

# **POLICY STANDARDS – AMENDED UPDATES (FROM TERM 4 2020)**

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**Implementation document for Curriculum planning and programming, assessing and reporting to parents K-12 amended interim policy (from Term 4 2020)**

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## Document history

Date	Description	Approved by
01-01-2006	Initial publication	
28-01-2020	<p>In 1.4: List of documents to be maintained augmented with reference to Registration Process for Monitoring the Government Schooling System; updated reference to Multicultural NSW Act 2000.</p> <p>In 2: Inclusion of student learning English as an additional language or dialect.</p> <p>In 3.2.4: Change to wording for students learning English as an additional language.</p> <p>In 3.3.2: Changes to comparing student achievement for Intensive English Centres and the Intensive English High School.</p> <p>Other minor changes in wording.</p> <p>Edited for accessibility.</p>	Director, Early Learning and Primary Education
20-04-2020	Interim policy updates effective only during COVID-19 (Updates in each section)	Director, Early Learning and Primary Education
11-10-2020	Amended policy updates for Term 4 2020 and following to 2021, as required. Return to use of the five point scale for reporting to parents, including amendments to curriculum due to COVID-19.	Director, Curriculum Early Years and Primary Learners

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## Context

Version 9.2 of the Policy Standards has been developed as part of the department's response to support schools through impacts caused by COVID-19. Version 9.2 supersedes Version 9.1 (when the majority of students spent periods of time learning from home). In Version 9.2, requirements for reporting to parents and carers using a five point scale have been reinstated, while some flexibility in total curriculum hours remains due to the changes in Semester 1.

These policy standards outline the requirements for all NSW public schools to plan curriculum, develop programs, assess and report to parents in line with the Education Act 1990, the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) syllabuses, credentialing requirements, obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Disability Standards for Education 2005.

Curriculum planning and programming will account for the needs of every student. Curriculum options and adjustments<sup>1</sup> are negotiated through [collaborative curriculum planning](#) to reflect the learning and support needs of students whose learning is impacted by disability.

Those students who may be learning at home due to self-isolation or temporary school closures, will engage in a single unit of work, the same as their peers learning at school.

A single unit of work refers to the plan of the intended teaching and learning for a particular class for a particular period of time. Units of work are part of the planned sequence for teaching the outcomes and/or content of the NSW syllabuses or learning from both home and school.

## 1 Curriculum planning and programming – curriculum and allocation of time

### 1.1 Years K-6

Learning programs, based on NESA syllabuses, are to be provided to address each learning area in each year of schooling. In primary schools, the six key learning areas (KLAs) are:

- creative arts
- English
- human society and its environment (incorporating history and geography)
- mathematics
- personal development, health and physical education
- science and technology.

In providing curriculum, schools are to ensure that greater priority is given to English and mathematics.

[NESA's K-10 curriculum requirements for 2020](#) provide schools with flexibility to decide which syllabus outcomes and content they teach and assess for Years K-6. This recognises that it will not be possible to teach the entire curriculum in 2020 as intended and allows schools the flexibility to make decisions based on student needs and school context.

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<sup>1</sup> Adjustments are measures or actions taken in relation to teaching, learning and assessment that enable a student whose learning is impacted by disability to access syllabus outcomes and content on the same basis as their peers. Adjustments reflect the learning and support needs of the individual student.

Schools have flexibility in how they deliver learning programs, for example through integrated programs, provided that:

- approximately 50% of time is allocated for English and mathematics, and 40% of time for the other KLAs and sport
- as part of the 40% allocation, schools are to include 150 minutes per week for planned physical activity, including a minimum of one hour for sport in Years 3-6 (where feasible and social distancing rules allow). Refer to the department's [Leading educational continuity](#) webpage for current advice
- provision is made for Special Religious Education (SRE) and Special Education in Ethics (SEE) in each primary year, where authorised personnel and approved providers are available (where feasible and social distancing rules allow). Refer to the department's [Leading educational continuity](#) webpage for current advice.

## 1.2 Years 7-10

The department provides annual updates to schools regarding the requirements for the Record of School Achievement (RoSA), which are available under the heading [RoSA monitoring](#) on the department's website. This commenced in 2016.

Learning programs, based on NESA syllabuses, are to be provided for each subject or course in each year of schooling. In providing this curriculum program, schools will meet the requirements of NESA for students to gain the RoSA. Schools must refer to the requirements, rules and procedures as detailed on the Assessment, Certification and Examination (ACE) website to ensure the eligibility of students.

Schools have flexibility in how they deliver learning programs, for example, through integrated programs. Where schools have implemented integrated programs of learning they must be able to demonstrate that the minimum required hours for each of the learning areas have been met.

NESA has provided schools with the flexibility to decide which syllabus outcomes and content they teach and assess for Years 7-10, recognising that it may not be possible to teach the entire curriculum in 2020 as intended and allowing schools the flexibility to make decisions based on student needs and school context. Schools must refer to the updated requirements, rules and procedures provided on NESA's [coronavirus advice](#) page and in the ACE manual [changes to the RoSA & HSC rules and requirements for 2020](#) to ensure the eligibility of students.

Provision is to be made for SRE in each of Years 7 to 10, where authorised personnel from approved providers are available. Refer to the [Religion and ethics](#) page for advice on the return of SRE and SEE.

Schools should work towards maintaining a balance of curriculum offerings that reflect the time requirements noting that adjustments to time may have been required for each subject. A sample amendment of hours is provided in Table 1.

**Table 1: Minimum time requirements for learning areas**

Learning area	Requirement in hours - policy	Sample amended requirement in hours Years 7-10
English (7-10)	500	400 (NESA 400)
Mathematics (7-10)	500	400 (NESA 400)
Science (7-10)	500	400 (NESA 400)
HSIE (7-10)	400 (Geography, History)	380 (NESA 400)
Languages	100	80 *depends on year affected (NESA 100)
Technology Mandatory (7-8)	200	180 *depends on year affected (NESA 200)
Music (7-10)	100	80 *depends on year affected (NESA 100)
Visual Arts (7-10)	100	80 *depends on year affected (NESA 100)
PDHPE (7-10)	300	280 (NESA 300)
Planned physical activity	150 minutes per week	Maintained if possible
Additional studies (electives)	400	300 – 400 as possible

Schools should plan for the full requirement of curriculum hours in 2021.

### 1.3 Years 11-12

The department provides annual updates to schools regarding the requirements for the Higher School Certificate (HSC) which are available under the heading [HSC monitoring](#) on the department's website.

Learning programs, based on NESA syllabuses, are to be provided for each subject or course in each year of schooling to ensure students meet the requirements for the award of HSC.

Students in Year 11 and 12 should continue to complete the learning activities and assessments required as part of their courses of study.

NESA has given principals and system authorities the power to determine the number, type and weighting of tasks for **HSC and Year 11 school-based assessment** as shown on NESA's [coronavirus advice](#) page.

This includes making determinations about all mandated tasks that are internally assessed across a range of courses listed on NESA's [coronavirus advice](#) page.

In addition to NESA requirements for students to gain an HSC, government schools are to provide students with Life Ready, a 25-hour course. The provision of SRE is not required.

Schools are encouraged to provide Year 11 and 12 students with weekly access to a minimum of 150 minutes of physical activity, including sport, where possible. Refer to the department's [COVID-19](#) page for advice on the return of sport and physical activity.

### 1.4 Complying with legislation including the Education Act 1990 and NESA requirements

Under the Education Act 1990, all schools are required to maintain documentation that provides evidence of compliance with NESA syllabuses and the [Registration Process for Monitoring the Government Schooling System](#).

Schools are required to maintain documentation that reflects the obligations to students under the:

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Disability Standards for Education 2005
- Multicultural NSW Act 2000 which contains the principles of multiculturalism and the framework for the department's Multicultural Education Policy.

#### **1.4.1 Years K-6 (Early Stage 1 to Stage 3)**

Essential elements to be included in a school's documented curriculum:

- syllabus outcomes and requirements in scope and sequence overviews for each KLA for each year
- syllabus content and teaching activities in teaching programs for each KLA for each year annotated to show amendments to syllabus outcomes
- timetables for each year/class showing allocation of time and teachers for each KLA.

#### **1.4.2 Years 7-10 (Stage 4 to Stage 5)**

Essential elements to be included in a school's documented curriculum:

- syllabus outcomes and scope of learning for each KLA for each year
- record of the total number of approximate hours that were allocated to each course
- a scope and sequence and associated learning programs for each course, including teaching activities mapped against NESA syllabus outcomes and content, and including registration and evaluation
- assessment processes that
  - comply with the requirements outlined on NESA's [coronavirus advice](#) page and [ACE](#) website, and department memorandums
  - include statements of school procedures for allocating grades in Year 10
  - set out requirements to retain student work samples to support grade allocation as required by NESA for the RoSA.

For Semester 2 2020 and in planning for 2021, the school's documented curriculum should include timetables showing the allocation of time and teachers for each year/class.

#### **1.4.3 Years 11-12 (Stage 6)**

School should maintain records of the original documentation established for Years 11-12 for Term 4, 2019, and Term 1, 2020, as listed below.

Essential elements to be included in a school's documented curriculum:

- timetables showing the allocation of time and teachers for each year/class
- the total number of hours allocated to each Year 11 and Year 12 course
- courses of study for each student each year that comply with a pattern of study for Year 11 and Year 12, as described on the NESA and ACE websites for candidates for the HSC (ACE 8005)
- a scope and sequence and associated learning programs for each course, including teaching activities mapped against NESA syllabus outcomes and content, and including registration and evaluation
- assessment policies and procedures that:
  - comply with the requirements as documented on the NESA and ACE websites, NESA official notices and department memorandums
  - include statements of school procedures for the allocation of grades in Year 11 courses, and in Year 12 English Studies and Mathematics Standard 1

- set out requirements to retain student work samples to support grade allocation, as required by NESA
- confirmation that the school has made disability provisions in accordance with the NESA and ACE websites.

Particular documentation required in relation to Year 11 and Year 12 assessment includes:

- organisational details of the school's assessment program for each course, outlining the number and types of assessment tasks, components, weightings and scheduling of the tasks
- marking, recording and reporting student achievement in assessment tasks
- administrative arrangements regarding absence from an assessment task, late submission of tasks due to illness or misadventure, malpractice and invalid or unreliable tasks
- student appeals against assessment rankings
- 'N' Award (non-completion) warnings and determinations
- providing students with written advice about the school's requirements for assessment in each course.

Schools should also keep records of changes to assessment schedules as allowed and described on NESA's [coronavirus advice](#) page and any other changes to administrative arrangements, including notification of these changes to students.

Schools should make decisions about the fieldwork and practical skills included in the Semester 2 curriculum to ensure they can be taught safely. Refer to the department's [COVID-19](#) page for advice on the safe delivery of curriculum and related activities.

Schools should maintain records for Year 11-12 students learning from home and at school including:

- syllabus outcomes and scope of learning for each course
- record of the total number of hours that were allocated to each course.

## 2 Assessing

Schools are to undertake assessment to inform students' learning. Assessment of student learning will be undertaken for all learners, including students whose learning is impacted by disability and students learning English as an additional language or dialect.

Ongoing assessment of student learning is important to enable teachers to provide feedback to students and guide their continuing provision of appropriate learning tasks. Teachers should continue to plan for assessment as part of their teaching and learning plans for students learning from home and school.

Adjustments to assessment tasks may be required for a student whose learning is impacted by disability and students learning English as an additional language. This should reflect the adjustments made to support the student's learning.

## 3 Reporting to parents – components of the written report

The parents/carers of all students are to be provided with a formal report on their child's learning twice a year. In Semester 1, 2020 interim modifications were made to the requirements due to COVID-19. In Semester 2, 2020 the requirements for reports will revert to what they were prior to COVID-19. The interim modifications will no longer apply.

Schools are required to issue the formal written report to parents in digital or print format.

The formal written report for each student will:

- use plain English
- provide information on a student's learning in each of the KLAs or subjects, as described in 3.1
- compare the student's achievement in each KLA or subject against state-wide syllabus standards<sup>2</sup> using a scale, as defined in 3.2
- include teacher comments for each KLA or subject; comments will identify areas of student strength and areas for further development
- have information about the student's attendance at school
- provide information about student achievement in relation to school programs that extend or are additional to syllabus requirements
- provide information about the student's social development and commitment to learning.

### **3.1 Reporting to parents – learning areas**

#### **3.1.1 Years K-6 (Early Stage 1 to Stage 3)**

Schools will report on the six KLAs of English; mathematics; creative arts; human society and its environment (which includes history and geography); personal development, health and physical education; and science and technology.

Languages will be reported in schools that provide students with a languages program of two or more hours per week.

Reporting should focus on individual student learning progress that supports parents to understand how their child is going and what can be done to support their learning growth.

#### **3.1.2 Years 7-10 (Stage 4 to Stage 5)**

Schools will report on subjects or courses studied in the eight KLAs of English; mathematics; science; human society and its environment; creative arts; languages; personal development, health and physical education; and technology and applied studies.

Reports will show information for components of each subject in all KLAs. Reports should provide feedback on individual student learning progress that supports parents to understand how their child is progressing and what can be done to support their learning growth.

#### **3.1.3 Years 11-12 (Stage 6)**

Schools will report on subjects or courses studied. Reports will show information for components of each subject.

For vocational education and training (VET) courses, schools will report on competency achievement. VET courses are competency-based where assessment of competencies is standards-referenced.

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<sup>2</sup> Syllabus standards are described by the components of a syllabus. The components that contribute to teachers' understandings of syllabus standards include objectives, Stage statements, syllabus outcomes and syllabus content or indicators. Stage statements (Years K-10) encompass, at a broader level than syllabus outcomes, the nature and scope of learning in each stage

### 3.1.4 English as an additional language or dialect students, K-10

Schools will report on the overall English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) Learning Progression phase of all students described as EAL/D. Schools will report on how EAL/D students' English language learning has been supported and their progress in learning English.

## 3.2 Reporting to parents – comparing student achievement against statewide syllabus standards in each KLA (required for written reports)

### 3.2.1 Kindergarten

Reports will describe how a child's achievement compares with syllabus standards through teacher comments.

### 3.2.2 Years 1-10

Schools will use the following five point achievement scale (Table 2) to report to parents for students in Years 1 to 10. Achievement is judged in relation to syllabus standards.

The achievement scale is to be used for reporting all KLAs or subjects, except VET courses where competency will be reported.

**Table 2: Five point scale for reporting student achievement to parents**

Describe this achievement level	Using this word	And/or this letter
The student has an extensive knowledge and understanding of the content and can readily apply this knowledge. In addition, the student has achieved a high level of competence in the processes and skills and can apply these skills to new situations.	Outstanding	A
The student has a thorough knowledge and understanding of the content and a high level of competence in the processes and skills. In addition, the student is able to apply this knowledge and these skills to most situations.	High	B
The student has a sound knowledge and understanding of the main areas of content and has achieved an adequate level of competence in the processes and skills.	Sound	C
The student has a basic knowledge and understanding of the content and has achieved a basic level of competence in the processes and skills.	Basic	D
The student has an elementary knowledge and understanding in few areas of the content and has achieved very limited competence in some of the processes and skills.	Limited	E

Where the word summaries are used, the report will contain a statement to explain that the five point achievement scale used in this report equates to the A-E scale.

### 3.2.3 Years 11-12

Schools will use a numerical score (1-100) or use A-E (or equivalent) achievement grades to clearly convey what the student knows and can do in relation to syllabus standards in each course. Schools will report on competency achievement for VET courses.

### 3.2.4 Reporting on learning outcomes for students learning English as an additional language

For new arrival EAL/D students in primary, central and high schools, if appropriate, KLAs or subjects studied may be reported against the five point achievement scale (in 3.2.2), otherwise only comments need be provided.

For new arrival EAL/D students in Intensive English Centres and the Intensive English High School, students' achievements in KLAs or subjects are to be described against the standards of the department's Intensive English Program Curriculum Framework.

For other EAL/D students (more than four terms in an Australian school) achievement in the KLAs or subjects will be reported using the five point achievement scale (in 3.2.2). EAL/D students' achievement in primary KLAs or secondary subjects will be assessed against syllabus standards.

### 3.2.5 Reporting on learning outcomes for students whose learning is impacted by disability

Reports for students, whose learning program is based on syllabus outcomes that are the same as the age/stage of their peers, should follow the requirements as set out above 3.1-3.2.4.

Reports for students, whose learning program is based on syllabus outcomes that are different from the age/stage of their peers, including life skills outcomes, will indicate achievement against a personalised learning program. A process of [collaborative curriculum planning](#) determines the most appropriate curriculum options and adjustments.

#### P – Personalised

In general, 'personalised' reports will be provided for students with moderate or severe levels of intellectual disability. 'Personalised' reports may also be provided for students with other disabilities in KLAs or subjects where a student's learning is based on syllabus outcomes that are different from the age/stage of their peers.

In addition to reporting the student's achievement, schools also may report the student's achievement using the following scale in KLAs or subjects through written comments:

#### P4 – Independent

The student can complete a task independently, without assistance. The student maintains the skill or knowledge over time. The student generalises the skill or knowledge to new settings, people or materials.

#### P3 – Frequent

The student relies on partial prompts to complete a task. The student can regularly perform the skill or demonstrate knowledge. The student uses the skills or knowledge in a variety of familiar settings and situations.

#### P2 – Occasional

The student understands information, concept and/or can perform skill. The student often relies on physical or verbal assistance when participating in a task. The student has begun to demonstrate the skills in selected, familiar settings.

The student has some existing prior knowledge and/or necessary pre skills for the task. The student is beginning to participate in a task with maximum teacher assistance. The student uses skills and knowledge in a single setting.

### **3.3 Reporting to parents – comparing student achievement with the child’s peer group at the school in each KLA or subject in Years 1-12**

In response to requests from a child’s parents/carers, schools are to provide information on how their child’s achievement compares with the performance of the student’s peer group. This information will take the form of the number of students in the school peer group receiving each grade or achievement level.

For Years 1-10, school reports (except those referred to in 3.3.1 to 3.3.3) where a peer group comparison is not required will include the following statement:

You may request the school to provide you with written information that clearly shows your child’s achievement compared to his or her peer group at school. This information will show you the number of children in the group in each of the achievement levels.

Schools will advise parents on the written report how the information can be accessed.

For Years 11 and 12, information on how student achievement compares with that of the peer group may be provided through course group rankings or grade distributions.

#### **3.3.1 Peer groups of less than five students**

Schools where the peer group is less than five students are to negotiate with the school community in relation to providing data for comparison. The negotiation should ensure that the potential for publicly releasing information about individual students is avoided.

#### **3.3.2 Newly arrived EAL/D students**

For newly arrived EAL/D students in Intensive English Centres and the Intensive English High School, schools are not required to provide information to parents about how their child compares with the student’s peer group.

For EAL/D students at primary, central and high schools, who are new arrivals in Australian schools (four terms or less), schools are not required to provide information to parents about how their child compares with the student’s peer group.

#### **3.3.3 Students with a personalised learning plan**

Where students are working with a personalised learning plan (as described in section 3.2.5), schools are not required to provide information to parents about how their child compares with the student’s peer group and the student is not included in the number of students achieving at each of the five levels of the achievement scale.