POLICY STANDARDS – INTERIM UPDATES DURING COVID-19

Implementation document for Curriculum Planning and Programming, Assessing and Reporting to Parents K-12 interim policy (COVID-19 Revision)

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## Document history

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Approved by</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01-01-2006</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
In 2: inclusion of student learning English as an additional language or dialect.  
In 3.2.4: change to wording for students learning English as an additional language.  
In 3.3.2: changes to comparing student achievement for Intensive English Centres and the Intensive English High School.  
Other minor changes in wording.  
Edited for accessibility.                                                                 | Director, Early Learning and Primary Education   |
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Context

Version 9.1 of the Policy Standards has been developed as part of the department’s response to support schools through impacts caused by COVID-19. This version remains current during the response to COVID-19.

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 adjustments¹ are negotiated to reflect the learning and support needs of students whose learning is impacted by disability.

Students learning either at home or at school will engage in a single unit of work provided by their 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 during adjustments to learning as a result of COVID-19, schools are to ensure that greater priority is given to English and mathematics.

A focus on English and mathematics in primary school reflects the expectation that approximately 50% of the school week is devoted to these key learning areas. Other key learning areas make up approximately 30-40% and schools have flexibility in how these are implemented.

NESA have provided school systems with flexibility to decide which syllabus outcomes and content they teach and assess for Years K-6. recognising that it will not be possible to teach the entire curriculum as

¹ 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.
intended via remote learning and allowing schools the flexibility to make decisions based on student needs and school context. Refer to NESA’s coronavirus advice page.

Where feasible, and social distancing rules allow, schools should include time for planned physical activity, consistent with department advice. The provision of one hour for sport in Years 3-6 will not be required until advice is provided enabling sport to resume. The provision for Special Religious Education (SRE) and Special Education in Ethics (SEE) in each primary year is not required until further advice is provided by the department. A sample daily timetable to address curriculum requirements is provided at Appendix 1.

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. For Years 7-10, allocated time for subjects when learning from home should be proportionate to the time scheduled at school. Where schools have implemented integrated programs of learning they are required to demonstrate that content in each of the learning areas has been met.

NESA have provided school systems with flexibility to decide which syllabus outcomes and content they teach and assess for Years 7-10. recognising that it will not be possible to teach the entire curriculum as intended via remote learning and allowing schools the flexibility to make decisions based on student needs and school context. NESA will provide further advice on the updated requirements for students to gain the RoSA. Schools must refer to the updated requirements, rules and procedures provided on NESA’s coronavirus advice page.

The provision for SRE in each of Years 7 to 10 is not required until further advice is provided by the department.

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

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

A sample daily timetable to address curriculum requirements is provided at Appendix 1.

1.3 Years 11-12

Students in Years 11-12 are more likely to be actively engaged for the timetabled hours. Face to face or digital delivery should be prioritised over paper-based systems for students in Years 11-12.

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

- curriculum offerings in Years 11-12 are complex and usually depend on the preferences of the student cohort balanced against the size of the school, the specialist rooms available and the skill set of the teaching staff
- some schools deliver a compressed curriculum in Years 11-12
- some schools schedule some Year 11-12 classes ‘off-line’ – before or after the nominal school day.

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.

Schools will need to consider the ways they provide support for students in Year 11 and 12 who may be learning from home or school.

In addition to NESA requirements for students to gain a 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 and where social distancing allows.
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 scope and sequence of learning that has occurred:

- syllabus outcomes and scope of learning for each KLA for each year
- samples of teaching activities in teaching programs for each KLA for each year
- timetables for each year/class showing adjusted 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
- assessment processes that
  - comply with the requirements outlined on NESA’s coronavirus advice page
  - set out requirements to retain student work samples to support grade allocation as required by NESA for the RoSA.
- confirmation that the school has policies for disability provisions in accordance with the ACE website.

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 policies for 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.

For Year 11, assessment in Term 2 should prioritise feedback over grading.

For Year 12, schools may decide to defer, cancel or modify assessment tasks scheduled for Term 2. Consideration for providing valid and reliable assessments and for the wellbeing of students and staff should be given.

Schools should make decisions about the practical skills included in the Term 2 curriculum to ensure they can be taught safely.

Schools should set expectations for students to be actively engaged in learning during each school day as they know their students and their school community. Students in Years 11-12 are more likely to be actively engaged for the timetabled hours.

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 during Semester 1, 2020

The parents of all students are to be provided with a formal report on their child’s learning twice a year.

In Semester 1, 2020, schools should provide one formal written report to parents. This can be provided in written or digital format.

In Semester 2, 2020 schools will be required to issue written reports consistent with the policy (version 9).

The formal reporting for each student will:

• provide a simplified written report in an accessible form that is easy for parents/carers to understand
• describe student progress and achievement on the learning covered during Semester 1
• provide teacher comments to describe student learning and identify the next steps in learning
• provide information about student attendance and commitment to learning.

In addition, principals will have flexibility to:

• modify their existing reporting templates/software to meet new requirements
• develop a new simplified report
• provide written reports by 30 August 2020 on Semester 1 (Term 1 until end Term 2) learning
• continue to use the A-E scale where valid assessment judgements can be made
• incorporate outcomes from parent-teacher discussions for a more complete picture of student learning progress.

3.1 Reporting to parents – learning areas

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

Reporting to parents should focus on the learning undertaken during learning from home or school in English and mathematics.

Information should also be provided on student progress where learning was undertaken in other KLAs including creative arts; human society and its environment (which includes history and geography); personal development, health and physical education, science and technology and languages (where offered). Schools undertaking integrated units of study may report against the single unit.

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)

Reporting to parents should focus on the learning undertaken during learning from home or school in each subject or course studied in the eight KLAs of English, mathematics; science; human society and its environment; creative arts; languages; personal development, health and physical education; and technological and applied studies.

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.

3.1.4 English as an additional language or dialect students, K-10
Schools should provide information on how EAL/D students’ English language learning has been supported and their progress in learning English during Semester 1. Where available, schools may provide the overall English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) Learning Progression phase of students identified as EAL/D.

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 a child’s progress and achievement on the learning undertaken through teacher feedback or comments.

3.2.2 Years 1-10
Schools may use the word descriptors of the five-point scale (Table 2) to describe student learning progress in teacher comments (grading students using a five point scale or A-E is not required).

Progress and achievement are described in relation to evidence of student learning during learning from home and school reflects the outcomes and content covered from NSW syllabuses during learning from home and school.
Table 2: Word descriptors of the five-point scale for describing student learning progress in teacher comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>These words may be included in teacher comments to elaborate on the five-point word descriptors</th>
<th>Use these words</th>
<th>Letter not required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Sound</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student has a basic knowledge and understanding of the content and has achieved a basic level of competence in the processes and skills.</td>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.3 Years 11-12

For Year 11, reporting to parents should focus on the learning undertaken during learning from home or school in each subject or course studied. It 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.

For Year 12, schools will use a numerical score (1-100), or 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, only comments need be provided. If appropriate, KLAs or subjects studied may be reported using the five-point word descriptors to describe student learning progress (grading students using a five point or A-E scale is not required).

For new arrival EAL/D students in Intensive English Centres and the Intensive English High School, students’ achievements in KLAs or subjects, where possible, 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) the five-point word descriptors can be used to describe student learning progress (grading students using a five point or A-E scale is not required). EAL/D students’ progress and achievement in primary KLAs or secondary subjects can be provided in a summative account of learning covered during Semester 1.
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.

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>P4 – Independent</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P3 – Frequent</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P2 – Occasional</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P1 – Beginning</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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, where possible, schools are to provide information on how their child’s achievement compares with the performance of the student’s peer group, acknowledging not all students will have covered the same outcomes or content.

This information may also be provided verbally and describe patterns of progress and achievements against the single unit of work and tasks undertaken during learning from home and school.

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 where available.
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.
Appendix 1

The daily times are indicative hours and schools may plan for educational delivery in a range of ways according to school practice (e.g. daily, weekly and/or fortnightly).