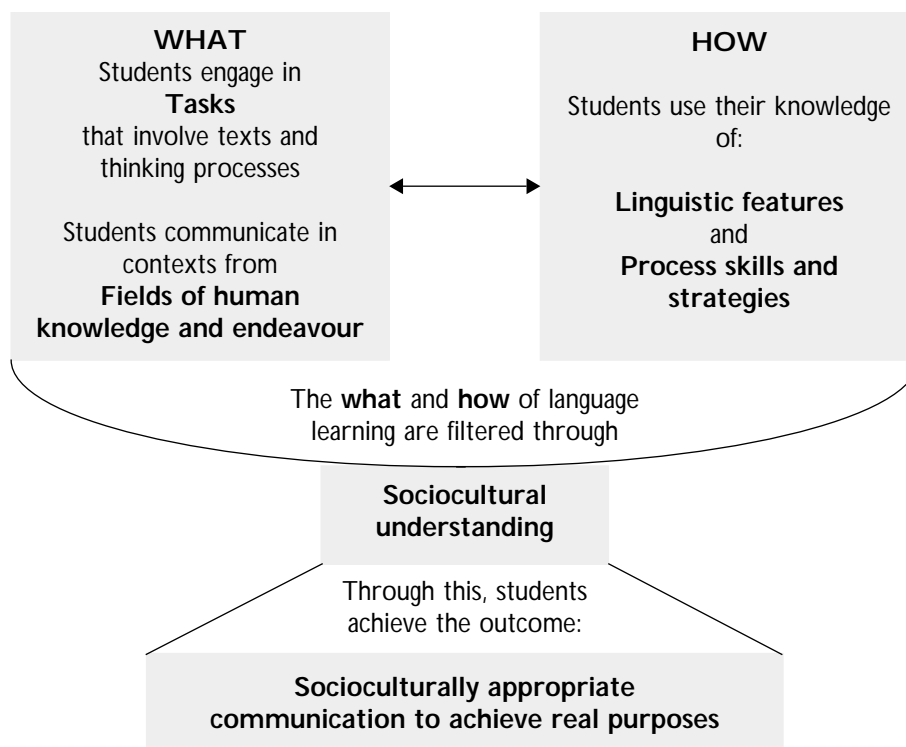
In terms of language learning in the school context, two perspectives need to be considered: bands of schooling and stages of language learning.

Bands of schooling indicate general characteristics of physical, academic and cognitive growth, while **stages of language learning** indicate exposure to and development of communicative ability in a language other than English.

The bands in this syllabus are designated as middle primary (Years 4 and 5), upper primary (Years 6 and 7) and lower secondary (Years 8, 9 and 10). For the purpose of planning, the lower secondary is further divided into Years 8 and 9 and Year 10. As learners move through the bands, they will develop an increasing capacity to deal with abstractions and contexts outside their immediate environment. They will be able to engage in increasingly complex and detailed tasks.

Stages of language learning are designated as Beginner, Elementary, Lower Intermediate and Intermediate. Because of student diversity and mobility, it is conceivable that learners at any band of schooling could be beginners. Beginners will be able to use language in tightly structured and scaffolded tasks, involving limited production of Italian. As students progress through the stages of language learning, they will be able to interpret and deploy increasingly complex language structures in texts. They will rely less and less on teacher input for comprehension until they are able to function more or less independently in familiar social and school situations.

Development of language programs should consider the needs of students related to maturity and cognitive and interest levels. The band of schooling is a significant indicator of what students do and talk about, suggesting the kinds of topics and tasks that may engage students. At the same time, how students use language to achieve the purpose of the tasks and the task demands will be dependent on the stage of language learning. This stage is related to time on the course and prior experience and achievement with the language.

Inclusive curriculum

In an inclusive curriculum, learning experiences are accessible to all students. This involves identifying and overcoming barriers that limit students' participation in schooling.

The syllabus provides a basis for teachers to design learning experiences and assessment tasks that are engaging, challenging and achievable for all learners, which encourage them to understand and appreciate diversity and to value and respect all people. The language learning program should offer experiences that are culturally and gender inclusive and that accommodate backgrounds, abilities, geographical locations and socioeconomic circumstances.

Learning experiences should be based on the contributions of a full range of social and cultural groups and acknowledge diversity both within and among groups.

Within this Italian syllabus, it is important that the cultural construction of what is valued by people from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds is acknowledged and examined. Italian cultural practices are not to be treated as quaint or exotic. Stereotypes and notions of homogeneity among Italian peoples are to be avoided at all times. Diversity within as well as between cultures should be explored.

The experiences and expertise of Italian native speakers among the students can enrich the learning processes for all. But teachers will need to be sensitive to their particular cultural backgrounds and levels of confidence as well as degree of expertise in standard Italian. Involvement of the community can be advantageous both in extending the resources for the Language other than English program and in ensuring that cultural sensitivities are protected.

The achievements of those students for whom English is a second language, and Italian the third or fourth language, should be valued and celebrated. Teachers need to recognise that such students bring a range of prior experiences to the classroom, some of which support their learning of the language, and others that may make this more difficult for them.

In particular, the multilingual experiences of many students with an Aboriginal background or Torres Strait Islander background should be acknowledged and built on.

Overall, it is important that all students have opportunities to develop awareness of, and sensitivity to, various groups in society — girls; boys; students with an Aboriginal background or Torres Strait Islander background; students from various cultural or linguistic backgrounds; students from various socioeconomic circumstances; students with disabilities; students from various geographical locations; students who are gifted and talented or who have particular learning needs. Students should learn to critically analyse and question disadvantage in social structures, to challenge injustice and to participate in society as equals.

Learner-centred approach

A learner-centred approach to learning and teaching views learning as the active construction of meaning, and teaching as the act of guiding and facilitating learning. This approach sees knowledge as being ever-changing and built on prior experience.

In the Languages other than English key learning area, a learner-centred approach provides opportunities for learners to negotiate meaning in response to input, and to develop their own creative utterances to meet the communication and problem-solving needs of tasks that are interesting, challenging and relevant for learners. Languages other than English learning experiences are based on the understanding that genuine language acquisition occurs when learners develop their own internal grammars as they draw language information from comprehensible input. They then refine these at their own pace through experimentation and practice.

Outcomes

Framework

This syllabus provides a framework for planning learning experiences and assessment tasks through which students have opportunities to demonstrate what they know and can do in the Languages other than English key learning area.

Key learning area outcomes

The key learning area outcomes highlight the uniqueness of the Languages other than English key learning area and its particular contribution to lifelong learning. During the compulsory years of schooling, students demonstrate communicative ability by comprehending and composing a variety of written and spoken texts in Italian for a variety of purposes. In their communication it is expected that students can:

- use a range of linguistic features;
- apply process skills and strategies to maintain discourse;
- demonstrate cultural understanding and develop intercultural competence.

In demonstrating the above communicative ability, students would demonstrate other outcomes as well although they are not readily assessable and not embodied in the core learning outcomes. Students acquire:

- positive attitudes to people of other languages and cultures;
- confidence and enjoyment in the application of new communication skills in purposeful interactions;
- understanding of the nature and role of language;
- understanding of their own and the Italian culture, recognising that all cultures are diverse;
- a repertoire of language learning strategies that can be applied in lifelong language learning;
- creative thinking and problem-solving abilities as they draw on knowledge and language skills to solve communication needs;
- skills for constructive participation with others;
- a reflective attitude towards their language learning and their first language;
- an ability to access knowledge of the Italian culture.

These learning outcomes contribute to the student's demonstration of the overall learning outcomes of thinking, creating, communicating, participating, reflecting and understanding subject matter.

Strand of the key learning area

Learning outcomes of the Languages other than English key learning area are described in the single strand **Communication**. Traditionally, assessment for

languages other than English is described under the four macroskills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, but as outcomes are informing both planning and assessment, it is considered appropriate to group them under the one strand of Communication. This indicates that learning language is a holistic and purposeful undertaking with students engaged in talking and writing, listening and reading about the world. The adoption of only one strand, which emphasises the comprehending and composing of language, provides greater flexibility for core learning.

Levels

The levels outlined on the following pages indicate progressions of increasing sophistication and complexity in learning outcomes. Language outcomes are realised through the strand of Communication, which is interpreted through a statement for each level that closely relates to the identified stage of language learning: Beginner, Elementary, Lower Intermediate and Intermediate. These statements describe the nature of language task demands. They include contextual, textual and linguistic complexity which students at the identified stage of language learning should be able to manage. The level statements identify the contexts and the nature of student interaction with texts at each level.

The level statements provide the context for the core and discretionary learning outcomes, which are described in terms of comprehending and composing. Students comprehend and compose language through listening, speaking, reading and writing and demonstrate these in holistic tasks.

The level statement at Foundation Level has been developed for students demonstrating a level of understanding before that of Level 1. This statement can be used to develop a range of specific learning outcomes that are tailored to the individual needs of students with disabilities and related to their individualised curriculum programs.

Core and discretionary learning outcomes

Core

Core learning outcomes describe those learnings that are considered essential for all students learning Italian. They describe what students know and can do as a result of planned learning experiences in the key learning area. The core learning outcomes are presented in order of increasing complexity from Levels 1 to 6.

Students should be provided with opportunities to demonstrate the core learning outcomes appropriate to the student's entry characteristics.

Discretionary

Discretionary learning outcomes describe what students know and can do beyond what is considered essential at a particular level. They indicate additional contexts or areas of learning and are considered desirable. It is not expected that these discretionary learning outcomes will be demonstrated by all students. The discretionary outcomes are included to assist teachers in broadening the understandings of those students who have already demonstrated the requirements of the core learning outcomes. Additional discretionary learning outcomes could be developed by schools or teachers.

At Beyond Level 6 all learning outcomes are discretionary.

The core and discretionary learning outcomes for Italian are presented on the following pages.

*L*earning outcomes

Communication

Foundation Level

Level statement

Students are developing an understanding of Italian oral vocabulary used in simple, repetitive sentence structures that are heavily dependent on context, teacher gestures, facial expressions and intonation for understanding.

Students are beginning to respond nonverbally to teacher utterances in Italian.

Students engage in shared Italian reading experiences, relying completely on pictorial clues and teacher dramatisation to comprehend meaning.

Students are developing awareness that, in our diverse society, there are many customs and beliefs.

Foundation Level statements have been developed for students demonstrating a level of understanding before that of Level 1. These statements can be used to develop a range of specific learning outcomes that are tailored to the individual needs of students with special educational needs and related to their individualised curriculum programs.

*L*earning outcomes

Communication

Level 1 — Beginner

Level statement

Students engage in tasks that are tightly scaffolded and sequenced, focusing on high-frequency formats, more for comprehension than production.

Students respond nonverbally or reiterate utterances that are drawn from frequent and consistent teacher modelling. Students rely on explicit contextual clues for comprehension.

Students interact with texts marked by highly predictable text structure and with simple, repetitive sentence structure and vocabulary. Content of texts is familiar and accessible with some explicit sociocultural content. Students read texts that contain only a few ideas and are supported by clear and frequent visuals which illustrate these ideas. Students listen to texts that are appropriately language-rich but heavily dependent on context for understanding.

Students produce texts of a few words in writing and a few turns in dialogue with the audience mainly confined to peers.

Core learning outcomes

Comprehending

1.1 Students distinguish sounds and sound patterns and understand and respond to high-frequency language with support from visual cues.

1.2 Students understand the meaning of key written words to which there has been significant exposure, as well as decode and recognise some written words from oral vocabulary through an awareness of sound–symbol relationships.

1.3 Students recognise when content refers to the Italian culture rather than their own and demonstrate understanding of some culturally specific gestures in a limited range of contexts.

Composing

1.4 Students respond to questions with short memorised utterances and maintain interaction if their speaking partner uses repetition and/or simplification.

1.5 Students label items and write set phrases used regularly in class approximating spelling of words written from memory and demonstrate an awareness of the conventions of print in Italian.

1.6 Students imitate culturally appropriate language and socioculturally appropriate gestures in high-frequency, learned situations.

Discretionary learning outcomes

D1.7 Students spontaneously use formulaic expressions in routine classroom procedures.

*L*earning outcomes

Communication

Level 2 — Beginner

Level statement

Students engage in tasks that are tightly scaffolded and sequenced, focusing on an increasing range of high-frequency formats which are likely to be both comprehended and produced.

Students respond nonverbally sometimes but also use familiar modelled utterances with minor creative variations. They are still dependent on obvious contextual support for global comprehension.

Students interact with texts marked by predictable text structure with simple, repetitive sentence structure and vocabulary. Content is familiar and accessible with some explicit sociocultural content. Students read texts that contain only a few ideas and are supported by explicit visuals. Students listen to texts which are appropriately language-rich but heavily dependent on context for understanding.

Students produce texts of a few words in writing, a few turns in dialogue and short simple presentations with the audience mainly confined to peers.

Core learning outcomes

Comprehending

2.1 Students understand a range of familiar statements and questions with visual support, controlled language when the context is obvious, and key words in short, spoken, authentic texts of several linked utterances.

2.2 Students identify the main purpose in a simple text on a familiar topic, relying on key words for understanding, and read and identify single items of information in short repetitive texts containing familiar language.

2.3 Students identify some key explicit cultural references to very familiar aspects of the Italian culture in texts and can determine meaning by interpreting culturally specific gestures, intonation and other visual or auditory cues.

Composing

2.4 Students make requests and interact with peers and familiar adults using key words or phrases and adapting memorised material on rehearsed topics using spoken models.

2.5 Students write phrases or short sentences based on models and contribute to the production of stories, class books, posters and other simple texts.

2.6 Students display appropriate body language and gestures in basic social situations.

Discretionary learning outcomes

D2.7 Students use Italian to meet some routine classroom needs, both social and procedural.

*L*earning outcomes

Communication

Level 3 — Elementary

Level statement

Students engage in tasks that require them to manipulate predictable language in a range of controlled contexts and present language in a variety of simple forms so that oracy and literacy skills are mutually developed. Students interact with peers in well-rehearsed classroom and social scenarios with some options for varying language choices. These contexts are heavily supported by visual and paralinguistic prompts.

Students read texts that are short, marked by simple structures and obvious sequencing with any new vocabulary clearly flagged by illustrations or high predictability from context. Students listen to texts that are simple, highly repetitive, supported by context, and delivered in deliberate, comprehensible chunks. Texts may include explicit references to everyday life in the Italian culture.

Students interact orally using modified formulae for dialogues of several turns and making short presentations. Students write texts based on simple, known speech patterns.

Core learning outcomes

Comprehending

3.1 Students readily understand and respond to short simple utterances, understand the gist of longer passages containing repetitive language and identify specific information in texts that reflects their own knowledge and experience.

3.2 Students understand the main ideas read in straightforward texts on familiar topics supported by context clues and predict the meaning of some unknown language in familiar topics presented in context.

3.3 Students recognise some explicit cultural references to learned aspects of the Italian culture.

Composing

3.4 Students initiate and respond promptly to speech in familiar scenarios assisted by visual or other cues, substitute language items in well-rehearsed patterns to vary questions or statements and follow a model to present a simple story or report.

3.5 Students write a few linked sentences on familiar topics, using well-rehearsed language to cover basic information and write a simple personal recount or report following a model.

3.6 Students use Italian to describe some culturally specific behaviours and information.

Discretionary learning outcomes

D3.7 Students use Italian to meet most routine classroom and procedural needs.

*L*earning outcomes

Communication

Level 4 — Elementary

Level statement

Students engage in tasks that require them to manipulate language in a range of controlled contexts and present responses that are sometimes creative with increasing emphasis on the relationship between spoken and written language.

Students begin to experiment with innovative language choices that more precisely meet their individual communication needs, still within heavily supported contexts.

Students read texts that are short, marked by simple structures and obvious sequencing with supporting visuals. Students listen to texts that are simple, supported by context, and delivered in comprehensible chunks. Texts may include explicit references to everyday life in the Italian culture.

Students interact orally in sustained dialogues or presentations on known topics. Students write texts that are simple but more distinctively 'written' in form as they better appreciate the differences between spoken and written expression.

Core learning outcomes

Comprehending

4.1 Students understand the pattern of straightforward familiar conversations, follow the flow of a simple recount or narrative that is heavily contextualised and extract essential details in passages where the material is familiar and highly predictable.

4.2 Students understand the gist of meaning in texts where familiar language is used in new but known contexts, identify specific information and are beginning to read independently.

4.3 Students understand explicit cultural references to well-known features of the Italian culture.

Composing

4.4 Students take part in simply structured conversations including unrehearsed instances with a sympathetic conversation partner and describe actual events competently from a personal viewpoint.

4.5 Students manipulate known structures and linguistic features appropriately to generate original utterances and construct simple cohesive texts in different contexts, displaying some concept of register.

4.6 Students express comparisons with their own culture using sociocultural information provided in texts.

Discretionary learning outcomes

D4.7 Students initiate and pursue their own contact with users of Italian through, for example, penpals, email, websites, community organisations.

*L*earning outcomes

Communication

Level 5 — Lower intermediate

Level statement

Students engage in tasks that are controlled through staged sub-tasks but offer a range of realisations, thus allowing students to be more creative and spontaneous in their choice of language and medium of presentation.

Students begin to use contextual support more analytically and distinguish the contribution of discrete structural and syntactical features. Contexts are still, however, familiar and supported.

Students read that present familiar content in predictable text structures but include embedded clauses and complex sentences. Students focus more on language and textual features for meaning. Students listen to texts that are varied, include other voices, require less concrete support but are still familiar and relatively simple in referencing and sequencing. Texts may include both explicit and implicit sociocultural knowledge.

Students interact freely with peers to meet real social and classroom needs although exchanges do not necessarily involve extensive idiomatic usage. Students may write texts in a variety of genres that are modelled on those read but at a lesser level of sophistication.

Core learning outcomes

Comprehending

5.1 Students understand familiar material in unfamiliar contexts with references to past, present and future events and infer the meanings of some specific new language items in familiar contexts.

5.2 Students understand texts where relationships in discourse are marked by simple, high-frequency forms denoting sequencing, referencing and other cohesive devices.

5.3 Students readily interpret familiar cultural input and recognise some references to more subtle aspects of the Italian culture.

Composing

5.4 Students convey information in texts with minimal support showing few patterns of linguistic errors on familiar topics of interest to them, and comment in simple terms, referring to recent experiences and future plans.

5.5 Students produce texts of several linked sentences that may include some complex element gleaned from models and devices such as fillers and connectors.

5.6 Students include some common learned colloquial expressions in planned discourse and include cultural references in presentations.

Discretionary learning outcomes

D5.7 Students demonstrate the core learning outcomes using all four macroskills at this level.

D5.8 Students independently access texts, e.g. stories and videos, for information and personal enjoyment.

D5.9 Students independently investigate and report on an aspect of the Italian culture.

*L*earning outcomes

Communication

Level 6 — Lower intermediate

Level statement

Students engage in tasks that are more open-ended and require thoughtful manipulation of a relatively limited language repertoire to realise task-goals creatively and appropriately.

Students interpret new subject matter, which may be increasingly abstract, as much through linguistic knowledge as contextual clues. Supporting visuals may be graphic and diagrammatic and contexts more varied but still appropriate to the students' interests.

Students read texts that present familiar content in predictable text structure with some complexity introduced through embedded clauses, complex sentences, referencing and sequencing. Students mainly rely on language and textual features for meaning. Students listen to texts that are more lifelike in pace, have fewer visual supports but are still familiar and relatively simple. Texts may include both explicit and implicit sociocultural knowledge.

Students interact orally in exchanges that echo real-life conversations between peers and others but that are not as idiomatic or sustained. Presentations on known topics are appropriate to audience, logically sequenced and incorporate a few dependent clause structures. Students write a variety of texts that are modelled on those read but at a lesser level of sophistication.

Core learning outcomes

Comprehending

6.1　Students understand authentic texts on familiar topics where the language used is literal and standard and infer meaning from lexical and grammatical associations as well as context.

6.2　Students understand more complex texts involving dependent clauses when they are short and clearly marked by high-frequency forms.

6.3　Students interpret references to unfamiliar aspects of the Italian culture by comparing with their own cultures.

Composing

6.4　Students express themselves through a variety of genres on a range of familiar topics and manipulate known structures to make original and extended texts that are organised according to socioculturally appropriate conventions.

6.5　Students incorporate two or three main ideas with some dependent clauses in a text, use some common colloquial expressions appropriately and demonstrate an awareness of register differences in their use of formal and informal language.

6.6　Students analyse, and comment on, issues of significance to members of the Italian culture of a similar age.

Discretionary learning outcomes

D6.7　Students demonstrate the core learning outcomes using all four macroskills at this level.

D6.8　Students meet authentic social needs with background users of Italian.

D6.9　Students discuss the cultural implications embedded in selected texts.

*L*earning outcomes

Communication

Beyond Level 6 — Intermediate

Level statement

Students engage in tasks that are still staged but are open-ended enough to give scope for more extended and genuinely individual conclusions that require creative application of known language forms to produce variations on well-understood models. Students process language more independently, applying analysis and synthesis to diverse inputs that are language-dense and often abstract. Contextual clues are more subtle and more language related. Contexts reflect students' interests beyond the personal to more global issues.

Students read texts of varying length that cover a wide range of generic formats, albeit relatively simple examples of such higher order genres as exposition. Students listen to texts drawn from authentic sources on known topics and supported by visuals. Some texts may need to be controlled and delivered at a slower pace than native-speaker norm.

Student dialogues are more spontaneous and unexpected, even humorous. Oral presentations, especially when delivered from notes, are for a range of audiences and purposes and require structural sophistication. Students write texts that cover the same range as their reading but with models to support the realisation of more sophisticated products.

Students manage implicit sociocultural knowledge in texts and understand the different cultural implications of a range of language choices. Students develop a repertoire of learning strategies appropriate to the task demands and assisting transference of skills. These strategies are explored and applied more consciously.

Discretionary learning outcomes

Comprehending

DB6.1 Students recognise some subtleties in imaginative and factual texts with respect to intention and understand authentic texts spoken at native-speaker speed where the content is concrete. Students deduce the meaning of unfamiliar language using an understanding of context and grammatical features.

DB6.2 Students follow the broad train of events and extract information from selected media sources and show an understanding of a range of written material that is imaginative and factual and includes some complex sentences and unfamiliar language.

DB6.3 Students detect some subtle cultural references in texts.

Composing

DB6.4 Students respond appropriately and spontaneously to detailed extended speech and present, on demand, information relevant to a topic of current learning showing an appreciation of audience and purpose, particularly in prepared texts. They use paraphrasing and self-correction where appropriate.

DB6.5 Students write persuasive texts in which ideas are developed logically to present an argument and demonstrate some control over style and register and write varying lengths of text with evidence of spontaneity and cohesion.

DB6.6 Students maintain social relationships and entertain others using culturally appropriate language and gestures and common colloquial expressions in spontaneous discourse.

Using outcomes for planning and assessment

Outcomes of the syllabus provide a framework for planning and assessment by describing what it is that students should know and be able to do. Using outcomes for planning and assessment involves:

- adopting a learner-centred approach to learning and teaching;
- assisting students to work towards being able to demonstrate the outcomes;
- planning learning experiences and assessment tasks at the same time;
- establishing clear expectations of student performance as a basis for monitoring the progress of student learning.

The core learning outcomes are sequenced according to task, text and language range and complexity in six progressive levels. This development is represented in the level statements.

An outcome at one level is continuous with, but qualitatively different from, the outcomes at the levels before and after. This sequencing across levels assists teachers in planning learning experiences to cater for the range of students' abilities.

When planning units of work, teachers could select learning outcomes from across levels within a key learning area or across key learning areas. Assessment tasks may gather information about more than one learning outcome.

Multiple opportunities for the demonstration of learning outcomes should be planned. A range of tasks in a variety of contexts with a range of communication purposes should be utilised to provide these opportunities.

Planning at Foundation Level may involve outcomes that teachers have written using a broad interpretation of the level statement; however, the intent of the statement should be retained.

Communicating

Teachers should plan to:

- involve learners for the major portion of their language learning time in holistic tasks where they meet real communication needs as they learn about themselves and their world;
- involve learners in open-ended tasks that allow multilevels of performance and that challenge learners to perform beyond their current levels of language proficiency;
- expose learners to rich, comprehensible language input from which they can begin to infer patterns and make sense of the language as a system;
- infuse sociocultural knowledge and understanding into the content and draw sociocultural understanding from the language system;
- focus on linguistic features and process skills and strategies in the context of genuine, purposeful communication.

Genuine communication means that learners engage in listening, speaking, reading and writing in real or lifelike tasks where there is a genuine gap in information, and where they have to create their own meanings for the purposes of enjoyment, socialisation and learning. Socioculturally appropriate

communication will involve understanding of the culture as well as understanding of grammatical and textual features. Focus on these elements has meaning to the degree that it contributes to purposeful, culturally acceptable and satisfying communication.

Content

In a Languages other than English program the content is derived from a consideration of contexts and purposes of communication, which will determine possible language functions, sociocultural understandings and processes that learners draw on in communicating. In the diagram on page 9 these are described as the **what** and the **how** of language learning. This syllabus specifies the content of the Italian program in terms of the required range of contexts and linguistic knowledge.

The contexts in which students are expected to communicate are detailed in the syllabus through the fields of human knowledge and endeavour. These fields are revisited throughout the program to allow for the consolidation, recycling and expansion of language and cultural experiences. These fields are encountered through tasks that involve students in using language in a range of contexts and for a variety of purposes as outlined. In completing these tasks, using process skills and strategies, students gradually develop their communicative competence.

Content

Fields and tasks

In each band of schooling, students will engage in tasks that combine language and knowledge about the field; a key principle of a task-based approach in an embedded program. In establishing the contexts for tasks, teachers will include examples from the countries in which Italian is spoken. Through topics in the fields and tasks, learners will be made aware of relevant sociocultural knowledge and perspectives and the ways in which cultural and social practices are reflected in language use. When working with the content through Italian, teachers can simultaneously enhance students' understanding of their own cultural knowledge and that associated with Italian. Students progressively understand that the nature of culture involves not only visible practices but also less visible ways of making meaning, such as value systems, attitudes and social processes.

The tasks will be based on communicative purposes within the following fields of human knowledge and endeavour:

- personal and community life;
- leisure and recreation;
- the natural world;
- the built world;
- the international world;
- the imaginative world.

In their planning, teachers will select tasks that involve students in meaningful and purposeful communication. As they comprehend and compose spoken and written texts for different purposes, students will:

- gather and exchange information;
- organise and interpret information;
- extend and create exchanges of information;
- evaluate and predict information.

These tasks, when carried out in Italian, will require learners to establish and explore interpersonal relationships and social practices relevant to the Italian culture.

Content

Linguistic knowledge

When planning and assessing student outcomes, teachers will consider the possible language functions and process skills and strategies that are required to engage in the selected communicative tasks.

Language functions — at increasing levels of complexity through the stages of language learning.

Socialising
- greeting and leave taking
- introducing
- expressing thanks and gratitude
- apologising and excusing
- congratulating, complimenting, praising
- expressing sympathy and regret
- asking and giving permission
- attracting attention
- making arrangements
- offering and responding to invitations and suggestions
- welcoming

Exchanging information
- identifying and asking about people, places and things
- describing people, places and things
- identifying and asking when
- expressing probability and improbability
- expressing and asking about likes and dislikes
- expressing and asking about wants, wishes and intentions
- expressing and asking about needs
- asking for and giving directions and locations
- identifying and asking about situations, activities and events
- describing situations, activities and events
- describing and asking about routines, habits and procedures
- requesting goods and services
- offering and receiving things
- expressing possession
- giving and responding to instructions
- comparing
- expressing possibility and impossibility
- expressing obligation and duty
- expressing ability and inability
- affirming or negating statements

Feelings, opinions and attitudes
- expressing feelings
- expressing hope
- reacting with joy, anger, surprise, excitement
- expressing approval, agreement and disagreement
- expressing interest or a lack of interest
- complaining
- giving reasons
- expressing opinions

Negotiating meaning
- asking for repetition
- asking for assistance
- expressing understanding and lack of understanding
- asking for and giving clarification
- asking for and giving confirmation
- asking how to say, spell, write and pronounce

Process skills and strategies

Communication

General skills and strategies that apply to both comprehending and composing
- plan for a language task; rehearse
- use information in a text to guess the meaning of new items and to predict what is coming; confirm or reject predictions
- recognise and use formulas and patterns
- recognise roles and relationships in participants and respond appropriately
- make links in text with cohesion, i.e. through use of pronouns, ellipsis, repetition, related words, substitutions and conjunctions
- identify and apply text features
- make decisions about how best to meet the communicative demands of particular situations; identifying the demands, selecting and organising information to meet the demands, considering alternatives and evaluating the effectiveness of the solution
- analyse and judge the content of texts, e.g. identify attitudes and recognise validity, fact versus opinion, bias
- use information in texts in critical and creative ways

Comprehending

Listening
- identify main ideas and supporting detail
- interpret speaker's attitude, e.g. through stress, intonation and body language
- interpret gestures and facial expressions
- identify idiom and colloquial language use

Reading
- identify main ideas and supporting detail
- locate information — use index, table of contents, headings, tables, pictures
- use graphic features (headings, pictures, layout) to help with meaning
- use semantic, syntactic and grapho-phonic cueing systems
- skim for overall text features and register
- scan for specific information

Composing

Speaking
- plan what to say
- initiate and end conversations
- control pitch, intonation and rhythm
- pronounce clearly and accurately
- pause to self-correct

Writing
- plan what to write
- use appropriate script
- use appropriate spelling and punctuation
- sequence material logically
- draft and redraft, edit and proofread

Compensation strategies

To overcome deficiencies in their language repertoires as they try to maintain the flow of communication
- adjust or approximate the message
- avoid or change a topic
- use gestures, mime, facial and vocal expression to convey meaning
- use knowledge of word structures to create words
- use circumlocution
- guess intelligently and ask for help

Social — affective skills and strategies

To manage and maintain interaction
- ask for repetition, paraphrasing, clarification or verification
- cooperate with peers to solve problems, complete learning tasks or model language tasks
- negotiate with teacher and peers
- take risks

Relationship of outcome levels to year levels

For the purposes of planning and assessment, outcome levels relate to stages of learning in the language being studied rather than to year levels.

It is recognised that some students will follow different pathways in their languages other than English learning. The Level 6 outcomes indicate a minimum level of language proficiency that would enable students to use their language in familiar adult social contexts. This minimum level is, therefore, a highly desirable outcome for all students at the end of their compulsory years of schooling.

The following table indicates possible pathways that students could follow in their languages other than English learning.

Table 1 Students' pathways in demonstrating core outcomes

				LOWER INTERMEDIATE (Levels 5 & 6) Level 6 outcomes typically demonstrated after 360 hours of learning the new LOTE.
	Students beginning a different language in Year 8 and provided with additional time			
	Students beginning a different language in Year 8		BEGINNER (Levels 1 & 2) Level 2 outcomes typically demonstrated after 80 hours of learning the new LOTE.	ELEMENTARY (Levels 3 & 4) Level 4 outcomes typically demonstrated after 180 hours of learning the new LOTE.
	Students beginning in Year 6	BEGINNER (Levels 1 & 2) Level 2 outcomes typically demonstrated after 120 hours of LOTE learning.	ELEMENTARY (Levels 3 & 4) Level 4 outcomes typically demonstrated after 240 hours of LOTE learning.	LOWER INTERMEDIATE (Levels 5 & 6) Level 6 outcomes typically demonstrated after 420 hours of LOTE learning.
Students beginning in Year 4	BEGINNER (Levels 1 & 2) Level 2 outcomes typically demonstrated after 120 hours of LOTE learning.	ELEMENTARY (Levels 3 & 4) Level 4 outcomes typically demonstrated after 240 hours of LOTE learning.	LOWER INTERMEDIATE (Levels 5 & 6) Level 6 outcomes typically demonstrated after 420 hours of LOTE learning.	INTERMEDIATE (Beyond Level 6)
	MIDDLE PRIMARY Years 4 & 5	UPPER PRIMARY Years 6 & 7	LOWER SECONDARY Years 8 & 9	LOWER SECONDARY Year 10

Even when a student begins a different language other than English on entering secondary school, the Level 6 core learning outcomes can still be demonstrated when prior language learning strategies have been fully utilised.

Indicative time allocations

Time allocations are based on an estimate of the minimum time needed to provide students with opportunities to demonstrate the core learning outcomes at Level 6. The following have been used to guide the design and development of the syllabus for the Languages other than English key learning area:

- **Years 4 to 7:** 240 hours across the four years;
- **Years 8 to 10:** 180 hours across the three years.

Assessment

Assessment within an outcomes framework is the purposeful, systematic and ongoing collection of information about students' demonstrations of learning outcomes. In this syllabus, core learning outcomes are presented in levels progressively increasing in sophistication and complexity to form a continuum of learning. This is represented by the level statements. Students' progress in the key learning area can be monitored by their demonstrations of the core learning outcomes.

Teachers use assessment information to monitor students' progress and to make professional judgments in order to:

- inform students, parents, caregivers and schools about demonstrations of learning outcomes;
- make decisions about students' needs, the learning and teaching processes and resource requirements;
- set learning goals with students, parents and caregivers;
- guide the planning of school and class curriculum programs.

Principles of assessment

For assessment to be effective, it should:

- focus on students' demonstrations of learning outcomes;
- be comprehensive;
- develop students' capacities to monitor their own progress;
- reflect current knowledge of child and adolescent development;
- be an integral part of the learning process;
- be valid and reliable;
- reflect social justice principles.

Demonstrations of learning outcomes

Within an outcomes framework, assessment focuses on students' demonstrations of learning outcomes. When assessment is focused on learning outcomes, students are aware of what is being assessed, the assessment techniques being used, and the criteria by which their demonstrations of learning outcomes will be judged. Teachers may then use information from assessment to plan and direct students' further learning.

Comprehensive range

Using a comprehensive range of assessment techniques and related instruments allows students multiple opportunities and a range of contexts in which to demonstrate learning outcomes. A variety of assessment instruments supports different learning styles. The assessment tasks developed in specific situations provide opportunities for students to negotiate assessment and approach assessment in different ways.

At any one period in their schooling, students could demonstrate their learning in different ways, and at different levels, across the range of learning outcomes. Assessment techniques must take into account that every student will progress at a different rate across and within the key learning areas.

Student monitoring of own progress

Students need to develop skills in self-monitoring and to reflect on the processes in which they engage, the skills they use and the products of their learning experiences. Self-monitoring enables students to gather important information that they can use to set goals and monitor their progress towards particular learning outcomes. Student self-monitoring also provides valuable information to help teachers, parents and caregivers make decisions about future learning and teaching.

Current knowledge of child and adolescent development

Assessment that reflects current knowledge of child and adolescent development considers the ways children and adolescents behave, grow, think, interact and learn. These are important elements to consider in the planning, development and implementation of assessment techniques.

Integral part of the learning process

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process. As teachers plan learning experiences, they should also plan how they will monitor students' progress. Authentic assessment tasks should match the students' learning experiences and the teaching methods they have experienced. Assessment tasks should also reflect real-life situations, where this is appropriate.

Valid and reliable information

Assessment should provide valid and reliable information about students' achievements of learning outcomes. Assessment tasks should provide accurate information about students' ability to communicate and provide students with opportunities to demonstrate one or more of the learning outcomes.

Social justice principles

Assessment based on the principles of social justice allows students to demonstrate learning outcomes in ways which are sensitive to, and inclusive of, the circumstances of every student. Assessment tasks should be planned to take into account students' learning styles, cultures, ethnicities, abilities, disabilities, genders, sexual identities, geographical locations, socioeconomic status and linguistic backgrounds.

In applying these general principles in the Languages other than English key learning area, the following features will be evident in the assessment program.

Decisions about students' performances will be based on their genuine interactions in tasks with genuine **communicative** purposes and in conditions that resemble authentic conditions as closely as possible.

Sampling of students' performances covers all elements of the program and occurs through a **variety** of tasks that allow students to demonstrate their full range of language skills in a variety of contexts.

Assessment tasks are **open-ended** to challenge students to demonstrate the extent of their proficiency and to draw on their total language repertoires.

Assessment reflects the teaching **balance** across the macroskills.

Criteria are used as a basis for making judgments about the students' progress. These criteria will be derived from the level statements and core learning outcomes to enable the link to be made between classroom assessment and the learning outcomes.

Techniques for gathering information

A variety of techniques should be used to gather information about students' performances in the Languages other than English key learning area. These techniques will involve the **observation** and **focused analysis** of students' language use in purposeful, varied and open-ended tasks that reflect the teaching and learning program and that allow students to demonstrate core learning outcomes in many contexts. They will provide a breadth and depth of relevant information about students' interactions to facilitate the drawing of reliable and valid conclusions about the achievement of learning outcomes, or why they have not been achieved. **Consultation** with students enables teachers to confirm these conclusions or may reveal a need for more detailed assessment.

In gathering information teachers could choose from the following assessment instruments:

- **anecdotal records** of regular classroom interactions such as participation in group exchanges, responding to and making requests, following instructions;
- **documentary portfolios** of completed tasks such as lists, reports, descriptions, survey results, poems, letters, newspaper or magazine articles, creative writing;
- **criteria-based checklists** of particular skills evidenced in practice sessions or real usage;
- **student responses** to stories, poems, anecdotes, advertisements, surveys, questionnaires;
- **performance notes** on role-plays, skits, songs, interviews;
- **notes on presentations** in the form of reports, dialogues, talks on given topics;
- **self-assessment and peer-assessment records** on individual performances on specific aspects of the language;

- **show portfolios** of projects including labelled illustrations, charts, posters, brochures;
- **working portfolios** of work in progress including, for example, records of writing conferences.

Making judgments and reporting

Within an outcomes framework, the outcomes to be demonstrated are made explicit to students so that they can plan for, and demonstrate, the learning outcomes. Evidence of demonstrations of learning outcomes can be drawn from ongoing observation of performance or from assessment tasks specifically designed to allow students to demonstrate learning outcomes. Teachers can make judgments about students' demonstrations of learning outcomes when they are satisfied that they have sufficient evidence of such demonstrations.

Decisions about a student's demonstration of learning outcomes preferably should be made without reference to the performance of other students. It is important that the outcome be demonstrated consistently, to a high standard and in a range of contexts.

The exercise of teachers' professional judgment is fundamental to assessment and reporting processes. Decisions should be based on explicit criteria, using a range of evidence to determine demonstrations of outcomes. The criteria should be made known to students so that the basis for judgments is clear.

Materials and processes to support the consistency of teacher judgments within and between schools can be developed through:

- shared understandings;
- descriptions of ideal responses;
- criteria sheets;
- common planning and assessment tasks;
- examination of students' folios;
- progress maps;
- moderation processes (formal and informal).

Students, parents and caregivers need timely and accurate information from teachers about the student's progress along the learning continuum. Reporting of students' progress in terms of demonstrated learning outcomes can be provided in a variety of ways, including progress charts, verbal feedback, the results of formal assessment and formal reporting.