

Study Area Specification Guide

English Communication

This study area specification (SAS) guide pertains to courses developed from the *English Communication Study Area Specification* (2004).

Study Area Specification

English Communication

Approaches

Approach B: Vocational Learning (VL) Strand

Focus of study area specification

In Australia, English is the principal spoken language and the predominant written language of personal and public life. Proficiency in and understanding of English allows people to share in and contribute to current and future local, national and global communities and cultures.

Effective communication is integral to our society. New technologies, the influences of globalisation and the restructured workplace require students to be able to interpret, construct and make judgments about meanings in texts in preparation for lifelong learning. The *English Communication Study Area Specification* (2004) is designed to allow students to develop and use these skills in the areas of work, community and leisure.

The concept of language and literacy as social practice is fundamental to this study area specification. It is through texts that people express and share the vitality of cultures and communities; tell the stories of cultures; contribute to the shaping of personal, group and national identities; explore ideas and feelings that invite reflection on knowledge, values and practices; promote shared cultural understandings; and participate actively in communities. Students will utilise, manipulate and critically reflect on a range of texts in the contexts of work, community and leisure.

Overview of approaches

The *English Communication Study Area Specification* (2004) has been developed for a broad range of students in Years 11 and 12. It enables one approach only:

Approach B: Vocational learning (VL) strand.

Schools may devise a course of study over four semesters, based on units designed to promote vocational education as well as general knowledge and skills. Units are designed within contexts of work, community and leisure. This approach does not provide any vocational units of competency.

Nature of assessment

An exit level of achievement will be awarded on completion of the program of study for English Communication. The criteria on which students will be judged are derived from the general objectives of the course: knowledge of contextual factors, knowledge of textual features, and knowledge and understanding of texts.

In order to enable students to demonstrate their knowledge and control of the three assessment criteria, within the contexts of work, community and leisure, tasks will provide opportunities for students to use their knowledge of:

- how texts are shaped by purpose, context and social situation
- how textual features are selected for particular purposes and audiences
- how texts reflect different values, beliefs and attitudes.

Students will complete a variety of written and spoken/signed tasks in real-life contexts for particular purposes and audiences. Assessment will be conducted in both individual and group situations.

The three assessment criteria are integrally related, and will be applied holistically to the body of work completed by the student in order to determine the exit level of achievement.

Opportunities for students

English Communication can establish a basis for students' further learning as well as developing essential communication skills to enhance employment opportunities.

This study area specification offers students opportunities, within the contexts of work, community and leisure, to use language to perform tasks, use technology, express identity, and interact in groups, organisations and the community. It focuses on developing students' understanding and use of language systems to communicate effectively. Students will have the opportunity to:

- make meanings in and of everyday, mass-media and literary texts, understanding the influence of cultural contexts and social situations
- develop abilities in speaking (signing), listening, reading, viewing, writing and shaping practices, responsive to and effective in diverse social contexts
- become confident, effective and critical users of texts and language, making judgments to accept or challenge meanings.

Students will be involved in learning experiences that allow them to develop their interpersonal skills, to learn and function in various situations, and to acquire specific knowledge and skills relevant to future life and further training and employment. Students are supported in developing the capacity to learn from and about spoken, written and visual texts.

How parents can help

Parents and guardians can help students by:

- reading the *English Communication Area Specification (2004)*, on which schools base their programs of study
- reading the school program of study and discussing this with the teacher
- showing an interest in the area being studied by discussing activities and relevant issues with the student
- discussing the student's progress with the student and with relevant school personnel.