

Reflections on the National Curriculum Symposium

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Consequence of sequences remit

- Phases in remit
 - Phases 1 and 2 by disciplines or discipline areas
 - Phase 3 may open more general question
- What if initial remit had been the whole?
 - Would we have embraced disciplines?
 - Would we have invented a new structure of knowledge?
- Consider our treatment of
 - Capabilities (10)
 - Cross-curriculum dimensions (3)

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Learning areas

Adelaide	Melbourne
The Arts	The Arts (Performing and Visual)
English	English
Health and Physical Education	Health and Physical Education
Languages other than English	Languages (especially Asian languages)
Mathematics	Mathematics
Science	Science (Including physics, chemistry, biology)
Studies of Society and Environment	Humanities and Social Science (Including history, geography, economics, business, civics and citizenship)
Technology	ICT and Design and Technology

Consider the form of our publication

The screenshot displays the Australian Curriculum Consultation Portal interface. At the top, there is a search bar and navigation tabs for Home, Learn, Explore, Consult, Technical, and Survey. The 'Explore' tab is active, and the 'Science' subject is selected. Below the navigation, there are filter options for Year Level (K-12), Strand (Science as a human endeavour, Science inquiry skills, Science understanding), Cross curriculum dimensions (Commitment to sustainable living, General capabilities), and Threads (Earth and Space Sciences). The main content area shows 'Year 7 Content descriptions' for Science, organized by Strand. The 'Science as a human endeavour' strand includes descriptions for '1. Nature of science', '2. Influence of science', and '3. Science careers'. The 'Science inquiry skills' strand includes '1. Questioning and predicting', '2. Investigation methods', and '3. Fair testing'. The 'Science understanding' strand includes '1. Human body systems', '2. Growth and reproduction', '3. Effects of Earth's movements in space', and '4. Oceans and atmosphere'.

Key features of our process

- Shape papers for discussion of forest
 - Key academic authors and reference group
 - Public discussion
- Detailed content and achievement standards
 - Pressing for developmental continua
 - Specifying by year to deal with differences within year
 - Keeping academic leaders engaged as 'coaches'
- Nature of consultations – including students
- National:local = 80:20

The whole picture

- Relationship with state/territory curricula
 - New replacing existing where the same domain
 - Australian is not federal government
- Treatment of Years 11-12
 - Release of drafts for consultation
 - K-10: on 1 March to 23 May
 - Senior years: April to June
 - Connection with State/Territory curricula
 - Assessment and certification

Special considerations

- Students with special needs
 - For some we need a 'prior to K' sequence
 - Drawing on an expert group, including Patrick Griffin
- Students with English as another language or dialect
 - We are convening a working group

Expectations vs implementation

- Australian Curriculum not more prescriptive
 - Goal world-class not uniformity
- Limits to what curriculum can achieve
 - Not ACARA's direct role
 - School authorities have PD and curriculum programs
 - Federal government has doubled funding
 - ACARA with states, territories, ESA and AITSL
 - ACARA mapping state/territory/Australian curriculum
 - Curriculum and pedagogy (not idiosyncrasy)
- ACARA curriculum website's links to resources
- Implementation from 2011 and by 2013

Aspirational goals and equity

- Role of achievement standards
 - Descriptions of quality of learning expected
 - Annotated samples of students' work
 - A to E with C as sufficient to advance without support
- What differentiation to achieve equity?
- *My School*
 - No emphasis on % above minimum competence
 - Means and distributions

As for the Carlton declaration...

- The realities of the federation suggest this might be a step too far...
- It is not one that ACARA could advance...
- BUT we do have a coordinating role!

Dealing with dichotomies

- My view
 - They are usually unhelpful
- Financial Times journalist's view
 - They are usually unhelpful but we need them
 - Our role is:
 - First to simplify
 - Then to exaggerate
- One from this conference that I like
 - Breadth and depth as complementary

And on Monday

www.australiancurriculum.edu.au

And afterwards....

...trust us!