South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework

Consultation on the ESL Scope and Scales

May/June 2001
# Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS............................................................................................................................ 2

INTRODUCTION ........................................................................................................................................ 3

ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES.................................................................................................................... 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>WHAT IS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE BACKGROUND TO THE DOCUMENT?</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ISSUE 3:</td>
<td>HOW ACCESSIBLE IS THE LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY IN THE SCOPE AND SCALES?</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSUE 4:</td>
<td>ACCESSIBILITY OF THE LANGUAGE AND IDEAS IN THE INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSUE 5:</td>
<td>“THE ESL SCOPE AND SCALES WILL HELP TEACHERS IMPLEMENT THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM, STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK BY PROVIDING ….”</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSUE 6:</td>
<td>“THE ESL SCOPE AND SCALES WILL PROVIDE AN ENABLING PATHWAY FOR ALL ESL LEARNERS TO ACCESS THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM, STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK BECAUSE ….”</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSUE 7:</td>
<td>“THE ESL SCOPE AND SCALES PROVIDE AN UNDERSTANDING OF HOW TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF ESL LEARNERS BY ….”</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSUE 8:</td>
<td>TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE SCOPE PROVIDE A CLEAR DESCRIPTION OF THE EXTRA LEARNING ABOUT STANDARD AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH THAT IS NEEDED BY ESL LEARNERS?</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSUE 9:</td>
<td>THE CONTINUITY OF THE CURRICULUM AND THE PROGRESSION IN THE SCOPE</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSUE 10:</td>
<td>COMMENT ON HOW WELL THE KEY IDEAS IN THE SCOPE PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE AND BALANCED COVERAGE WHILE STILL BEING USEFUL FOR PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSUE 11:</td>
<td>SUGGESTIONS TO BETTER DESCRIBE THE LEARNING REQUIREMENTS</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSUE 13:</td>
<td>HOW USEFUL ARE THE SCOPE AND SCALES IN PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING TO CATER FOR THE DIFFERENT NEEDS OF ESL LEARNERS?</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSUE 14:</td>
<td>HOW USEFUL ARE THE SCALES ENABLING YOU TO IDENTIFY AND REPORT ON THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE RANGE OF ESL LEARNERS?</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSUE 15:</td>
<td>COMMENT ON THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE FOR THESE GROUPS OF ESL LEARNERS</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSUE 17:</td>
<td>TO WHAT EXTENT DO THE KEY IDEAS IN THE STRANDS DESCRIBE THE SCOPE OF ESL LEARNING?</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSUE 18:</td>
<td>THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE OUTCOMES SEQUENCES INDICATE CLEAR AND ACCURATE PROGRESSION ACROSS THE SCALES</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSUE 19:</td>
<td>THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE FOR THE SCALES ILLUSTRATE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE OUTCOMES</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSUE 20:</td>
<td>TO WHAT EXTENT DO THE OUTCOMES AND EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE ASSIST IN DESIGNING ASSESSMENT TASKS FOR YOUR LEARNERS?</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSUE 21:</td>
<td>THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE FROM THE TWO STRANDS CAN WORK TOGETHER TO ILLUSTRATE THE OUTCOME</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSUE 22:</td>
<td>THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE GLOSSARY IS USEFUL</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSUE 23:</td>
<td>WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE DOCUMENT FOR TEACHING PRACTICE?</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

The Consultation about the ESL Scope and Scales document has been conducted using focus groups, interviews and a web site questionnaire. This draft final report has been developed around the responses to detailed questions in the questionnaire, answers by experts and trialing teachers during interview, and discussions recorded from focus groups conducted with trial teachers and mainstream teachers who had not yet trialed the material.

Interviews were conducted with:

- Members of the ESL experts working group
- Trialing teachers (by telephone)

Seven focus groups were conducted with representation as follows:

- representatives of mainstream teachers
- representatives of ESL teachers
- representatives of trialing teachers
- representatives of the ESL experts working group
- representatives from other relevant experts working groups
- representatives of trialing teachers who were both ESL and mainstream teachers (paired)

The following tables represent the demographics of the respondents to the questionnaire. The questionnaire was placed on the Erebus website for four weeks with publicity or requests to complete the questionnaire being handled by the department.

In all, responses were gained from 52 teachers, 75 percent being trial teachers. There was a spread of responses across the grades although 58 percent were from the R-7 bands. Seventy one percent of respondents were from the metropolitan area. There were equal numbers of primary and early years teachers, while middle and senior years teachers represented about half the number of their junior colleagues. The proportion of mainstream to ESL teachers was about equal.

Fifty four percent of respondents taught general support ESL learners, 17 percent taught new arrivals and 12 percent taught ESL to Aboriginal learners.

Response Table 1 Trial or non-trial

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trial school Teacher</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-trial school teacher</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Response Table 2  Grade range in school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Range</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R-12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-7</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Response Table 3  Location of school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>metropolitan</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>remote or rural school</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>regional centre</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Response Table 4  Band of students taught by responding teacher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band of Students</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Years</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Years</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Years</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Years and Primary</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary and Middle Years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle and Senior Years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100</td>
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</table>

Response Table 5  Position of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL teacher</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Arrivals program teacher</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstream teacher</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Team</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Response Table 6  Type of student taught
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Arrival Program students</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Support students</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Students</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Arrivals and General students</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Arrivals and Aboriginal students</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General and Aboriginal students</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All categories of student</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>52</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The approach taken in the report is to use material from all sources to explore the themes and issues arising from the responses. Where a theme is well-supported, representative (but not exhaustive) quotes from a variety of aspects are provided. Words like “in general”, or “the majority”, “most” or “many” are used to describe these areas or issues. Where a theme is raised by a small number of respondents, it is noted using delimiting terms like “some” or “a particular viewpoint”. Here the quotes used are often exhaustive of those provided on the point. In cases where the view represents particular groups of respondents, the groups are identified.

The focus groups and interviews were used to provide broader overviews in many areas as well as to provide triangulated verification of information. Where these are the only sources of information they are reported as such. Where the questionnaire covered more specific questions, the information is not necessarily triangulated using various methods but is verified by the number of similar responses. In many cases, with critical issues, all methods were used to gather information. In such instances, the responses to the questionnaire are reported separately to the responses gathered via focus group or interview.

The report is set out in issues that were generated from discussion with the steering committee representatives. Issues are organised from the general to the particular with implications for practice placed at the end. In accordance with the requirements of the steering committee as conveyed through feedback on the draft report, we have provided no conclusions or recommendations, leaving these up to the steering committee. The report simply provides the responses grouped into various themes and categories. The figures and tables throughout the report are numbered to coincide with the issue they illustrate.
**Analysis of Responses**

**Issue 1: What is your understanding of the background to the document?**

**Analysis of responses to interviews and focus groups**

Participants and interviewees provided much in common in response to this question. In general, most were aware that the document provided alignment between the English language learning needed for ESL learners to access the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework scope and standards. Practicing teachers emphasised that the document is support for both ESL and mainstream teachers in dealing with students whose English does not allow them to access the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework levels. It was noted that this document had been written with mainstream teachers in mind as well as ESL teachers. Discussion revealed that, while many ESL teachers saw ESL as a Learning Area, there was a view that Learning Areas were for all students and this document was a curriculum avenue into mainstream for ESL learners. The following sample of quotes demonstrates these views.

*Need to align ESL learners language development with SACSA. SACSA driven – not separate.*

*Review of the previous document, rewritten with benchmarks with non ESL teachers in mind, old document for specialists.*

*Rising from a need to identify ‘levels’ of ability and suggested outcomes for each level.*

*At the beginning of SACSA there is a line that said ESL could be a key area (or at least would have a curriculum and standards). Didn’t end up as a learning area. Learning Areas are for ALL learners, while EL is only for some. Standards would acknowledge what ESL learners should be able to do. Historically there has always been a separate ESL curriculum, but there is learning that happens additionally to the eight Key Las. It is more than simply accessing the curriculum.*

*Support for teachers to give all ESL students better chance in all subjects.*

*Increasing focus on explicit teaching using SFG – useful to have this as a basis for document to direct teaching practice. Question response from teachers to earlier documents would like more specific document.*

*Developed from the current ESL Statement and Scales – needed to be the same format as the Learning Areas in SACSA – the inclusion of Equity issues in SACSA provided a strong argument for the inclusion of the ESL Scope and Scales in the SACSA Framework.*

*The need for a more clear and accurate way to assess ESL students which is based on functional grammar. A document for all teacher with students who don’t have standard Australian English.*

*Derives from earlier reviews and scales. Need to broaden access to pathways to SAE to clarify differences in learning needs of ESL students from those with learning difficulties. Old ESL scale had some large gaps – needed to be rewritten.*
**Issue 2: What is your understanding of the purpose of the ESL Scope and Scales?**

**Analysis of responses to interviews and focus groups**

The document was generally viewed as being designed as a curriculum to monitor and plan for the learning progress of ESL students, who need steps of achievement dissimilar to native English speakers. It was widely acknowledged that ESL learners have different cultural backgrounds, which give a different cultural understanding and they need language-oriented material in addition to what is offered in the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework. The emphasis was on the use of the documents by teachers as a tool for providing for and checking the progress of learners. The use of the material for programming and focusing on outcomes was emphasised, as was the use to provide explicit, fine-grained steps in teaching.

To give a measure or check for classroom and ESL teachers to map students use of and development in English language.

To make the outcomes of the scales clear to all mainstream teachers and to help them program for ESL students.

Tool for explicit teaching of language, tool for assessing where students are at in their language development.

To be a document that speaks to both ESL and mainstream teachers. Allows you to find ‘levels’ of students. Tool for knowing what and how to teach – makes explicit expectations. Tool for play and programming – helps with assessment

To provide a description of the learning that ESL students undertake as additional learning and a means of assessing their progress in learning English. Also to be used to assess students’ English language learning needs for funding ESL programs in schools.

A particular view mentioned that the document provided explicit standards against which decisions could be made about the resources needed to support learners. In this sense, the document was seen as a potential threat to resource allocations.

This is a crucial part of ESL. Purpose is also to maintain ESL students as a target group. To articulate the scope of what the additional learning for ESL students will be. The secret is to provide a tool for measuring learning which can be used to demonstrate accountability. Other purposes are to serve as a tool for planning and programming and for professional development – for mainstream and ESL teachers.

To provide an explicit scale for assessment for plotting individuals for funding and for students’ ability to access the SACSA English programming and planning.

Mainstream teachers noted the document’s purpose as providing suggestions to cater for mainstream ESL learners in their classes.

To ensure that teachers understand some of the learning needs of ESL students within each LA and give some constructive support as to how teachers can ensure that their specific learning caters for these students with suggestions and strategies they can use.

Support for all teachers to become explicit teachers of SAE. Will be supportive for teachers in suggesting strategies – to inform teaching practices.
Issue 3: How accessible is the language and vocabulary in the scope and scales?

Analysis of responses to interviews and focus groups

There was some support for the level and tone of the language used, especially if read in conjunction with the glossary. The important point made by many teachers was the need to become familiar with the document and its approach. Once familiar, the language becomes quite communicative.

Easy teacher friendly language.

Teacher friendly except at the senior years.

Glossary helps to classify the difficulties.

The glossary is a must be there may need to be some T&D for teachers to ensure they know that the glossary is available – maybe it needs to be included in each Band section and in the Scales section as well.

OK, with practice and familiarity and reference to the glossary as needed, I find it accessible (also feel the need to brush up on my functional grammar).

For someone with a sound knowledge of functional linguistics- very accessible for others – glossary is necessary.

Once familiar OK- Glossary works. Horror at first- more examples might help mainstream teachers – key ideas needed in checklists to avoid vagueness of outcomes.

Requires familiarity with the terms – comes with persistence, if you make the efforts. Checklist in continuums would be a useful tool. How well does the document value the cultural background of the students- the document has a strong technical language feel- rather than a social- cultural context of language basis.

Whilst the language seems to be technically precise- a definition of terms and concepts would be ideal.

However, accessibility of the language was a major issue, raised here specifically, but in other areas repeatedly. The major problem was for non-ESL teachers who were unfamiliar with the concepts and words used by ESL teachers.

Good. I think it is very good (referring to grammatical terms mainly) although there are some teachers who may be disadvantaged by the fact that they have not had a comprehensive training in their own educational background.

Problems. Dense, too wordy. Needs editing. Language sentences. Reader issue. Tension - to describe language you use the language to do it. Exemplification is valuable. Uses same language model as English teachers use therefore they should understand.

It is very dense, very wordy. Can it be made more reader friendly, while still retaining the complexity? There is a tension in that there is a need for some technical language to describe language – even if this is unfamiliar to teachers. There is a lot of exemplification to assist teachers to understand. There are opportunities for professional development.

Required background in functional grammar – which I didn’t have.

It does presume one has quite a bit of knowledge of the language. Perhaps need more examples.
Good- but speaking from viewpoint of ESL teacher of many years with much study in functional grammar.

Bewildering.

Seems a reasonable progression – chart needed. Some jargon unclear. A lot of flipping between glossary needed. Teachers will not have the time for this.

It’s specialised for the ESL field – not helpful to mainstream teachers. The language is not accessible. A paper to impress. It’s not a working paper

I think there needs to be more concise summaries of key points for teachers to be able to recall at short notice – they may never have the time to go back to the text to check something out.

There may have to be sufficient time devoted to helping teachers feel comfortable with language and vocabs in Scope and Scales from my observations. Some clearly written key ideas. Liked the glossary. Liked the introduction to each band eg, primary years. These explain ‘mode’ language’ etc. Functional linguistics is excellent but for an ESL teacher.

Being an ESL teacher with many years experience and having completed the Language and Literacy Course, I am familiar with most of the terms. The Glossary will help with the terms that I’m not sure of.

A lot is very accessible – I’m an experienced ESL teacher and find the use of functional linguistic terms precise and clear. But problem – some margins/descriptors are too minute and open to subjective interpretation ie – narrow or restricted range or limited range …. terms are too similar in meaning and the ‘scale’ needs to be made clear. Remove word ‘construct’ and replace it with ‘produce’ – remove this jargon.

When I read the document before inclusion of the glossary I needed to refer to a functional grammar text to make sure I understood the Scope and Scales. Teachers who haven’t had recent T&D in area of English are likely to find it difficult.

Very daunting unless some prior knowledge. This needs a very ‘human’ front when distributed to school and staff - many teachers will be threatened and simply not bother.

One significant observation was that the language appears to increase in level of technicality from the early bands through to senior years.

Except for a few expressions especially at senior level the language is clear.

Primary years is OK / Senior years is too dense and expectations/outcomes are off the board particularly in context of disadvantaged schools/areas.

Very difficult to read at senior level.

Up to primary it is accessible but concern re senior. “Foregrounding” – example not consistent with use.

OK – until you get to Senior Years. The information throughout needs to be more ‘teacher friendly’.

Lexically very dense – particularly senior years sections (see p6). Not easy for a mainstream teacher to understand – while some words are in glossary eg ‘foregrounding’ it is not obvious what these words mean in different contexts.
Analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The accessibility and clarity of the language used in the document attracted the widest divergence of opinion amongst respondents. Disagreement centred mostly on the use of technical terms, such as "nominalisation", and terms deriving from the functional grammar underpinnings of the document. In general, ESL teachers and specialists considered the level and type of language used to be explicit, clear and understandable, reflecting their prior exposure to these terms. Mainstream teachers, however, were more likely to report difficulty in understanding the document, particularly where they did not have assistance in interpreting it from an ESL specialist. Their comments suggest that many found the presentation of the document to be “off-putting” to say the least, and many found it to be completely impenetrable. ESL specialists strongly defended the need for the use of technical language to describe English language and language learning.

The dichotomy of views is demonstrated in Table 3 below. Slightly more respondents said that the material was not clear and accessible than those who expressed positive views. Of all of the questions in the ESL Scope and Scales Survey, this question attracted the highest proportion of negative responses.

Table 3: Extent to which the Language of the material is accessible and clear

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not answered</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little extent</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate extent</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great extent</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3a: Extent to which the language of the document is clear to trial and non-trial teachers.
Figure 3a shows responses to the survey by trial and non-trial teachers. This figure again shows the extent of the negative feeling towards the style of writing used in the document, particularly amongst trialing teachers. Interestingly, non-trial teachers had less negative views, perhaps because they had not engaged with the document to the same extent as those who had attempted to use it in practice.

Figure 3b: Extent to which the language of the document is clear to ESL and mainstream teachers.

Figure 3b shows the divergence of views between ESL and Mainstream classroom teachers. While many ESL teachers also felt that the document was not clear or accessible, this view was more frequently held by mainstream teachers.

For many mainstream teachers, the terminology used is unfamiliar. The comparison between the goal of making language learning simple for students, and the complexity of the demands made on teachers is reflected in the following comment.

*It is interesting in that here we have people trying to make learning simpler for ESL learners, but the document used to assist teachers is full of complex language. I have just completed an ESL course (ESL in the mainstream) but find it difficult to comprehend and relate to planning and teaching.*

*It is ironic how difficult it is to access the document which is supposed to be about making language accessible.*

Many mainstream teachers said that they had doubts that many of their colleagues would persevere sufficiently with the document to make sense of it.

*Teachers need to have documents, which are clear and easy to read…. If it's hard, they won't read it, and I don't think they'll read this. ESL teachers might, but not classroom teachers, and I think it's too much to expect them to. As GB Shaw said, 'Never use a big word if a small one will do.'*

*Very daunting unless some prior knowledge. This needs a very ‘human’ front when distributed to school and staff - many teachers will be threatened and simply not bother.*
Other examples of critical comments include the following:

I have found the document to use a lot of unnecessary jargon, some of which is not included in the glossary, e.g. technical concrete words, micro-genre etc. To use the document efficiently I need to be able to read it and understand it, without flicking to a glossary all the time.

The Language used in the scope is very difficult to understand strand structure in text in context p 2&3 particularly.

Confusing, complex and jumbled, especially for mainstream teachers who have not completed the Language and Literacy Course. The Language and Literacy Course would be a prerequisite for understanding the Scope and Scales.

Genre approach useful but Systemic Functional Linguistics terminology is not and probably never will be widely understood or accepted. (I tried some of the terms out on mainstream staff and was met with incredulity.) Traditional grammar terms are better understood and more likely to be accepted by mainstream staff. These present enough of a challenge to the latter. To illustrate this point I recently had to explain the intricacies of subject verb agreement to a Year 12 English teacher.

For those who had a strong understanding of functional grammar, the document was more likely to be described as …

very explicit and there is no ambiguity as to what the writer means because the language learning continuum is defined.

I think it is not reasonable that a specialist field such as ESL could be written in such a way that all readers, some of whom may have not had any language or linguistics training, will be able to easily understand every aspect of the document. In a similar way if I was reading a physics document I would not expect to be able to understand everything, unless it were reduced to such simple language that meant that sophisticated ideas could not be expressed. I think that instead of thinking about how to necessarily simplify the language, recognise that there is specialist knowledge that teachers are going to have to acquire in order be able to use this document to support ESL students. Being a native speaker is not enough to understand sufficiently how the language works so that one is able to teach it.

Some respondents acknowledged that their ability to use the document increased with practice and time spent considering the whole document.

The language is highly technical and requires a working knowledge of systemic functional linguistics for even specialist teachers to access. For mainstream teachers the language is quite inaccessible without intensive professional development courses. The quality of the glossary is therefore critical as is intensive inservicing and support packages.

I find the key ideas a little broad, and I couldn't plan from these. However the kinds of evidence taken collectively puts things in perspective.

We feel there were some parts of the scope where the terminology used was such that we had to read it two or three times in order to understand it. The Introduction section becomes much clearer once you have read and understood the entire document. From our perspective as mainstream teachers this section should be very concise as it's not a document that we would access every day. We imagine this terminology would not be a problem to an ESL specialist teacher. The language throughout the Scales document was much more down to earth and user friendly. Also the structure and visual format was very easy to read.

Some teachers commented on the apparent lack of compatibility of the language and format of presentation between ESL Scope and Scales and English Scope and Standards.
The language didn’t match with the SACSA framework, although it wasn’t too difficult to understand. Needs to align more with SACSA levels.

Functional grammar terminology has been taken out of the English document – there is a need to be consistent.

Very different formats. Key Competencies and Essential Learning codes not listed in ESL materials. Find it much easier, quicker, more practical and straightforward to access the English Scope and Standard. Prefer layout. Example: within one strand: texts and contexts, language, strategies, each has three sections which equate to: (a) listening and speaking, (b) reading and viewing (c) writing. In comparison, ESL Scope and Scales seems to be a jumble, with everything thrown in together. I am surprised that the clear format we had has been discarded. I see the present new format that we are trialing as a retrograde step.

The need for professional development support to introduce the document was frequently identified.

On first reading of the document, it comes across as very dense e.g. ‘nominalization’. Again, quality implementation is the key rather than changing the language where the danger is in oversimplifying a language that needs to be meaningful and useful.

Completion of the Language and Literacy course absolutely necessary in order to understand the content. The whole document is fairly dense and will need access to appropriate T&D for teachers to fully understand.

Some language not accessible to many teachers, only those who have completed the workshops dealing with Language and Literacy From A Functional Perspective.

If a teacher has completed a course in functional grammar and worked in a setting where there is a strong emphasis on E.S.L. teaching and learning then the language and the complex ideas presented in this document can be understood.

The demands on classroom teachers these days are such that if a new document emerges which we must use, it must be ‘user-friendly’ or we simply will not have the time to demystify it nor in most cases are we offered the support to do so. That is why it is critical that these teachers be offered extensive Training and Development in relation to this document.

Some specific areas for improvement noted by respondents in interviews and focus groups include the following:

Some language in Texts and Contexts is not easy to understand. eg. 5.2 Scale 5 ‘Uses vocabulary that is constructing further their orientation to the community.’ What does this mean?

4.4 Texts ‘Chooses with increasing confidence to use more language relative to the number of gestures and visual sources’

We spent a lot of time trying to comprehend the language used in the Key ideas and outcomes. We found it a lot easier looking at the examples of evidence. Using words such as audience, mode, etc. It made it more difficult to understand because they are not words that relate to the language of what we do in the classroom, e.g. listening, speaking, reading and writing. It would be even harder to involve students in negotiating assessment activities because of the language barrier.

There are a lot of words that are not always clear in their meaning in this context to non-specialist teachers, and some that could be simpler i.e in scale outcome 1.1 the word ‘responds’ could be ‘recognises’? There are other places where words like ‘concrete technical vocabulary’ and ‘technical vocabulary’ are used to describe progression of understanding but their difference isn’t particularly clear.

Some language, especially in Texts in Context, is not easy to understand, and therefore makes it
inaccessible eg. Outcome 5.2 dot point example 1 'uses vocabulary that is constructing further their orientation to the community and other personally relevant topics, eg leisure topics.'

The documents are very wordy. In its present format, the scales provide practical information but do not present an overall view of sequence or allow for easy scanning of key ideas/outcomes/examples/etc.

While the language is sometimes technical and not easily understood, the provision of examples of what is meant is particularly helpful. Overall, I don't have any serious problems with understanding the language.

It's unnecessarily jargonistic, for example, the use of 'realises' is uncommon, and 'achieves' would fit just as well (last paragraph, page 3 curriculum scope). Also, what's the difference between coherence and cohesion?

From a new ESL/English perspective the jargon is very off-putting. Terms such as 'SAE' have no meaning to most. Terminology is used in a way, which alienates both teachers and the community.

Primary years is OK. Senior years is too dense and expectations/outcomes are off the board particularly in context of disadvantaged schools/areas.

A lot is very accessible – I'm an experienced ESL teacher and find the use of functional linguistic terms precise and clear. But problem – some margins/descriptors are too minute and open to subjective interpretation ie – narrow or restricted range or limited range … terms are too similar in meaning and the 'scale' needs to be made clear. Remove word 'construct' and replace it with 'produce' – remove this jargon. Issue 3: How well you were able to engage with the introduction to understand the approach to teaching English as a second language?
Issue 4: Accessibility of the language and ideas in the Introduction

Analysis of responses to interviews and focus groups

In general, the introduction is seen as informative and communicative by participants in the focus groups and interviewees. In particular, it was seen by most as more user friendly than the rest of the document, being less technical with clearer explanations.

No surprises – easy to read – good lead in.

I found it ‘teacher friendly’ – with information for easy understanding for non-ESL trained personnel.

I have only read the document once in preparation for this meeting and found the language easy to read and comprehend.

Teacher friendly. Easy to understand on first reading. Good entry point – need no more. Much easier than prior.

The introduction was appropriate in that it addressed the issue of ESL learner profile and acknowledged prior learning/background/philosophy – this is not evident in the scales.

Makes very good points on ESL learners and their language ability, learning stages and needs and points out that language is a resource for making meaning in context.

Pleasant reading (accessible language), there is an intrinsic link between language and culture which is evident in the Introduction but lost in rest of document and language is seen/as/becomes technical.

The introduction is brief and succinct with a glossary and a helpful table showing the relationship of the Scope and Scales to the English Standards and year levels. Glossary – good to be in the front – include standard and non standard English and Aboriginal English. Early years needs to be included.

However, at the margin, it appears to suffer from its compromise approach between being a technical paper and a generic scene setter. For some ESL teachers it lacks specificity and depth. In contrast, for some mainstream teachers it is technically dense and too long.

Introduction is mostly clear and covers the main points well. However, the feeling is that it is very dense and difficult for teachers to read. It has been significantly condensed, may be too far. While teachers find the document difficult, the answer is not be dress it down, but to support it with professional development. See its main use as a reference point for teachers. The document does allow teachers to acknowledge more than just the technical aspects of language.

Quite well, but the introduction is long (could be shortened). Glossary is very useful.

A bit windy but gives a clear understanding of the document. Could be summarised as one page.

Not exciting reading. Wordy for non ESL (as with whole document). Needs something for me (technology) specifically or reduce to one page.

Easy to understand – concise and short. Necessary to ‘set the scene’ – even though believe some teachers will skim over it as irrelevant or patronising.

Understanding occurred because of a strong ESL knowledge but introduction was too long and wordy e.g. p3 empty vessel!!!
Had to read it several times and I had had no experience prior to this year and involvement.

There were some specific points registered regarding the introduction. In particular, the word “patronising” was used several times to describe one phrase.

The info recognises very well what the learner brings to the learning but the kids manifestations of this aren’t recognised – meaning, patterns, emotions, contacts aren’t carried through.

Definition of ESL student is good, however, last paragraph of Introduction is a disaster (too confusing). Drawn away from the effectiveness of Introduction.

Introduction basically good, except for last few paragraphs. Pleasant really – makes some good points raising all of the issues you would expect, but the feeling is not reflected in the rest of the document, particularly links between culture and language.

Patronising, eg empty vessels. There is a need for other documents as bridging for LA’s into the document.

**Analysis of responses to the questionnaire**

There was a diversity of opinions about the “Introduction”, though the majority of respondents saw it as an overview with quite a sound explanation of the key issues and their links. As indicated by Table 4 below, 84% or respondents answered the question “To what extent does the introduction to the document provide a clear explanation of the relationship with, and connections to, the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework?” with responses in the moderate to great extent range.

Table 4: Introduction to the Scope and Scales document

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Figure 4a: Responses by trialing and non trialing teachers regarding the extent to which the “Introduction” provides a clear explanation of the relationship of the ESL Scope and Scales with, and connections to, the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework by trial and non trial teachers.

Figure 4a illustrates the overall nature of responses by trial and non-trial teachers. By far the majority of respondents indicated that the extent to which the “Introduction” provided clarity of the relationship with and connections to the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework was either moderate or great. However, relatively fewer trial teachers chose the category “to a great extent” than the non-trial teachers, though there are proportionately fewer non-trial teachers represented in the response.

*Well done, clear, easy to read, user friendly….*

Some noted that the “introduction” placed the macro skills together. Others noted the importance of the fact that the document clearly stipulates that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are now included and supported by the ESL program.

Figure 4b below shows the difference in the responses between ESL and mainstream teachers. The graph indicates a skew by mainstream teachers toward the lesser extent of the response continuum. This indicates that mainstream teachers found the “Introduction” provides a less clear explanation of the relationship of the ESL Scope and Scales with, and connections to, the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework than did trialling teachers.
The extent to which the “Introduction” provides a clear explanation of the relationship of the ESL Scope and Scales with, and connections to, the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework by ESL and mainstream teachers.

The approach taken by the respondents below indicates some ambivalence to the answer. While the content was generally seen as appropriate, the manner of presentation received some criticism.

*The setting out needs to be clearer, perhaps organised into sections with headings for teachers who are in a hurry or new to the area of ESL. Teachers might skip page 3, as it looks daunting and gives no indication of what it contains.*

*In places, the text is written in a complex structure with many complex words. I often had to reread sentences, paragraphs and sections to get the meaning. Teachers are busy people and to simplify this without losing the meaning would be very helpful.*

ESL experts would generally prefer to see more explicit explanation with the inclusion of technical understandings, whereas many teachers would like to see the introduction shortened with the language being made simpler and “jargon” removed. Many, especially mainstream teachers, suggested that much of the prose could be better presented in dot form. More linking and a broadsheet overview were key points.

*Diagram developed by John Polias showing the relationship between the Scope and Scales and the English Scope and Standards would help here.*

*The use of headings and sub-headings would make the document easier to access.*

The chart on page 5 was seen as essential, with many respondents from all data collection sources and categories wanting it featured more clearly and explicitly. Many saw this as making the links clear into the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework English scope. However, there was divergence of opinion between ESL and mainstream teachers about whether the chart should link into the previous ESL scope and scales to help teachers make the transmission to the new approach. Most wanted further explanation of the chart, along the lines provided in training sessions for those being introduced to the document.
A more detailed explanation of the diagram on page 5 would make clearer the relationship between the new ESL Scope and Scales and the English Standards.

The focus groups revealed a lack of understanding, especially on the part of some mainstream teachers and particularly some secondary teachers, about the need to link some (older) ESL learners into Band scope and scales below the age of their learners. For example, some older learners who had just arrived in the country were seen to be performing in English at levels well below their age cohort. Work for them needed to come from a Band below their age level but this did not appear to be clear to some teachers. Those who only looked at the Band material they were teaching especially registered this issue. Many commented to the effect that if the document were to be structured in Bands, it needed to make clear what came before and after the Band. A clear chart of progression at the introduction was cited as a suitable means to achieve this broad overview.¹

One important point raised by mainstream teachers in the focus groups was that the explicit nature of the scope and scales “filled in the gaps” in grammatical learning that all South Australian learners needed to acquire. For these people, making the link between the scope and scales and mainstream English was imperative. However, while continuing to make the point about setting out, some structural issues were seen to block the efficacy of this link. The following quotes illustrate the points.

The approach shown in the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework ESL Framework is practical for all teachers in developing programs for ESL students; it is sequential, thorough in provision of examples and deserves to be used in cross-referencing with the English Scope and Standards.

It needs to be highlighted that there are strong similarities between the strands for the Scope and Scales and SACSA frameworks. All teachers need to be aware of these connections in order for them to be used efficiently.

The Scope and Scales introduction does provide information regarding the language demands implicit in the English Framework. The set up however could use more dot points to highlight information…. The section titled ESL Scope and Scales and the SACSA framework does not accurately reflect the connection between the two documents. With no specific section detailing grammar articulated in the English statement the correlation for teachers will be difficult to make.

A note is needed to be added to the table explaining that if a student is eg. a yr 2 level 6, then they are ready to exit the ESL program at this time. Also, to achieve a level, a student needs to achieve all 4 outcomes State explicitly that there are 3 English strands, but only 2, as the ESL Language strand incorporates Strategies.

Many mainstream teachers noted that they have little experience with the existing ESL Curriculum Statement and ESL Scales. For this group of respondents there are particular issues, some of which can be interpreted to reveal that mainstream teachers may need further support to reach the messages of the document. Some suggested that a statement was needed early in the introduction to the effect that:

… the assumption is made that students who study English have a good command of the English language but the ESL learner does not have such a command and has to be taught the language of English through which they then learn in all other curriculum areas ie ESL teaches the language of English while English studies the manipulation of the English language in literary forms. The underpinning assumptions are different.

Some mainstream teachers thought the introductory section was not particularly easy to read. In particular, they felt that they had to search for connections to the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework. Some felt these connections were a little difficult or obscured.

¹ An associated issue is that many noted the examples of evidence of outcomes were age specific and this did not facilitate the use of the “earlier” bands for teaching older learners.
It was stated that there was a connection but there needed to be more information provided to flesh it out.

Comparison between supposedly equivalent levels, English Standard 4 and ESL Scale 12 for example, is difficult. The difficulty lies in the English Scope and Standards language outcomes being organised under Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing and Scales outcomes being organised under Purpose, Topic, Audience and Mode.

... because the Scales and English Standards are organised in different strands, it is impossible to see a clear relationship - the Scales should have been organised in the same strand organisers as the English Standards so that there is some consistency.

The table showing comparison of scope and standards is very helpful. The fact that the scope and scales do more than just co-relate to the English section of the SACSA needs to stand out more prominently in the text, as due to the similarity of strands, most mainstream teachers will mainly see it as an adjunct to English. The fact that the first 3 scales are what were covered in the Pre Literate scales in the previous document means that this should also be explained somewhere here. Although these early scales will be used to monitor progress of ESL learners of all ages the pedagogy for Early learners should also be addressed clearly. On page 4 of the introduction, dot points for the range of factors influencing development of SAE language skills should also clearly include something along the lines of 'students skills, proficiency and ability to use their first language' as a factor in success of second language learning.

While not only pertinent to the "Introduction", the following quote stands alone in its message about the link to the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework.

The introduction states 'there should be a close cross-referencing between the two documents,' P.4. But, nowhere in the E.S.L. document, especially in the scales, is there acknowledgement of the Essential Learnings, Key Competencies e.g. F-Futures, Id- Identity, as found in the SACSA Framework. Such acknowledgement would show visual relationships and connections between the E.S.L. Document and the SACSA Framework and support the classroom teacher in planning and programming an inclusive curriculum. There are no references and bibliography included in the introduction. Scales 1-5 appear to be closely aligned to the School Entry Assessment document.

Other mainstream teachers requested that the some explanation of what was meant by ESL learners be included in the introductory paragraph.

The introductory section assumes that all teachers have this information, whereas we felt that it should be spelt out. This explanation was found in the first paragraph of page 2 of the Primary Years Scope.

In particular it is important to emphasise to mainstream teachers that issues such as prior learning, cultural and emotional background have a big impact on ESL learners. It is also important to discuss the need for an inclusive curriculum at this point, where parents and community members can be invited in, and resources and teaching methodologies are inclusive of all students in the class. Cross-curricular links need to be stressed more than they have been to show the links between the document and the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework.

This theme was reiterated by several respondents who felt that the generic nature of the document meant the needs of and approaches to the three categories of learners were insufficiently covered. For example:

Perhaps a clear definition of who the cohorts of ESL learners are eg. Is it well known that Aboriginal learners can be included as ESL learners?

As the inclusion of Aboriginal learners as ESL learners is a recent development, the description
of English language learning for Aboriginal students is not well developed.

Others mentioned the need to make explicit the specific requirements of New Arrivals in terms of the trauma many of them had experienced in their homelands.

On the other hand, there was strong support from focus group participants for the document to retain this approach. The feeling here was that it was describing the English learners from any background needed to access the learning in the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework. Any other approach by learning background would require such specificity and range of examples that it would become unwieldy.

There was some concern about the practical implications of the document’s intent, especially in relation to ESL funding and professional development support. For example:

2 dot points page 5 - how do teachers manage this in a practical sense/how do they specifically achieve this? Page 5 last paragraph - needs further clarification and training to practically implement this connection. Last sentence page 5 - does this also indicate the child’s SAE skills are on a par with other L1 speakers? Nap children still have gaps on exit and require further support. Mainstream teachers of ESL learners with no ESL teaching experience and/or relevant T&D will have difficulty making the link between the Scope and Scales and the English SACSA (+ other areas).

May need information on when students should exit the program ie when they have achieved ESL scale appropriate to year level.
**Issue 5: “The ESL Scope and Scales will help teachers implement the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework by providing ….”**

**Analysis of responses to interviews and focus groups**

The emphasis on the nature of the document as a working tool for ESL teaching was reemphasized in these responses.

A tool to focus on the specific and unique needs of NESB students as well as giving a concise and useful planning and assessment tool.

A working document which can be used in conjunction with the SACSA Framework, when planning for and assessing students progress.

Working document, planning, assessing. Tool for needs focus. Links to key points – linked to the Bands.

Ideas, suggestions and content- enabling the teacher to help students and situations become confident, effective and fluent users of language.

A sympathetic approach with practical suggestions for teaching language structures.

So too was the role of the document in linking the levels and bands of ESL performance to the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework standards.

Links to key points and reference where they fit with the Standards – linked to bands.

Cross referencing, an understanding of ESL student needs and an emphasis on the link between language and culture/classroom/mainstream teachers, too.

Allows all students access to the LA’s. Language shouldn’t be the barrier. Explicit needs of learners can be addressed.

Possible teaching strategies and outcomes for ALL students at differing ‘levels’.

Standards of expectations at all levels – written (what about listening and speaking?)

One of the key points to arise from this statement was the advantage to all teachers of the explicit nature of the content in the scope and scales in describing the learning required to access Standard Australian English that underpins the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework.

Fine grained account in growth in language ability

Help teachers make the LA’s accessible.

A useful complementary way of talking about both ESL and English that uses the same models of language.

A reference point – a description of how language acquisition happens. Fine grained account of ESL learners’ progress that allows cultural learning and language acquisition to be acknowledged. Will help make the learning areas accessible to ESL learners. Think that the complementing between ESL and English scales will be important.

More Scales than standards so can acknowledge the learning progress. Help teachers make the learning areas accessible. Help teachers assess the learning areas and ESL learning together and separately.
Benchmarks to work towards in class and develop expectations about the proficiency of ESL learners.

A structure from which to work – legitimacy.

Pathways to address language and understanding needs of their ESL students within specific Learning Areas.

A theoretical underpinning to the explicit teaching of grammar, moods, forms of language. Will make reporting more precise.

Explicit criteria (with examples) to assess students abilities in English.

Explicit teaching points that will help students to become competent users of English, a means of assessing students with their English language ability across genre.

However, a note of caution was raised about the links. As mentioned below and later in several responses, there is an explicit link between ESL scales and the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework standards. At face value, this could be taken to imply performance is linked directly to age/grade/year level. Where an older student new to English is performing technically at a level commensurate with an ESL scale 1 through 6, if this link is taken literally, the student would be graded as a school entry-level student. This of course is inappropriate. However, if the links are taken as standards guides only for such learners, rather than in an age related manner, learners’ progress can be well tracked by using the scales.

But the Bands link causes an issue for learners that are older but performing at a lower level than would be expected of an English background learner of the same age. This is just a label issue, not one of Bands. Could use early language users, primary language users, middle language users. The repetition in the Bands is an issue. The issue is just the labeling. Need to read ALL to know where your students ‘fit’.
Issue 6: “The ESL Scope and Scales will provide an enabling pathway for all ESL learners to access the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework because ....”

Analysis of responses to interviews and focus groups

The overwhelming nature of responses to completing this statement was positive and supportive. Most respondents identified a range of ways in which the document provided an enabling pathway into the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework. One of the major advantages was the technical link between ESL and SAE, with the explicitness and fine granularity of the ESL document providing a sound base.

- It will provide teachers with a technical framework to assist students to improve their language skills.
- The smooth transition leading in small steps up to Standard One and in equally small clear steps through the Standards.
- It provides an alternative approach to that of the English framework—doubles their chance of success if they are learning English via 2 different (but compatible) frameworks.
- It parades good strong “literacy” development and provides a sequence of and use of language.
- Essential skills are recognised at each level, while at the same time, a framework of suggested activities is suggested enabling ALL students to improve and move to a higher level of proficiency.
- Information about cultural knowledge that allows teachers to implement the Equity Perspectives, the cross-curricular awareness of ESL, the detail about English language learning that ESL students need in order to access and to meet the literacy demands of the Learning Areas curriculum.

Another key point was the practical link the document provided into the Learning Areas of the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework.

- They can be incorporated in classroom programming especially in the early years.
- Making the LA more accessible in the program
- Assess both LA and ESL – address the language issues in the LA
- If teachers can make the learning areas more accessible it will be enabling.
- More to the point it will highlight the changes to focus on the planning and programming of areas that need to be taught to allow ESL students to access the curriculum therefore a more equitable “pathway” will/should exist for students.

Its accessibility was both complimented and critiqued in relation to providing an enabling pathway.

- It is easy to read, not too wordy or too long and so a teacher can access the information quickly.
- Need a fold out chart to compare how the ESL steps fit into growth across the Bands. The similarity of working needs assistance to see differences. Chart on page 5 of intro is useful. Need to see side by side.

Some teachers did not agree that it would provide an enabling pathway without further explication or support.
The examples of evidence are not appropriate for Anangu schools – will need to develop their own. This is not really different for any learning area. The pointers are not a checklist. Perhaps a box with the caveat on each page. Advice needed on how you use the scales with ESL students who also have special learning needs.

Don’t agree – only those with support

I preferred the 1994 Scales which were not linked to a year level, but the pre-reading and pre-writing students don’t seem to be on the pathway.

If used would help – However, only language rich subject areas will gain value in correct form. Consider extra support that is needed for non-language rich areas – ie what does a PE or Tech Studies teacher need?

It will govern/influence curriculum/syllabus content, especially in oral/written work but it doesn’t give mainstream teachers strategies to work with.
Issue 7: “The ESL Scope and Scales provide an understanding of how to address the needs of ESL learners by ….”

Analysis of responses to interviews and focus groups

While it was noted by some interviewees and participants in focus groups that the document did not provide advice about specific pedagogy\(^2\), it was also generally noted that the explicit nature of the purpose, content and levels of expectations provided a sound understanding of expectations for teachers. The aspects mentioned as support for understanding included:

Providing specificity

Identifying skills and outcomes, enabling teachers to plan effective curriculum.

Describes explicitly the features of language that students need for proficiency providing a scaffold for building up language skills.

Aligning content with expectations

Giving a chart that is aligned to the SACSA levels. Teachers can see the expectations at particular developmental levels.

By the chart on page 5.

Giving clear key ideas, as well as corresponding assessment points – short and to the point.

Aligning with the key ideas and standards and bands.

Diagnosing their proficiency understanding and identifying what the added learning task is, identifying that the tasks associated with a specific need (not deficit)

Offering indicators to assess students work and offering ideas and planning and preparatory support to move students along.

Providing examples

Giving examples of each key idea.

Providing specific examples (though many are at an unreasonably high standard) and guidelines

Giving explicit examples of the types of contextual and language needs of students from different cultural backgrounds

Reflecting all aspects of language development (including oral interactive language) with clear examples and a demonstration of contextual language throughout.

Providing clear outcomes with examples of evidence that indicates that these outcomes have been achieved, however, it would be useful to place a box on each page that clearly puts emphasis that the evidence indicators are NOT the ONLY evidence indicators, eg. “These indicators are neither inclusive nor exhaustive of all evidence that may indicate the successful achievement of each outcome.”

\(^2\) It was also acknowledged that this type of document was not the place for explicit pedagogy.
Establishing levels of outcome

*Pointing out the level of competence a student 'should' reach at a certain year level in schooling.*

*Helping teachers find out what level their students are at and have common language to talk with teachers from across the curriculum.*

Explicating the purpose and key linkages

*Making explicit in the intro rather than the S&S the link between language and culture (may hobby horse) – the S&S*

*Allows teachers to cover each of the four aspects of genre, field, tenor and mode.*

*Establishes the relationship between content (meaning) language – “purpose’*

*The focus is on the importance of language acquisition being a skill rather than content driven curriculum.*

*Recognises that ESL learning is a challenge, not a problem. Makes the point that ESL belongs across the curriculum – not just English.*

*Focusing on language as a social construct, which can be purposefully developed if teachers understand its role in learning.*

**Analysis of Responses to the Questionnaire**

As indicated by table 10, 72% of respondents who answered this question indicated that the descriptions of the strands clearly describe what ESL learners need to learn to either a moderate or great extent.

Table 7 Description of learning in ESL strands

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Figure 7a below indicates the extent reported by trial and non-trial teachers. As the graph illustrates, there is strong agreement between trial and non-trial teachers that the material in the strands clearly describes what is needed by ESL learners.

Figure 7a: The extent to which the descriptions of the strands clearly describe what ESL learners - by trial and non-trial teachers

![Diagram showing extent of agreement between trial and non-trial teachers.]

<table>
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<table>
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Figure 7b: The extent to which the descriptions of the strands clearly describe what ESL learners - by ESL and Mainstream teachers

![Diagram showing extent of agreement between ESL and Mainstream teachers.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of learning in ESL strands</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great extent</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate extent</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little extent</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mainstream teacher</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL teacher</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However, the generic approach to the description of learning requirements brought both supportive and questioning responses. In the main, most participants in the focus groups indicated their support for the generic approach to the document, which does not distinguish ESL learners by their background. The focus was seen as being on the technical aspects of English usage to which learners from different backgrounds needed to be brought. Nevertheless, some respondents questioned the approach.

_I felt that the document referred more to general learners of ESL rather than to Aboriginal Students. Minimal reference was made to Aboriginal English._

_It is very easy to relate … to general support learners but not as easy to find information on new arrivals and Aboriginal learners. This is because the document talks about learners of ESL as a whole and, apart from the introductory section, does not differentiate between the three groups. However, we do believe that ‘learners of ESL’ is an appropriate and inclusive term._

_Though Aboriginal students aren’t explicitly targeted, the detailed meta language is relevant to their needs also._

Overall, the descriptions were highly praised, especially for the clarity of the writing. Focus group participants indicated that by using the document to gain familiarity, and especially with support of fellow practitioners to apply the concepts, the document became quite clear and proved to be an excellent guide. The following quotes illustrate the majority opinions.

_the descriptions of the Strands are concise, informative and easy to understand. We really liked the examples used, which have made it easy to relate to everyday teaching. Also, the opening statement of socio-cultural context was good as it talked about the importance of understanding cultural development and genre. The statement ‘The fact that genres are assumed, expected ways of interacting……’ should be highlighted in bold, as this is a crucial understanding for teachers of ESL students._

_good examples across curriculum areas_

_the strands are Texts in Context and Language, and between them they describe the texts that students need to learn and the language needed to realise these texts, with strategies and cultural knowledge embedded in the strands. I feel that this covers the main common areas of learning by these groups of learners, with no distinction being made in the learning needs of these three groups._

_The information regarding the strands puts the document into context and provides the structure for the document._

_Provides valuable in depth ideas for programming, teaching, assessing and reporting._

However, there were some exceptions, notably from some mainstream teachers for whom the writing was seen to be complex, technical and dense.

_Language needs to be more accessible. Jargon dense, off putting and excluding. Systemic functional linguistics known only to a few. Some ESL teachers including me are familiar with its language but virtually no mainstream teachers are._

_We read terms like ‘macro-genre’ and were baulked. Is this unnecessary jargon? Will many teachers of ESL students be reaching for their dictionaries to try to understand such terms? We did! Check the rest for user-friendly language._

Perhaps further support for understanding would be provided in the form of reader assistance. For example:

_The Strand structure was very difficult to understand, it was heavy going to read a visual diagram would be helpful to show clearly what each strand involves. How they interrelate._
the Strand explanation [pages 3-5] Texts in Context is written in paragraphs whilst the Language strand is written using dot points. To improve clarity and speed of reading the strands for Early Years Band should be written using the same style, preferably dot points.

At the beginning of the strand structure some tables would help clarify the descriptions given, especially for us mainstream teachers who are not overly familiar with some ESL terminology. I have devised my own tables from these documents for the KEY Ideas outcomes across the early years band to enable me to see the overall structure and pattern of these. In this I used the headings Genre/Topic/Audience/Mode across the top and the Texts in Context and Language strands down the side. Similarly I took the scale outcomes and placed them in order 1-6 under their 4 headings as above to see the logic and progression of them and use as an assessment of individual students. again I feel that mainstream early years teachers would find this beneficial to get a clear headset. the 2 staff I shared these with commented they were most helpful in understanding the information in the document and seeing its order.

Some respondents expressed concern about the commencement levels, finding that their entry-level students had less technical performance than the lowest end of the scales. This issue was also raised in relation to some aboriginal students and some students with disabilities.

Not low enough. Does not describe any of the learning and teaching which needs to take place before children reach the level described. Needs a level prior to level 1.

Examples do not relate to the full range of learners eg. those at the beginning end of the continuum.

None of the initial basic learning of children entering a NAP Unit is outlined in the document.

Others indicated various views about the appropriateness and levels of illustrative material in the strand descriptions.

Page 4 - whale, blow hole, baleen too technical

Some pointers are only for the more adept ESL learner eg page 5 - second key idea, fourth dot point. Technical

language not clear to mainstream teachers. Examples are not always appropriate to age

The outcomes and indicators are very general and open to individual interpretation

Strands and Key Ideas are clear. However, some of the examples are focused principally on older children not younger children.

Some respondents drew attention to what they saw as some gaps in coverage

Would like to see more attention paid to visual texts such as TV, film, and computer software in order to better reflect best practice in language and literacy learning in primary classrooms
Issue 8: To what extent does the scope provide a clear description of the extra learning about Standard Australian English that is needed by ESL Learners?

Analysis of responses to interviews and focus groups

A consensus in the responses from interviewees and focus group participants indicated that many teachers view the description of the learning as a valuable tool for all English learners.

This is what most children need anyway. Difference between formal/informal, idioms etc – that they need to understand – table to show how.

OK. It exposes the differences between formal/informal language, the use of idioms, colloquialisms, identifying links in text, active/passive voice.

Describes language learning for students in general. All of this would be easier to find if it is in a table.

The Scope is explicit and gives good examples – helpful in planning, reinforcing in general classroom practice as well as in giving extra help.

Explicit material in terms of what they need is well covered in terms of key pointers and explicit outcomes. These can be glossed over and it reinforces good practice while giving good ideas.

It provides good reminders of what good teaching and explicit teaching looks like and highlights the needs of NESB students.

Yes, because it explains in terms that reflect consistently explicit teaching, contextual support and language support needed.

Some felt that parts of the learning were inappropriate.

Eg. Page 6 – audience – colloquialisms etc that SAE speakers may not necessarily need.

Some indicated perceived gaps.

Pronunciation – is there enough? Culture? Social conflict?

Maybe not enough on pronunciation.

Good but when thinking/reflecting on question some examples of what a range of ESL learners might not know would emphasise the information and clarify

Cultural knowledge needed; share assumptions; about genres.

The Early Years and Primary Years better describe the ESL-ness of the curriculum. As we move into the Middle and Senior Years I have difficulty in recognising the difference between what ESL learners need to learn and what all students need to learn.

Analysis of Responses to the Questionnaire

While the scope of this question allowed for differentiation among the three targeted groups of learners, the man differentiation in the responses was in relation to Aboriginal learners. Where such differentiation occurred it is noted in this analysis.
As Table 8 shows, overall, the response indicated a positive reaction in relation to the clarity of description about the extra learning. Seventy two percent of respondents who answered the question gave positive responses.

Table 8: Description of extra learning in ESL in bands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not answered</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little extent</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate extent</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great extent</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following summarize the positive responses

*I like the Scope and Scales as it is very explicit about language and gives direction as to the process involved in acquiring English.*

*It provided very relevant information regarding the learning required for ESL students. The descriptions are very clear.*

*Provides a very good description of the scope of learning students need.*

*We found that the opening paragraph on page 2 on the Primary Years band was excellent, and well thought out.*

*I particularly like the detail provided that describes the learning that ESL learners need to undertake in order to access the Curriculum in the Learning Areas.*

Figure 8a below indicates the responses to this question by trial and non-trial teachers. While the response is positive overall, once again non-trial teachers provided a more positive response than the trial teachers. The proportion of trial teachers who chose “not at all” or “to a little extent” is substantial. The explanation may lie in Figure 8b, which shows the breakup of responses by ESL and mainstream teachers. As can be seen in Figure 8b, the majority of the negative response categories for this question were generated by mainstream teachers. It would seem that the pitch of the document is supported by the specialists but is a struggle for the generalist.
Figure 8a: The extent to which the section of the document relevant to your Band(s) provide a clear description of the extra learning about Standard Australian English that is needed by ESL Learners – by trial and non-trial teachers.

The generalist or mainstream response was not all negative. Many mainstream teachers pointed to the fact that the “extra learning” in fact made explicit (especially through the inclusion of grammar) what

Figure 8b: The extent to which the section of the document relevant to your Band(s) provide a clear description of the extra learning about Standard Australian English that is needed by ESL Learners – by ESL and mainstream teachers.
many “mainstream learners ought to know”. For that reason the document was seen as an important reference when dealing with learners whose English skills are not at an appropriate level of standard Australian English though they come from backgrounds where English is the “mother” language.

Mainstream trialing teachers from the Catholic Education sector explained in their focus group response that the document was explicit, clear and valuable to them only after the initial struggle they had to understand and use it. These people had been paired with an ESL teacher and asked to evaluate the work of selected learners against the documents. Their initial struggle was supported with at the elbow expertise and they quickly came to see the value of the scope and scales to explain and support their planning and programming and the learning process.

For a substantial number of respondents, however, the apparent density and complexity of language used to describe the learning made accessing its message difficult.

Make the language simpler

… sometimes, in an effort to be very specific, the language becomes rather wordy.

My only comment is the range of terms used eg broad range, narrow range etc. This will be OK if a block of exemplars is produced to support the material. The document itself needs to include a broader range of examples or documented in a support booklet.

The document needs to use less complex language especially from a mainstream perspective.

Change the language - language is difficult and wordy. Makes the document difficult to read and this will detract from the usefulness of the document, even though it is backed up with many good examples.

I have a Masters degree in TESOL and a number of years experience in the field and I still have found the language of the document to be way too ‘dense’. It has taken me a great deal of time and effort to understand what the writer means in many areas of the document. If I find myself in that position, how accessible will this document be to non-specialist ESL teachers and Maths, Science, S&E,....etc...teachers who will have to use the document. Most of them have had neither my training nor my experience with ESL ‘New Arrivals’ students and they haven’t had the luxury of 3.5 days non-contact time in which to develop an understanding of the Scope and Scales documents. Many of them will quite likely find the documents to be inaccessible. In many cases, they will therefore, quite simply, not use them.

The need for reader assistance in the form of diagrammatic overview or linking was cited by several respondents, eg:

Some form of diagram or visual image to enable a quick reference to assimilate the overall picture

Arrange in a clearer form e.g. table…… The text is not visually helpful. Wading through large blocks of texts can impede understanding.

The statement of the specific needs of the three groups needs to be clearer. Maybe it needs organisation into a visual format, such as a table, so that it is immediately accessible rather than having to wade through blocks of text.

Teachers expressed a need for a change in presentation. In its present format, the information is presented very thoroughly; yet, for a classroom teacher, it is also a wordy document. An A4 size overview would allow for initial perusal, for example, of key ideas.

Description is there, but not immediately apparent to us. We needed to read and re-read it to appreciate it. Perhaps this is a layout issue. Maybe a chart? Keep it simple - teachers might treat the apparent excess of information here with cynicism... Can we class-room teachers internalise
this quickly? If not, why not?

Could be set out more clearly, such as using dot points and simplified sentences. I liked the language section and the texts in contexts section.

For some, there was a call for explicitness in describing the learning requirements.

Make the description of the learning needs explicit in the bands

We found that the Bands provided a very general description of the extra learning needed by SAE learners. Although it was clear in this general sense, it was not particularly specific to the different groups. Mainstream teachers may have some difficulty deciding which parts relate to the student they have. Again this is not fleshed out specifically to individual groups of students.

Some comments made specific reference to the need to make more explicit the requirements for Aboriginal learners.

We felt that there should also be an acknowledgement of Anangu students from the Pitjantjatjara Lands and Yalata who learn English as a Foreign Language, in much the same ways as new arrivals do. In particular students who live in these isolated areas and the transient students who move from the Lands to regional centres. They also bring to learning English, different cultural, social and language needs which need to be considered by the classroom teacher.

For the children I teach (Anangu, pitjanjara speakers) there are other finer steps that need to be made. Things such as reading from left to right, starting at the top of the page, margins etc. These students are not from a literary background so this knowledge is not already present when they come to school.

My students are Anangu. They are not urban Aborigines and they are not Aborigines living in a traditional manner. There is a great amount of learning that our students need that urban Aborigines and ESL students living in a mainstream society are already equipped with on entering school. For example, our students are not exposed to literature until they enter school, and English is spoken at school only; not in the home and not in the community. The ESL scope doesn’t mention the extra extra learning that our students need…. from, how to hold a book to how to use a pencil. Newcomers to our school understand no English. Most of our Reception students wouldn’t be placed on the scales at all. Outcomes such as described in 1.4 (Language Strand) would not be satisfied in the first six months of school.

Need to specifically list the extra skills needed to be learnt in order to move from Aboriginal English to SAE.

Others were more pertinent to the specific bands. Comments related to the Early Years Band included:

Does not clearly describe the initial learning on the early years band continuum. Does not reach ‘low’ enough to cover children’s English language learning (including social/cultural) on first entry into an intensive English language program. Needs to mention early intervention as a vital aspect on entry point of all NAP learners

Does the description of ESL early years band give mainstream teachers false expectations of these children’s learning? Should mention that NAP JP children are learning new concepts through a second language.

‘Early Years’ page 2, paragraph 2 could also include something about children given access to activities which encourage a wide range of peer interaction, involving playing and listening and talking to other children in real social contexts helps develop understanding of age appropriate interactions in the new cultural context. Methodologies which encourage group work, sharing and collaborative learning give lots of opportunity for this.
I had some concerns that the some concepts were too advanced for the learning band they described, eg in the Early Years they talk about on Page 5 exploring and classifying their world eg classifying plants in different ways (ornamental, medicinal, nutritional) and comparing the alternatives.

In early years, include statements from the introduction relating to the importance of their home language, and the importance of self esteem related to cultural & language learning aspects.

Comments about the Primary Band included:

I was only able to find information pertaining to SAE in the introduction and not in the primary years. Therefore I am unsure as to whether a clear description of SAE has been provided for students within the primary band as I found little reference to this.

Nothing that clearly states what ESL learners have to do within the Primary Years Band of the Curriculum Scope document.

A comment about the Middle Years was:

It's too broad, too generalised to be of any real use. Doesn't reflect the huge range of language and cultural understandings and range of texts types that students need to address and be exposed to in the Middle Years band. The previous ESL Curriculum Framework did a better job of describing the necessary language learning.

The following comment about the Senior Years Band reflects a concern raised by many throughout the consultation.

Teachers of these ESL learners are not restricted in using only the age band of the students but the entire document as their students' language level may not be in their age band. Therefore I do not feel restricted to the Senior Years Band to plan or monitor learning. If a student's language level was within the Senior Years Band (higher level of language acquisition) then the document does provide enough description of language progression. My only recommendation is that some statement be made on the Scope of each of the ESL age band documents, that indicates that earlier band documents may need to be referred to: that the students' language level may not fall within the age band.
Issue 9: The continuity of the curriculum and the progression in the scope.

Analysis of responses to interviews and focus groups

Most comments in this area were quite positive about the progression.

Excellent. Improvement on separate documents. Cohesive and growth oriented.

An improvement on the preceding documents. There is more cohesiveness now.

There was some comment about the level of expectations.

Expectations seem high at middle and senior documents.

Seems to be OK for p/early but quite advanced m/senior. Much more progressed than reality at all levels.

I thought this worked well except for the Senior Years section – far too hard – like it had been written by a different person.

Could be in primary years, but big leaps in senior years.

Really good – logical and clear.

Appears to match development requirements for accessing the curriculum framework.

Middle Years (Scale 3) can see where students have ‘been’ in Scales 1&2 and where they are heading in Scale 4 onwards.

Others repeated the call for reader assistance, especially in the form of visual support to see progression.

The continuity is there but a foldout chart will help to see the progression more clearly.

Continuity is easy to track and very good – fold out chart would help.

Seems a reasonable progression – chart needed.

It’s not accessible for stressed, inexperienced, mainstream teachers. I think it needs to be edited so that all the ‘constructs’ are changed to ‘uses’ or produces/writes etc. to take out as much unnecessary jargon as possible.

Some teachers were concerned at the small differences in some areas

Good- in some places differences almost to slight to bother about.

7 & 8 the same.

Thought that the first 6 scales seemed a little too detailed. Seems to have strong organisation which would ensure continuity. Scales are detailed enough to reflect a gradual progression. Have to know gradations of meaning with words used. Narrow restricted limited to avoid being subjective.

Others reiterated the concern that the link to year levels was inappropriate for some learners.

Should read end of year 4, in scale 8. Scale 7 shouldn’t be aligned to year 3 – this is ante South
Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework. In between should be left out and stress ‘by end of’.

There’s an obvious progression to be aimed for in the scales- however, students with specific learning difficulties or gaps in their schooling require extra input to reach those goals.

Because benchmarks are set every two years and seems to lock a student into a particular year level, this does seem to disturb progression. However continuity was there.

Analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The respondents to this question generally indicated (77%) that they feel there is clear progression across the bands. The large proportion of respondents who chose the “great extent” category gives weight to the positive nature of the responses.

Table 9: Clear progression of scope across Bands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not answered</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little extent</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate extent</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great extent</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9a and 9b show that teachers from all response categories provide similar feedback.

Figure 9a: The extent top which there is clear progression of the scope (key ideas) across the Bands – by trial and non-trial teachers
The positive comments illustrate the figures.

definitely does this

Yes there is a definitely a clear progression of the scope across the bands. The key ideas were concise, sequential and easy to understand. The steps across each scale were small and readily achievable for ESL learners. It was also easy to see how this related to the SACSA Frameworks. The format of the document and how it is set out is very easy to read and understand. We liked the way the two strands were side by side, underneath the one outcome.

I have only linked at the progression from the Early Years to the Primary Years and there seems to be logical progression of both content and examples given. The key ideas presented show developmental learning.

The progression is carefully constructed and easy to follow.

I've only had a comprehensive look at the Middle Years and Senior Years Bands because that's all I could use with the students I have been working with but I felt that the progression of the scope (key ideas) across those bands seemed clear.

For some, the structure, setting out and language were issues in understanding progression.

spreadsheet/flowchart so that the progression is visually clear

This is difficult to ascertain in the present format. Probably need a chart or table to see this clearly. Time frame of trial is too short to do justice to the content of these documents.

There is a clear progression to the initiated, however the language is subjective in that it can be interpreted by individuals with very little guidelines.
It is difficult to work through the document to see the progression - it would be easier to read in some form of structured overview or table format. The wording is too similar across the bands, with the odd word thrown in an attempt to show progression (e.g. narrow range to wide range).

This is a very confusing question because there are no bands set out in the scales. It would be helpful to list the scales progressively across an A3 page which shows the progression more clearly. This would make it easier for teachers to place the children on the continuum.

Comparison of Key Ideas across different bands needs to be made physically easy. A structure overview would help.

Perhaps it ought to begin by stating, or representing diagrammatically, how each band will differ from the previous (and the next). The term ‘clear’ in the question was a sticking point for us. No, it wasn’t clear enough.

For others, there were issues in the progression per se.

I have found that there seems to be a big jump between the primary band and the middle years band, particularly in the texts and contexts strand. The middle years band is almost exactly the same as the senior years band with minor changes to the wording. I believe the middle years band in particular to be aimed too high.

There is some inconsistency that comes about through generalizing about what types of communication are more complex than others. This comes about at least in part because the examples come from across all areas of study. There may be some mis-matching in consistency across such a broad spectrum of language use.

generally, the margin between some scale pointers is too small… the minute differences between some descriptive terms used leaves it as too vague/subjective e.g. ‘strictly limited’ vs ‘Restricted’ or, ‘limited’ vs ‘narrow’ vs ‘small’. Partial solution: perhaps include the list of descriptors used throughout the document in a scale (in the intended order of skill growth), as reference for users. The use of functional linguistic terminology aids clarity & precision.
**Issue 10:** Comment on how well the key ideas in the scope provide comprehensive and balanced coverage while still being useful for planning and programming.

**Analysis of responses to interviews and focus groups**

There was mixed reaction in the responses to this request for comment. One theme to emerge from some of the responses was that of usefulness.

*Quite helpful – specifically the examples provided within the dot points – in brackets – helps to clarify for teachers.*

*Strength of key ideas goes across ESL strands and therefore shows connections*

*Great for assessing. I feel that this is a useful working document for programming and planning as it correlates well with the SACSA language document. It is easy to follow and very explicit for someone new to the document.*

However, many comments included qualifiers.

*Very useful if you feel confident in using – excellent direction towards language course – expectations may be too high.*

*Good BUT you have to read it very carefully – too carefully. Need better student examples and bold outlines to identify key concepts.*

*Useful, if you feel confident in using it. Can be an enabling pathway for all students. Some good ideas.*

*Key ideas provide plenty of useful ideas but surely this is what we are already/have been doing, eg. Comparing texts, acknowledging different sources/interpreting, analysing text etc.*

*It is very comprehensive for planning- but you have to choose the criteria that are most relevant rather than attempting to cover it all.*

*One of the strengths is that it shows the links between strands. Requires people to read the points in order to understand the concepts.*

There was some consensus that the document ought to be useful for all teachers.

*Can be used for all students – not only ESL. Major use is for programming and planning.*

*Covering all seven* areas of Learning (*LOTE no included). Essential details which carry to general learning/planning.*

*Should be used by all teachers for ESL and non ESL students*

*Has coverage across all LAs – aware of its breadth and match outside English. Clear enough language and fits easily into programming – easy to use. Given a little bookmark for the brain to ensure you do the formal work clearly. Don’t skip some of the explicit requirements. Good base to ensure we don’t skip – we give explicitness and depth.*

However, some, especially mainstream, teachers felt it was not a useful planning and programming tool for them.

*Hopeful for planning and programming – sets criteria that one can teach towards. However it isn’t likely that I would use it, as a mainstream teacher.*
Examples are useful. I doubt if teachers will use to plan.

Good practical examples relating to a range of areas – practical subjects neglected.

Too wordy, the dot points are necessary to illustrate exactly what is intended in the key ideas. OK use as check list.

Unlikely to plan/program from it.

Very comprehensive, but I teach year 12 and rely on their criteria to plan work, especially to pass the PES exam. I would use the document more with working with junior students, one to one support.
**Issue 11: Suggestions to better describe the learning requirements**

**Analysis of responses to interviews and focus groups**

The opportunity was taken here to make broad suggestions in relation to the document and its implementation. Several themes emerged which tend to represent the key themes of the consultation. The first was in relation to accessibility of the key aspects of the document.

Need some form of overview that provides a shortcut into the document. Needs to be more accessible for quick reference.

Hard to find ways into this for the groups – need a short cut into it from three starting points. Diagrams highlight key areas to make is stand out – short cut format for non-language teachers - summary closing units, charts.

Diagrams/headings. Bold introductions (example of written responses that meet levels of standards).

Well written, but needs to highlight key areas (not just italics) some diagrams with examples.

Use headings eg last key idea. Punctuation; use of colons, semi colons, rather than commas. Basic visual material; effective use of images in web pages.

A second theme related to practical support within the document.

Have more examples.

Pointers to show specific learning (cultural) difference between the 3 groups to assist teachers to address unique learning needs of each.

Have some dot points that are explicit for other LA’s.

Needs to address clearly all learning areas – remove specialist terms (multimodel)???

More explicit and varied Learning Area eg’s especially for more practical subjects – a science example, technology example, maths examples

More examples would be appropriate to identify the learning requirements for different kinds of students (if these are different).

Maybe there could be more examples of Aboriginal learners’ language given.

Examples from many cultures.

Another was in relation to the links with the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework.

There is not a clear link to KC and EL – is it needed here? Classroom teachers would first refer to South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework therefore would already cover EL and KC. Issue to explore.

There were some technical issues raised for improvement.

Mode written in JP needs to be developed. Evidence doesn’t parade a picture.

Some of the pointers for scale 1 mean that some Anangu students can’t be put on the scale as
they have no concept of print.

A fifth was the call for professional development to support the introduction and implementation of the document.

Run lots of T&D for non ESL teachers.

A complete booklet support Aboriginal students – identifying assessing English dialect tools, info on English dialect and strategies.
Issue 12: Comment on the compatibility between the Scope and Scales and the standards in the English Learning Area of the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework.

Analysis of responses to interviews and focus groups

There was general support for the view that the correlation between the Scope and Scales and the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework English document was appropriate.

Correlated well. Broad and vague Vs explicit and helpful. Could be the language basis for all curriculum areas. Could find the connections but only because of support. Easier to use S & S rather than SACSA.

The two strands appear to lead to the three English South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework strands by their headings. They appear to talk about the same approach but the scales give more structure and explanations.

Very compatible, clear links provided. Same approach but more detail included.

However, a key theme in this response was the view that the different organisers of the ESL and South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework created some difficulty in making explicit links between the two documents.

As the two documents are organised differently (ESL = Genre, Field, Tenor, Mode and English = listening, speaking, reading and writing) it is very difficult to see the relationship between the two. The connections are there – just not readily visible.

As an ESL teacher I found it difficult to compare with the English. Listening, speaking, reading, writing, but ESL has a different organisation – field tenor mode.

One does not preclude /exclude the other, but not easy to find the links as ESL includes more grammar detail.

The English teacher and I eventually worked out that there is a fair amount of compatibility, but we had to go beyond the work that we were assessing and rely on our holistic knowledge of the student’s abilities before we could make a fair assessment using both frameworks.

Need to be able to more easily be matched. Categorized and organised differently.

Different- ESL skills based? English – task driven.

Disparity in number of areas (English also has strategies) and specificity of descriptions – is “vaguer” in English document.

Needs better layout to bring out the inter-relationships between the elements (not just in English).

Other dissenting voices raised issues that are more specific.

Could be pitched too high – standards inherent in some examples are too difficult (eg. colloquialisms and idioms) – is there a point teaching colloquialisms outside of texts?

Big ask. Enabling pathway is to the 8 KLAs not just English. English doesn’t underpin the rest – it is literacy interweaving that is important. This is an issue re funding cut off – not learning. (check calibrations) This affects the integrity of the scales at the upper end. Helpful that there are
similarities in the model of language.

Pitching too high – eg. A lot of year 8 regular students would struggle with the level of language. Some of the references in the scales to colloquialisms are culturally exclusive – don’t coincide with the language of the playground.
Issue 13: How useful are the scope and scales in planning and programming to cater for the different needs of ESL learners?

Analysis of responses to interviews and focus groups

As mentioned above, many responses indicated that the document was useful for planning and programming.

They provide guides and enable cross-referencing to ascertain achievement (work covered) and gaps.

Very useful – integrity in terms of representing the developmental continuum.

Provides detailed and explicit explanation that expands on what is expected within South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework. Will be a good tool to assist with programming to ensure we don’t glass over key sub-areas but take time to explain and teach them explicitly.

Explicit and a lot of support to describe programming needs. Leaves little doubt about what to teach but scope about how and age specifics.

I believe that it will be very useful. The Scales have integrity in that they are explicit, and do represent the learning continuum. The dot points give you a lot of direction.

The Scope is big enough not to be restrictive and the Scales are covering the necessary steps to trace the progress of students. The needs are explicitly catered for.

A lot is good teaching practice – so may use as a checklist after planning a unit – for all levels of learners.

Useful in terms of working out how to group children – what things can be done in classroom as part of whole class program, where withdrawal needs to occur and in determining how classroom teacher and ESL teacher will work together.

Others identified that, while useful, it needed amendment to make it more easily accessible.

They offer ideas that can be worked into the daily activities and offer a variety of approaches. I would rewrite these scales into something I can understand and refer to that! – something shorter and clearer. Main document too difficult.

OK, but need more examples and explanation of jargon. Some use for SACE teachers. Would need to ‘reunite’ into own language – wouldn’t use as a resource.

Does the Scope allow you to see back to the pathway that learners need to go through in each band? Can people see their learners in the Scope? Teachers should be in no doubt about what they should teach.

Hard for teachers to understand the difference between teaching an early years child and a senior years learner from scratch. They want to go back to the EY but the content and age appropriateness is not helpful. Needs adjustment - don’t use EY content or method for seniors. The alignment/match is easy. The language is easier in the EY etc so the senior teacher would need to read back to understand what is required.

If a summary checklist existed to overlay planning done it would be able to recognise potential problems and amend plans. Current document is not user-friendly to do this.
Others would not make use of the document for planning and programming

*Ploughed through it – needs reforming. More examples of student work. More Explanation of jargon, reader assistance. Useful for SACE for daily activities – approaches and materials useful. Senior and middle years are hard going. Some guides to show what to look for and teach too but wouldn’t plan from it. May use it to align – check back. May use if a problem area were identified. Not a lot of evidence of oral work – mainly formal – use of informal.*

*Teachers might check back with the document but wouldn’t plan from it.*

*Checklist only? Needs to be used to see whether this is applicable. Might plan for all and go back to this for specific – need to have support from ESL teacher to understand. Raise awareness of things for all students. Used as a reference point.*

*They may be more useful as a diagnostic tool for some to indicate difficulties and successes children as students are having and set a direction for future learning.*

*Not enough information for students with disabilities. Teachers would not use them for planning programs as we already have 6 other areas to plan with. If needing help/assistance one would contact ESL teacher for immediate feedback/resources. Would use if ESL student was not within standard (assessing)*

**Analysis of responses to the questionnaire**

Table 13 shows that 79% of respondents who answered the question have a positive opinion about the extent to which the key ideas are clear and comprehensive enough to provide a guide to planning and programming for the learning needs of ESL learners.

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Figures 13a and 13b show that trial and non-trial teachers are better disposed to using the material as a programming guide than the mainstream teacher response category.
Table 13a: Extent to which key ideas provide a guide for planning and programming – by trial and non-trial teachers.

Key ideas provide a guide for planning and programming

Table 13b: Extent to which key ideas provide a guide for planning and programming – by mainstream and ESL teachers

Positive comments include the following.

*I really like the way it is set up and found it to be an excellent guide and resource for planning, ensuring that all areas are covered. It fills in the gaps and takes out the guess work for planning.*

*I have already written a program and assisted a colleague in another curriculum area write a*
program. In both cases the document has been extremely useful as we have been able to identify objectively where the students are at in their language learning and target their needs better.

I found then key ideas very broad. However, the kinds of evidence taken collectively clarifies the key idea for me.

We believe that the key ideas are comprehensive and provide an excellent resource for planning and programming for the learning needs of ESL learners. The cross-curricular aspects of ESL planning and programming are evident in the key idea, which is good as mainstream teachers need to understand the importance of a cross-curricular approach when implementing these programs.

The 'what to learn' section under the key idea is the essential clarifying section

Even though I will be planning from Early Years Band, this document will be extremely useful for planning relevant curriculum for my students.

Focus group feedback confirmed that the mainstream teacher focused on Learning Area programming, leaving the more individualistic ESL type program up to the specialist. While the material was seen as useful reference, it was ESL teachers who saw it as a guide to programming.

I would not use this document for planning and programming as primary teachers have to plan/program in 6 areas of study as it is. I would use it to confirm my assessment of ESL student in a mainstream class. Like most staff we would approach the ESL teacher for guidelines and assistance, as this would be immediate and the same for everyone and not open to so many interpretations.

I find this very comprehensive and useful for planning and programming. I would like to see a booklet of examples developed to make the document more user to a wider range of mainstream teachers.

The main support comes from the examples of evidence. It seems really clear that this could be further enhanced by annotated work samples. In fact for most non-specialist and inexperienced English language teachers it seems it would be essential.

…. need considerable T&D to understand and be able to use these documents, very little time for planning seriously within a program of maths or science

Gives us a general idea to start programming. Flexible enough to adapt to ability levels in classes.

within a program of maths or science Texts in Contexts 2nd key idea (...to represent in English the physical and social world...etc.0 simpler examples needed for third dot point - not examples that are suitable for students who have already achieved the ESL scale appropriate for primary years. Language 2nd Key Idea (...learn a range of vocabulary to form groups etc.) Although, and possibly because, the language is specific it is difficult to read and consequently not as user friendly as the other sections in the Key Ideas. Almost as if it had been written by an entirely different person. 4th Key Idea (...the grammatical elements for organizing spoken, ...etc.) the first example seems to be at the high end - it certainly wouldn't equate with my year threes or quite possibly year fours and fives so, it really doesn't assist me in my practical understanding of the Key Idea.

A guide for planning and programming? No, this is too complex. Where in the learning theory? Where are preferred learning styles of individuals acknowledged? We think we will stick to relying on our close knowledge of our students and their backgrounds and their needs - and applying reason to this.
Suggestions are along the following lines.

It would be good to highlight or make more of the cross-curricular and inclusive methodology of ESL teaching (perhaps in the introductory and glossary section). As an appendix it would be useful to have some suggested programming proformas as an added resource for teachers. These could have sections which relate specifically to the Key Ideas and the cross-curricular relationship between the SACSA Framework.

I would like to see some annotated planning proformas as a guide on how best to use the document for planning. Again the ability level of the students I teach effects my use of the key ideas. As a primary teacher I would often be looking more at the early years band, and then even modifying some of those ideas.

Examples of plans and programs using the E.S.L. Scope and Scales would be a valuable asset and examples of work collected from teachers who have developed programs would further enhance the accessibility of the document.

The range of contexts that we have to teach for, across the curriculum, make it difficult for the Key Ideas to be truly comprehensive. They give some ideas but nothing more than what I have learnt over the years teaching ESL. I don't know how useful it would be to a new teacher. Again, I find the focus is on written language and doesn't adequately address the other macroskills of listening, speaking and reading and responding. This is because of the way the Scope and Scales have been organised into the strands of Texts in Context and Language. The previous Scales gave a more comprehensive picture.
**Issue 14: How useful are the scales enabling you to identify and report on the achievements of the range of ESL learners?**

**Analysis of responses to interviews and focus groups**

Many held views that the scales were quite useful in identifying and reporting on the achievements of their learners.

*Fine grained therefore allows tracking and recognition of programs. People who use the existing ESL scales will be able to use easily.*

*People who are able to use the existing Scales will be able to use them easily. What little work has been done suggests that there is very little ‘fear factor’.*

*The Scales give enough outcomes and specific points to pinpoint the specific status quo of a particular student.*

*Appear to be useful. Fine grained difference is explained by the kinds of evidence you need to collect. Give enough outcomes and specific points to pin point where learners fit. Similar format to school level entry assessment.*

*Very useful – especially the section of ‘scales of evidence’ – BUT you definitely need the glossary from introduction to decipher some examples.*

*Given the time to use them they are very useful because of their specificity.*

*Not a deficit approach – identifies what they can do. Familiarity is the key they only work after familiarity.*

*Identifies what ESL learners can do not only on what they can’t do. Is positive from this perspective. Teachers get better at using them with experience.*

*Yes- Excellent to identify what ESL learners can do- values the skills they do here- indicators what they learn to move along the continuum. Reporting- consistency of what we report and comment on.*

*Quite good. It provides specific descriptions and proficiencies that students need to display for band scale and what competencies they need to acquire to move on.*

However, there were dissenting voices around a number of issues. One was around the language. This was particularly targeted at the upper bands.

*The Senior Years was terrible – jargon, long sentences and far too hard to read. Tables/highlighting/examples needed to make it more user friendly.*

*Language difficulty in senior years. Scales labour on a bit. Not readily accessible to non ESL teachers.*

*A bit jargonistic and wordy – particularly at higher levels. Need more work assessment and what that might mean in the classroom.*

*The continuity is there, the progression from middle to senior is in complexity and volume (length) of text, sophistication or judgement of choice.*

*The examples of outcomes are not a hierarchical language never sometimes, most, always (user friendly language).*
Another referred to a perceived narrowness of approach.

Somewhat restrictive – I take a more wide ranging view of language yes – syntax, grammar is important but not to sacrifice communication and consideration from where the learner is coming from.

Restructure because they don’t allow a wide approach eg, pronunciations and meaning. Expectations only possible for a small percentage of ESL learners (second phase, interrupted learning) – often English peers haven’t good English.

Somewhat restrictive in recognising the range of communication ability, eg, oral language is not given sufficient emphasis.

The issue of year levels was raised once more.

Scale 7 – Year 3? Why put year levels.

Only question mark is do we read the year level as well as the scale.

Others raised very specific issue in relation to the early years.

OK. I don’t think learners can be ‘boxed’ at one scale. Some ‘early grammar’ from an ‘early scale’ may still be problematic.

Early years band omitted. Perhaps reading is left out a little in some levels, in the examples.

Useful in describing what students can or can’t do at different levels – but maybe not the full range of students (scale 0). There aren’t clear examples of reading pointers for each outcome – can these be added.

One respondent raised a very practical point

In reporting, I wonder how well information obtained can be communicated to parents etc. Where students are not permanent residents, but are catered for by the system – how relevant will the assessment process and reporting be to the education system to which they will be returning? Does it matter?

**Analysis of responses to the questionnaire**

Responses to this question were generally supportive of the Scope and Scales as a tool identifying and reporting on learner’s achievements, although this support was not overwhelming. Some teachers recognised that the Scope and Scales provided them with an opportunity to know what students can do, rather than what they can’t. While the majority of teachers thought that they could use the document for this purpose, many also said that they did not see this as its primary purpose, but as a guide for interpreting and understanding other forms of assessment. Table 20 shows the responses to the questionnaire in relation to the extent to which the examples of evidence illustrate achievement of outcomes. The table shows that of those who responded to this survey item, the majority thought that the document did so to a moderate or great extent.
Table 14:Extent to which examples of evidence illustrate achievement of outcomes

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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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Figure 14a shows that while no respondents said that the scales did not enable identification of student achievements, a significant number said that it was useful only to a small extent. Support was less strong from trial school teachers. The small number of non-trial teachers who responded said that the scope and scales were at least moderately useful for this purpose.

Figure 14a: Extent to which the Scales enable identification and reporting of student achievements – by trial and non-trial teachers
Figure 14b: Extent to which the Scales enable identification and reporting of student achievement – by mainstream and ESL teachers

Scales enable identification and reporting of student achievement

Table 14b shows that while the majority of respondents thought that the scales did allow identification and reporting of student achievement, but substantial numbers of teachers were very luke-warm in their support. There were no significant differences between mainstream or ESL teachers in this regard.

Some respondents expressed the view that there may be differences in the extent to which the scales might be useful for reporting student achievement to different audiences, such as parents and the system – but were not unanimous in which group they thought would be best or least well served by the scales. In either case, the point was made that the usefulness of the scale was very much dependent on the knowledge and skills each teacher brings to task.

OK, we can report in terms of a number (scales) if/when required - but so what? What will this mean? … In terms of reporting, the scales may assist in compiling descriptive reports.

Report to whom? - to other ESL teachers, yes  to classroom teachers ,no  to parents, no  to DETE , yes  The scales help me identify levels of learners.

Opinion was also evenly divided as to whether the current version of the scales is better in this regard to previous versions. This diversity of opinion is reflected in the following comments.

I think they will provide a more workable way of reporting on the achievements of our ESL learners that the 94 Scales.

Previous Scales were much easier to use. They also give a more complete picture of student.

I'd prefer to see the Scales organised in strands as per the previous Scales. They provided a more comprehensive overview of learners’ achievements.

As noted elsewhere in this report, respondents appeared to be unclear about the way in the examples of evidence should be used in assessing student achievement against the scales. Some said that the Scales were:
Useful in describing what students can or can’t do at different levels – but maybe not the full range of students (scale 0). There aren’t clear examples of reading pointers for each outcome – can these be added?

Very useful, with the rider that some ‘fine graining’ of indicative evidence (or addition of 1 or 2 developmental scales in early years band).

Teachers expressed a concern that work samples were not included to show examples of the students’ work expected at a particular stage. Reference was also made to the age of the student (Junior Primary as compared to a High School student) and the language and concepts inherent in student thinking at different age levels.

I would like to see more examples of oral and written student responses. Format makes it slower, more tedious and difficult to access the information because the key areas are all thrown in together: listening and speaking, reading and viewing, and writing. Prefer format of Scope and Standard. Quicker, easier, more straight forward to access.

Not all teachers were convinced of the merits of using the scales for reporting purposes.

I can place students in the scales, but unfortunately they seem disadvantaged by them. As mentioned above the students I teach are not immersed in English and have a limited knowledge of the language. They therefore appear on scales 2 and 3. (These are year 3 and 4 students). I feel that the scales don’t reflect how far these students have traveled.

Some specific suggestions for change were made, including the following:

As a mainstream teacher we feel there is an emphasis on the ability of the educator to understand in a comprehensive manner both the Scales and the SACSA Framework documents. It could be difficult to identify and report on the learner’s achievements without this understanding. The Scales by themselves are certainly useful in identifying students’ achievements, however, to report these achievements we feel it is important to relate it to a mainstream curriculum (for general support learners). Perhaps it would be useful to have a paragraph highlighting this connection between the two documents in more depth. It would also be useful to have some examples of suggested assessment and reporting techniques. One needs to be aware of whether the reporting is class based, system based, or for home-carers. The content, techniques and report format may differ in each case.

Pointer descriptions are complex and confusing and not easy to identify.

Too much content in each pointer.

One must keep in mind that this version of Scope and Scales is for mainstream teachers who have not done the Language and Literacy Course.

The Scales will need to be read and understood by a whole range of users who are unfamiliar with the Terminology. They are really useful for ESL teachers to identify learners’ achievements but probably confusing for many other teachers of ESL learners across the other areas of study including English.

Using the outcome sentence only it is possible to create adequate assessments using varying formats of observation, anecdotal notes, etc, thus allowing a teacher to report to the system but not to parents or the school community eg. governing council.

Where they are sequential in their development they certainly do assist in identifying and reporting on learners’ achievements and in designing assessment tasks. Some of the earlier scales seem to be written from the perspective of a mature ESL student, one who has already learnt how to read and/or write in their own language.
It would be easier to work with the Scales if key ideas were followed by the matching scales. Some outcomes while relevant for older New Arrival students are not possible for an Early Years ESL learner to achieve, i.e. Scale 3, Outcome 3.2 Texts in Context and 4.2 evidence “Uses first language dictionary”. (Impossible when they can’t read or write in first language. It is unreasonable to expect all outcomes to be achieved.

Easy to assess an individual piece of evidence. We would find it difficult to place an ESL learner on the scales in the first place. What do we assess them on to determine where they fit? Could have a couple of key indicators matched to each scale so that at a quick glance you can roughly work out where the ESL learner is at.

Still a little unclear on indicators of progression from level to level in some areas. Need for some ‘Snapshots’ of assessment maybe.

The scales would be easier to work with if they were laid out with the key ideas followed by the matching scales at that level. Some evidence examples, while relevant for older New Arrival students, are not possible for an Early Years ESL learner to achieve, eg. Scale 3, Outcome 3.2, Texts in Context: Uses first language dictionary -

Some teachers commented on the need for support materials to translate the scales into a useful tool for assessment purposes.

I observe students work and make frequent reference to the Scales document to use evidence gained from my observations to identify about where they fitted into the Scales framework. I have developed a proforma which has the students’ names along the horizontal axis of an A4 page and the items of evidence I’m seeking listed along the vertical axis of the page. I’ve drawn a grid in the space between those two entries so I can use these pages to ‘tick the box’ when I come across evidence which shows that the student has achieved each of the outcomes listed. This kind of proforma would be useful if included in the original document even if not every outcome suits a ‘tick the box’ format. Perhaps the writer could include such a proforma if a re-write of the document takes place.

I think teachers will need to have lots of T&D and opportunities to practice this before they will feel confident in assigning a level. Exemplars will assist teachers. However I think what has been done is fine, it will just take a while for teachers to become familiar with the language used and transfer what is listed to examples of student’s work.
**Issue 15: Comment on the appropriateness of the examples of evidence for these groups of ESL Learners.**

**Analysis of responses to interviews and focus groups**

A key issue identified by several teachers was the role of the examples. Much was said about the inadequacy of coverage of the examples. The need for examples across the range of Learning areas was noted.

*Need to be a broader range of subjects – leaned to Science in middle years – need English and Geography etc. Cultural refs to things kids may not be aware of eg, Suez Canal. Some are ‘odd’ phrases and not really accessible – expecting too much. Outside everyday life; demanding.*

*More needed – in more detail. Examples from broader subject areas.*

*Needs to be across a broader range of subjects (seems to have a science focus) some of these require a level of cultural literacy well beyond the life experiences of many students.*

However, another observation noted that the examples are not meant to be exhaustive or inclusive of all ESL learners.

*The examples are pitched at levels of age rather than just the technical ability. The examples given are there to talk to the teacher- not examples of what the child would right.*

The standards represented in the examples drew some criticism. So too did the relevance to ESL learners.

*I found examples to be outside the world of school aged children and not always appropriate and often too complex.*

*Demanding – not culturally relevant or socially relevant in many cases.*

*Maybe examples don’t reflect ‘playground language’ but it is supposed to be curriculum related (kids pick up playground vernacular anyway).*

*Field – uncomfortable with use of personal attributes e.g. pretty etc. Examples of cereal boxes are ethnocentric.*

Once again the issue of age appropriateness of examples was raised.

*Issues around appropriateness of examples in early language for senior years.*

*Examples on level 2 not relevant for a 16-year-old. Placing a 16-year-old on a level of 2 is demoralizing and is an indication this 16-year-old has not acquired any degree of mental sophistication from his previous environment.*

*Are the examples of evidence in each scale appropriate for all ages and cultural backgrounds? They seem to fit nest with the “normative age” of the scale than the full range. E.g. the 16-year-old who is at scale 2. Are the examples supposed to reflect examples of student’s work or simply examples to make clear the concept of teachers.*

*Doesn’t take into account senior students with minimal English examples seem to be somewhat age specific which is quite exclusive when trying to measure students of a very different chronological age.*
Analysis of responses to the questionnaire

Table 15 shows that 80% of respondents who answered the question are positive about the extent to which the examples used for describing or illustrating the key ideas are appropriate.

Table 15 The appropriateness of examples for describing key ideas

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Tables 15a and 15b show there are similar responses from the four categories of teachers although the relative response of trial and ESL teachers is of interest. Overall, there is less support for the response “great extent” in this question than in other questions. The “moderate extent” category drives the positive response overall.

Figure 15a: The extent to which the examples used for describing or illustrating the key ideas are appropriate – by trial and non-trial teachers
Analysis shows that there is some concern on the part of specialists that not all examples are appropriate throughout the document. The issue does not appear to lie in appropriateness to illustrate a point. It is more so in relation to appropriateness for the students being brought to the scope and scales. For many learners, whose circumstances are outside the “norm”, the examples are not seen as relevant or realistic. One teacher described the examples as painting a picture for teachers to understand the points, rather than as examples to illustrate learner's work.

Because of cultural and language issues our students would not be able to achieve many of the examples given. They are not fluent speakers of English and most of them have a very limited English vocabulary. Therefore examples given such as interviewing, debating, and independently constructing their own text (Primary Band-texts in contexts) are somewhat unrealistic.

The examples used for illustrating the key ideas were appropriate and comprehensive. However, our suggestion for change is that as this is a South Australian document we felt it would be useful to use examples which related specifically to South Australia. This would incorporate a bit of 'local identity' for educators to relate to. i.e. for 'interacting with a range of familiar or less familiar people in informal situations. eg. interviewing a park ranger at a National Park' could become 'a cultural representative from local cultures' (this could be an indigenous or a person specific to a culture of a child in the classroom).

There is no mention of Aboriginal learners, or learning styles of these students. No mention of how Aboriginal English can be used in conjunction with SAE or used as a basis to build upon and introduce SAE to these learner. Examples are not always appropriate to age. They do not describe the beginning early band ESL learner and are often primary and not JP examples. eg. outcome 3.1 dot point 3 - 'give information about safety on packaging of products.'

I teach Upper Primary students. Initially I assumed that I would use the Primary Band. After trialling this document, I realise I will have to aim for outcomes in the Early Years Band. On closer scrutiny, the Early years Band has a few outcomes that I feel are inappropriate for Mainstream English as First Language users in the early years Eg. Early Years, Language Strand, (field): 'organising a table of common comparatives and superlatives!!!! I feel confident that the Anangu Schools need their own set of assessment tools designed by us which would be inclusive of our
example to help identity for new arrivals is not clear, sometimes the context is inappropriate for their age.

There are a few examples which seem out-of-tune with Early Years, to me. eg page 5 in Scope & Scales, 'classify plants in different ways eg medicinal, ornamental, nutritional..’ or page 7 'learning that abbreviations vary in their meaning’. These are more appropriate for primary years I think.

These are useful, but because ESL encompasses language use across the curriculum it's difficult to give example that embraces all possible contexts and the range of uses of language.

The difficulty of developing an exhaustive list of examples to be inclusive of all learners' backgrounds was recognised in the feedback. However, the purpose of the examples in relation to "painting a picture" to make the point more concrete for teachers and to provide an evidential basis for making profession judgements does not appear to have been communicated successfully through the document. Some teachers appear to want to use the examples as a checklist to measure acquisition, rather than a guide to evidence they should be examining.

Some elements of this issue are illustrated by the following specific response.

Outcome 1.4 Interacts in a strictly limited range of spoken text... and begins to construct CHUNKS of written text - this implies a lot of writing and makes no reference to copying text. The word 'chunks' needs to be substituted for another word or left out as it is not clear to what you expect of ESL learners at this level. To our understanding at Level 1 they should not be expected to write a lot or copy chunks on their own. Students should be encouraged to trace over words and have a go at writing single letters/sounds or short words, not a text. No understanding yet of a sentence construction.

Outcome 1.4 Strand: language Scale 1 page 3

dot point 2 - 'uses some conventions appropriate to printed English'- 'left to right' - should be encouraged to randomly place words on page, becoming familiar with forming letters 'spaces between words' - could be moved to scale 2 'most letters being identifiable' - at this level we think students should be able to experiment with letter formation and tools used at school eg. pencils, crayons etc.

Dot point 3 'begins to identify some beginning sounds' - include initial sounds, delete end sounds in words, move to scale 2/3 'rhyming words' - move to scale 2, too complex 'identifies a few words with the same initial sound' - ESL learners will still be developing their basic vocabulary and may not be able to identify basic things and therefore are unable to hear initial sounds - focus on increased everyday vocabulary before initial sounds

dot point 3 ' says what the letters of the alphabet are, what their associated sounds are' - change to - can identify MOST/SOME of the letters of the alphabet by sound only at this level

dot point 4 'say that letters of alphabet are, associated sounds and identifies words in written texts when pronounced' - at level 2 can identify letters by name and sound - instead of 'identifies WORDS in a written text' should this be ALPHABET sounds identified in words - suggested change at Scale 2 expected to identify words

Scale 2 Outcome 2.1 page 4 text in context dot point 3 - too wordy, hard to understand

Scale 3 Outcome 3.1 page 6 text in Context dot point 1 - 'demonstrates for several basic genres the understanding that they have different purposes...' - too much expected
Scale 3 Outcome 3.1 page 6 Language dot point 3 - 'identify goal and steps in a procedure' - too difficult, more suited at Scale 6, needs to be simplified

Scale 3 Outcome 3.2 Page 6 Language dot point 4 - delete 'classify' or use examples such as label features (2 eyes, fur, hair etc.) not classify, pay more attention to visual detail increasing vocabulary.

Outcome 3.4 scale 3 page 7 text in context dot point 'uses more language relative to the number of gestures and visual resources' - given by whom? the teacher, student - gestures unclear dot point 4 'ENVIRONMENTAL PRINT' - too complex at this level, especially opening and closing dates and times - suggestion for change, simplify to SCHOOL/HOME ENVIRONMENTAL PRINT to increase vocabulary - 'commands on packaging' - too difficult unless it is read to the student

Outcome 3.4 language page 7 dot point 1 - 'reads aloud environmental print' - too complex, change to 'be aware of environmental print in our lives' dot point 5 - '....texts are clearly legible' change to 'sometimes legible'

Scale 4 Outcome 4.1 text in context page 8 dot point 4 - too complex. dot point 6 - too complex at this level.

Scale 4 Outcome 4.1 Language dot point 2 - eg. 2 is too complex, move to higher level. Identifying types of genres, not features at this stage, 'action verbs' and 'topic' too hard, maybe focus on increasing vocabulary of verbs, being exposed to a variety of reports with different topics and be able to identify what it is about. eg. 4 'write several pieces of information' change to 'recalls verbally pieces of information'

Outcome 4.2 Scale 4 page 8 language dot point 5 - example is too complex.

Outcome 4.4 Scale 4 Language page 9 last dot point - 'speech marks, apostrophes' - too complex, this comes with writing stories, they need to have practical examples at this level, the rest is OK.

There were several comments about the density and technicality of language in some of the examples. This issue is particularly important for classroom teachers in areas other than English.

Dot points are often ambiguous, jargonistic. Were they written for classroom teachers or for those in the know?

At least they will be understood by teachers of English. We tested this on other teachers who complained of too much jargon.

Some of the examples which appear below the 'Key Ideas' did help to clarify the writer's meaning. In some cases however I was even more confused after reading the example. In addition, the language used in and around these examples is the language of 'Systemic Functional Linguistics. Much of this language is not explained in the glossary (although the glossary is useful, perhaps it could be greatly extended). For this reason the most important next steps in this process are that some re-writing of the document occur and that teachers get as much training and development as they need in order to feel confident about using this document.
**Issue 16: To what extent does the material provide you with a clear understanding of the relationship between the scope and the scales?**

**Analysis of responses to the Questionnaire**

Table 16 shows that 83% of the respondents who answered this question indicate that the document is clear in providing an understanding between the scope and scales.

Table 16: Relationship between Scope and Scales

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<thead>
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<th>Frequency</th>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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</table>

Figure 16a below illustrates the responses to this question from both trialing and non-trialing teachers. While the approach indicates support, it is less positive than in other response areas.

Figure 16a: The extent of clarity of understanding of the relationship between scope and scales – by trial and non-trial teachers
The approach taken by the following respondent clearly indicates the view of many:

*as with the other learning areas, the scope is the guide for the breadth of teaching in a band while the scales documents the outcomes and the evidence. As the introduction to each of the Scope documents clearly indicates, the key ideas in both documents follow the same pattern (purpose, topic, audience and mode) and there is one common outcome for the two strands for a key idea. The further elaboration of learning requirements of a band for purpose, topic, audience and mode makes the links even clearer.*

*The relationship between the Scope and the Scales is very carefully constructed. The Scope provides the broad description of the activities that teachers provide so that the students are able to achieve the outcomes in the Scales. Working from the Scope to Scales gives a holistic picture of the learning that will be undertaken.*

Much of the issue in this area appears to be related to the call for further reader assistance. The following selection of responses illustrates this point.

*We found this material useful in providing a good understanding in the relationship between the scope and scales, however, we found that we needed to refer between the two documents to set our understandings in concrete. A suggestion that we felt would be useful is if the section starting on page 3, titled, 'Strands, Texts in Context', had a separate heading which related directly to the Scales. It would be useful if this included some content on the structure of the scales, not specifically/or only the strands. The information provided in the Introduction and Glossary Document is useful in explaining the relationship between the Scope and Scales, at this point.*

*Again, titles purpose, topic, mode appear in the scope but not in the scales or key ideas. This link would be made stronger if the titles appeared in these other areas.*

*Again a visual diagram showing the relationship between the scope and scales would enhance understanding. Where do the key ideas fit into the scales? Are they supposed to? I found the key...*
ideas clear and relatively easy to understand with examples being given which were also clear and helpful. It was refreshing to come across the key idea page as it was easy to read and understand where as the first 2 pages (2,3) were difficult

Scope and Scales should be aligned on one page - the same as South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework

the organisational structure of the key ideas and the outcomes could be made explicit so the teachers can

make these connections overtly by using heading eg 1.1=genre purpose, 1.2=topic field 1.3=audience tenor.

It would be useful for the document to provide more detailed information regarding the relationship between the two. The information is limited and does not give clear guidelines about how to use the scales for teachers with minimal or no previous knowledge. I would actually like to see the documents put together rather than separate.

Some graphic representation would help non-specialist ESL teachers deal with the relationship. This is necessary as some aspects of the language used to describe language learning are relatively specialised and unfamiliar to many.

The Key Ideas for the Strands of Text and Context and Language are well written. But when the key ideas arising from the strands or scope are transferred to the outcomes in the scales the outcome sentence becomes intense and jargonistic with key words becoming obscure, because two ideas of text and language have been rolled into one. Either write the outcomes as two separate statements as presented in the strands (scope) or highlight key words.

However, there are organizational issues that are not simply a matter of presentation.

I find the document VERY difficult to read. I am quite familiar with the previous Scales and supporting Curriculum document and found that much more accessible. I find the way this is structured to be very inaccessibile and consequently difficult to use. I also think that organising the Scope and Scales under the strands of Texts in Context and Language has added to their complexity, especially in trying to show levels of progression, strategies, reading and oral language use. There is a focus on written language in these documents at the expense of the other macro-skills. The previous Scales were much easier to read and use and gave a better overall view of the student.

In Introduction and Glossary ESL Scope and Scales and the SACSA Framework it would be good to have another sentence explaining when it would be appropriate to exit ESL program e.g. scale 8 achieving at a year 4 level and therefore should leave the ESL program.

The format here is the same as for other Learning Areas, but would it be at all possible to write the scope in the same way as in the Scales: ie side by side?

Should write down the variable names next to each outcome eg. Outcome 1.1 purpose, Outcome 1.2 topic etc. These variable names should match the English areas of reading, writing, speaking, listening. This would make it much easier to understand and relate to their actual practices. Outcomes are very wordy and therefore time consuming to understand and use, needs to be cut down.

As scope means 'range of contexts ESL learners interact in' (Texts in Context) and the 'Choices to realise the texts from Texts and Contexts strand' make the Language strand, again a diagram would help clarify this. Several mainstream teachers who looked at the document found it confusing (And daunting) probably because of the language. They all responded more positively to graphic representations. My point here is if this document is to be used by mainstream teachers such as us it needs to be easily accessible in language and structure.
I suggest that the outcomes are explicitly stated as genre, field, tenor or mode in the Scales, not just the Scope.

In our telephone briefing we were advised that in the Scope for Early years and Primary Years, the Key ideas were matched to Purpose, Topic, Audience and Mode. By adding these sub titles to the scope, and to the scales it made the relationship between the scope and scales easier to understand.
**Issue 17: To what extent do the key ideas in the strands describe the scope of ESL learning?**

**Analysis of responses to the questionnaire**

Table 17 shows that 76% of respondents who answered the question are positive about the extent to which the key ideas in the strands describe the scope of ESL learning.

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Figures 17a and 17b show that trial teachers, non-trial teachers, mainstream teachers and ESL teachers generally have similar positive views that the key ideas in the strands describe the scope quite effectively.

Figure 17a: The extent to which the key ideas in the strands describe the scope of ESL learning – by trial and non-trial teachers
The positive feedback is further illustrated in the following comments.

*We felt that the key ideas in the strands effectively described the scope of ESL learning. The information provided was comprehensive and the dot point format made it easier to read than previous sections.*

*I liked the key ideas they were much more informative, provided clear examples. This was much clearer than the strand structure section.*

*The key ideas are a valuable planning and programming tool for both ESL and mainstream teachers.*

However, while there is strong support there are constructive suggestions for consideration. Some of these again relate to the issue of language being used. Others tackle issues about the structure of the presentation and others the structure of the approach.

*The description is extensive but again the language used in the description is the language of 'Systemic Functional Linguistics' and it will therefore be inaccessible to many of the teachers who will be expected to use the document. The Key ideas are good but if most of the teachers who are expected to use their content, cannot understand what the writer is conveying, the language must be changed so that it is accessible to these teachers.*

*Key Ideas need to be stated far more succinctly using less jargon. I needed to simplify and summarize them to fully understand their meaning.*

*These are very clear but could maybe include either before or after 'Key Idea' the words...relates to Purpose (Genre) for the first one, relates to Topic for the second one etc...*

*Use terms: 'Purpose', 'Topic', 'Audience', 'Mode' - as headings. Be upfront and obvious.*
The use of functional linguistics & genre info. is appreciated for its clarity. The 4 key ideas consistently are, in order, related to 1. Genre/Purpose, 2. Field/topic, 3. tenor/audience, 4. Mode - these sub-headings should be included for easy teacher reference ie, this should not be a hidden plan please.

A compilation of the strands in order of scale and outcomes as an overview would be useful at the beginning of the ESL Scales would be appropriate. Then one could gain a clearer understanding of sequence and be more able to assess student capabilities.

Once again some aspects of the lexis used is unclear. This is especially so for non-specialists. I myself find the distinction between factual, literary, complex, formal, minor and macro genres difficult to clarify. I think it is also not particularly clear to many people of the progression that uses 'technical' as its highest point.

I like the set out and the description of learning, but … I believe some of the examples and some of the concepts are too complex for the learners at that point in time. For example, a new arrival in Year 5 would have difficulty with such concepts as on page 6 identifying the vocabulary patterns in a text, eg identifying relating processes in the orientation of a narrative, action processes in the complication and resolution and sensing processes in the evaluation.
**Issue 18: The extent to which the scales connect with the ESL scope**

**Analysis of responses to the questionnaire**

Positive responses were provided by 83% of the respondents who answered this question. The extent of connection between the scope and the scales was clear to most respondents.

Table 18: Relationship between Scope and Scales

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<thead>
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Figures 18a and 18b indicate that similar responses have been obtained from mainstream teachers, ESL teachers, trialing teachers and non-trial teachers. The pattern indicates a substantial group in the moderate extent category of response. This leaves some cause for concern over this area, relative to responses to other questions. The suggestions indicate that much of the issue is in the lack of reader assistance to see the relationships.

Figure 18a: The extent to which the scales connect with the ESL scope – by trial and non-trial teachers

Figure 18b: The extent to which the scales connect with the ESL scope – by trial and non-trial teachers
On the positive side, the following comments describe the ways people see the relationship.

_We felt that the Scope document was like a wheel and the scales were the spokes that made it all go around. The information provided in the scope clearly links with the scales, specifically, the section on the strands is very useful. Using the two documents side by side we can see how it all fits together._

_I particularly liked the content of the scales they were clear and the examples were excellent giving clear instructions on what needed to be focused upon._

_The big picture organisational links are there._

_More user friendly_

As with other questions, reader support to make the links was called for.

_Again a visual diagram would be excellent showing how the scales and the scope and perhaps even the key ideas all work together. Cross referencing between the two would also be helpful. The document(scope) was too dense and it was difficult to locate how they are supposed to connect as a mainstream teacher I found this very difficult._

_Difficult to see connection. Needs to be formatted with the Scope and Scales alongside each other the same as SACSA._

_Because the outcomes for the Texts in Context and Language have been combined it is more difficult to work out the link. The outcome now becomes broader. The Scales should be prefaced with information for the teacher. Teachers who have never used this or previous ESL documents will need more information about how to assign a level, and what proportion of outcomes need to be achieved to reach a specific level._

_There is no reference to Key ideas in the scales. Maybe you could list Key ideas codes next to outcomes in the scales, (like SACSA does with Key competencies and essential learnings.) If we are to program against the key ideas it would be easier if they were matched to the evidence because the evidence is easier to relate to classroom programming._
It is difficult to put Key Idea from Text in Context with Key Idea from Language and then hold in head to see if it has some meaning as outcome in Scales.

The two seem to tie in well at the Early Years band but some of the descriptive terms are vague ie small range/brief/basic when trying to ascertain appropriate scale of children. I'm not sure if there is a solution to this but this is where lots of examples build on the idea of what constitutes the level. Also in the KEY IDEA in the language strand (Page 6) it states ‘Learners of ESL learn a SMALL range of vocabulary...’ whereas scale 6, still an early years scale, states in 6.2 ‘uses a WIDE range of vocabulary’ The use of small in the scope and wide in the scale is confusing.

I think a practical way to make the connections between Scope and Scales more concrete may be to include in the document a few samples of student work and indicate which section of the Scope inspired their production and how the scales were used to assess the samples of work. This would allow the reader to look over the teacher/assessor’s shoulder as it were and get a feel for how some of the critical parts of using these documents could unfold. That kind of more tangible path may lead to teachers being more able to understand exactly how the Scope connects with the Scales and how to use both in tandem. Perhaps a video could be made which shows one or more teachers using the Scope and Scales to prepare some work for students to do and then using the Scales to assess this work. This kind of video may be invaluable as a training resource for teachers who are not familiar with these documents.

Other responses critiqued the relationship per se, specifics in the document, or the understanding of the relationship conveyed in the text.

Some inaccuracies in pointers eg. reading and alphabet within a Scale eg. Scale level 1.1 ‘copying a very short basic example’ - to what level of accuracy do you mean? Needs to show consistency whether - eg. gestures used or not used. Note - nodding is not a good example. It can have different meanings in different cultures. The use of English student dictionaries applies to children who are literate in L1 only.

The number of Scales for any one Band are many. The language used to encompass all the gradations can be confusing. It is attempting to do a very complex task, that is to distinguish the many levels across all areas of study.

The main concern for teachers, particularly classroom teachers, is the fact that older students may have the English language ability of a Junior Primary student and it must be emphasised to those using the documents that the scales are not age dependent. Rather, the scales are linked to English language ability. This was stressed by non-ESL teachers who have limited ESL support, if any. In schools where there are few ESL students, these classroom teachers have indicated that the Scope and Scales would be very USEFUL to support the development of appropriate programs (for a limited number of ESL students).
**Issue 19: The extent to which the outcomes sequences indicate clear and accurate progression across the scales**

**Analysis of responses to the questionnaire**

Table 19 shows that 73% or respondents who answered the question feel that there is clear and accurate progression across the scales.

Table 19: Outcomes indicate progression across scales

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<tbody>
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<td>Total</td>
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Figures 19a and 19b show similar responses from all categories of teachers. It is noticeable that, of the positive responses, a substantial proportion chose to a moderate extent. This implies that there are issues in the progression.

Figure 19a Extent to which the outcomes indicate progression across the scales – by trial and non-trial teachers
Sample positive responses include:

The outcomes sequences show a clear and accurate progression across the scales. As a mainstream teacher this section is particularly useful as it is easy to see how the outcomes relate to the SACSA Framework. You can see the 'building up' of the students' skills and experiences in small step by step progression. As an educator it is easy to recognise the big picture of the students' learning - where they've come from, where they are at, and where they are going to!

As with other responses, reader assistance was a key issue. One particular aspect of this is the apparent fineness of the gradation between outcomes in the sequence.

It would be useful to have the outcomes sequences set out in a table form so that children progression could be plotted, and thus movement across the scale could be visually seen.

If they were set out in table form as in old Scales they would be easier to read and it would be easier therefore to see progression.

Very fine degree. Highlight the key words in the outcome which separate the scales eg Scale 1 copies – arranges, Scale 2 copies / jointly constructs, Scale 3 support add jointly constructs, Scale 4 constructs limited - doesn't communicate come before interact?? - highlight key words in outcomes to show progression - needs a chart to show progression of words used so it is clear

The sequence of information is fine, however the use of strictly limited, limited, narrow etc may cause some confusion for teachers. Of course teachers will use their professional knowledge to interpret the meaning however it may result in less accurate leveling of students and misinterpretation by other teachers using the level

The many gradations in the numerous Scales demand an understanding of the comparative words used. For many this will not be immediately clear or will be contestable or confusing enough to create a block to its ready use.

The fine gradations of the early scales make it difficult to clearly differentiate between one scale and the next when relying on the evidence indicators because they are sometimes the same eg the evidence for 1.3 is the same as for 2.3 for the 1st dot point. Some subjective difficulties when distinguishing between what constitutes a small range and a narrow range but I suppose subjectivity is inevitable and moderation workshops and inservice training is fundamental to the
success of teachers using this document to the benefit of there ESL learners

The calibration across the Outcomes is very thorough. However there are times when the difference between one Scale and another is very small. It is not always easy to distinguish the difference between 'strictly limited range' 'very narrow range 'or 'small range' and 'narrow range'.

generally, the margin between some scale pointers is too small.... the minute differences between some descriptive terms used leaves it as too vague/ subjective eg. 'strictly limited' vs 'Restricted' or, 'limited' vs 'narrow' vs 'small' Partial solution: perhaps include the list of descriptors used through the document in a scale(in the intended order of skill growth) , as reference for users For R/1, there are too many levels, making memory-use of the document in these levels too user unfriendly

Some respondents were concerned about technical issues in the scales.

Some inaccuracies in pointers (eg. reading and alphabet) within a Scale eg. Scale level 1.1 'copying a very short basic example' - to what level of accuracy do you mean? Needs to show consistency whether - eg. gestures used or not used. Note - nodding is not a good example. It can have different meanings in different cultures. The use of English student dictionaries applies to children who are literate in L1 only.

By limiting the Scope and Scales to a focus on written language, there is a limit on the evidence available to show students' progress - the previous Scales assessed a broader range of knowledge, skills and understandings and consequently showed more clearly a progression across the Scales.

In the mode outcomes for level one and two the last part of the description is developmentally around the wrong way ie level one says 'and begins to construct chunks of written text' whereas level two says 'and begins to jointly construct chunks of written text'. Jointly, which implies with outside help should come before independently working. Again, the progression from scale to scale is reliant on attuned teacher judgement of similarly described outcomes not especially easy for non-specialist teachers.
**Issue 20: The extent to which the examples of evidence for the scales illustrate achievement of the outcomes**

**Analysis of responses to the questionnaire**

Table 20 shows that 79% of respondents who answered the question were positive about the extent to which the scales illustrate achievement of the outcomes. Once again, the proportion who gave a "moderate" rating indicates concerns that may need to be addressed.

Table 20: Extent to which examples of evidence illustrate achievement of outcomes

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Figures 20a and 20b show that the issues were raised by all respondent categories.

Figure 20a Extent to which the examples of evidence illustrate achievement of the outcomes – by trial and non-trial teachers

Extent to which examples of evidence illustrate achievement of outcome
The following are samples of the range of positive responses.

I find the examples very useful and accurate.

The evidence for the Scales definitely illustrates the achievement of the outcomes. In fact it is this part of the document which we felt was most useful in our classroom practice. The examples are wide ranging and account for a variety of experiences that the ESL learner could participate in, during their learning. It also provides a good resource for teachers who are looking for evidence in children's work for achievement of the outcomes.

The examples of evidence illustrate the outcomes very well. I believe that is will be necessary for students to achieve all or most of the examples of evidence in order to achieve the Outcome. This is a distinct difference to the examples of evidence in the Learning Area Outcomes.

As with other questions, responses about the need for more reader assistance were common. Some of these imply potential changes in the layout and presentation in the document. Others imply support in the form of professional development.

I would like to see more examples of evidence (concrete examples in brackets as in language)within the texts and contexts strand. There seems to be many examples under language, and I found them very useful.

Would be more accessible if the evidence examples were perhaps separated into bands or columns relating to older or younger students. But they are vital to the unpacking of the language used in the general outcome statement.

It is difficult to measure 'Uses confidently' or 'includes more confidently' or 'uses with some confidence', especially when these phrases are all used for indicators of one particular outcome. There is evidence of progression but I can't comment on accuracy until I have had a lot more experience in using the Scales. Moderated samples across the year levels (including Senior Years and adults) are necessary to develop a shared understanding of these very fine differences. To make this work there needs to be a common understanding and agreement of the terms used. eg what is the difference between 'some' and 'greater' confidence, a 'range' and a 'wider range', 'elementary' and 'increasingly complex'? Moderated student work samples needed.

Table or continuum diagram of activities would be helpful.
Again I think it may be very useful to have samples of student work included in the document which have been assessed using the Scales to offer tangible examples of how the evidence may be found with links indicated for how we get students to produce the evidence we want in the first place. It would be useful also to have even more examples of evidence included.

Beware of jargon and overly technical terms. (eg. Scale 12, 2.1, dot point #3 under texts). Its likely that teachers other than English trained teachers will need to make sense of this in order to apply scales

Many respondents mentioned the need to make the band application of the outcomes quite specific.

Examples of evidence should be banded JP/P/M. I teach Year 3-4 students in the Mainstream therefore I need to see the JP progression clearly. Examples are very Primary - sometimes it is the writers language that shows degree of difficulty not the evidence.

They need to be linked back to the original sacsa document particularly in the English learning area. If they are already linked then they need to be made clearer, as I couldn't see this. Same headings would make it easier or simply cross referencing the ESL scales with the English standards would be helpful. They do give examples of the learning needed and do clearly illustrate the outcomes within the scales but as a mainstream teacher I need to be able to quickly relate it back to the sacsa original document, English in particular.

In some ways this indicates the difficulty teachers have in applying the examples. Where the learner is of the age relevant to the Band, fitting the examples to the Band may be appropriate. Where the learner is not of the age but is of the technical level of performance in the Band, making the examples age appropriate to the Band may be unproductive. In one sense, the issue is the struggle between linear approaches to measurement by, say, counting versus weighing up evidence to make professional judgements. The measurement issues do not appear to have been clarified to readers. The struggle in this area needs to be addressed in a specific manner. The following example emphasises the point.

As you don't need to achieve all the evidence, there could be inconsistencies across users. It would be good if you can specify how many pieces of evidence, e.g: 4 out of 6 so it is more consistent. Do you need to achieve equally in Texts and contexts as well as Language to be able to move on? Texts and Contexts evidence was easier to match to SACSA framework than Language.

Several respondents gave specific feedback about more technical aspects of the evidence.

Evidence must be in bands ie Early, primary, Middle especially in Scales 1-6. Evidence given is very Primary Middle School. Evidence in outcome 1.4 ,2.4, 3.4, is not JP for example 1.4 language dot point 2 is a Primary /Middle years example Where is the JP example which would show some writing development . 2 be consistent with basic and elementary genre make the decision and stick to it across the scales. 3. Take out examples of cereal boxes because ethnocentric. 4. the degree of difficulty is in the 'writers' language not in the evidence for example scale 4/5 2nd dash point in language eg Scale 4 = action verbs at the front of sentences in procedures, Scale 5 = action verbs foregrounded in procedures difference? Field examples - uncomfortable with eg use of personal attributes pretty, cute, handsome.

Example of evidence should reflect learners age level/abilities. Most are primary examples and should be more appropriate to pre JP and JP.

… the combining of the two strands has now broadened the outcome for the scale and thus diminishes the effectiveness of the outcome descriptors.

Many of the examples seem to be scaled wrongly. The expectations in the early years are far too high and unrealistic. For example, outcome 1:4 on page 3 - recognises the difference between SAE texts and texts in other languages that use the same script - this is unrealistic for a child beginning school, as we would expect that they are non readers. Scale 2 - outcome 2:4 - begins
to write in SAE by copying groups of words or phrases or simple sentences - this is also inappropriate for children in the early stages of reception. Another example is outcome 2:4 - says what the letters of the alphabet are, what their associated sounds are and begins to understand there are differences when these same letters are in clusters. In scale 3 - outcome 3:1 - all of these examples seem inappropriate for children this age eg. demonstrates an understanding of the structure of several basic genres by identifying in which contexts they would be chosen. Most of the examples in scale 4 seem are aimed too high.

Outcome 3.2 Texts in Context- Using a dictionary?? This activity would apply only to older New Arrival students, not to Anangu students or mainstream ESL students in Early Years

In scale 4 the evidence is too advanced for the outcome, e.g. Outcome 4.1 (Language). A student in Year 1 at scale 4 would not be expected to identify features of basic genres. Competent English speakers would have difficulty matching this.

In Scale 4, some of the evidence is too advanced for the outcome, eg. 4.1 Language: A student in Year 1 would not be expected to identify features such as action verbs at the front of sentences in Procedures, or the topic at the front of sentences in a report. Competent students with English as their first language would have difficulty with this.
**Issue 21: To what extent do the outcomes and examples of evidence assist in designing assessment tasks for your learners?**

**Analysis of responses to the questionnaire**

There is mixed response regarding the benefit of the examples of evidence in assisting assessment task design. These mixed responses would suggest a need for the document to convey a stronger message about the appropriateness and use of the examples of evidence. There appears to be confusion between the role of the pointers as being intended to be samples of student work or guides for teacher interpretation.

Table 21: The extent to which examples of evidence assist in designing assessment tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not answered</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>9</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate extent</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great extent</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the respondents who addressed the question, 61% indicated a positive response that the examples of evidence assisted in assessment task design. Conversely, it is important to note that a substantial proportion, 39%, were not confident that the outcomes and examples of evidence would assist in designing assessment tasks for their learners. Figures 21a and 21b show that the cautious response was made by ESL teachers, mainstream teachers and trialing teachers.
The examples of evidence were viewed by some respondents as being a useful tool for designing assessment tasks.

*Using the evidence is easier for assessment than the outcomes in the scales.*

*Haven’t devised any yet but the examples will aid this.*
Other comments were positive but balanced in seeking more specific examples to assist in development of assessment tasks.

The outcomes and examples of evidence are very beneficial. It would be great to see some more really specific examples included.

There are lots of useful suggestions within the outcomes and the examples of evidence which could assist in designing assessment tasks. However, in an ever-changing climate of teaching it becomes more difficult to continually design new material because of time factors. It would be fabulous to pick this document up and find an appendix of suitable assessment tasks or at least, reference to the 'ESL in the Mainstream' material, which has suitable assessment tasks. So to answer the question - yes - the outcomes and examples of evidence do assist in designing assessment tasks but we would also like to see some formats or proformas provided.

I would need to modify some of the outcomes to enable my students to achieve them. Example - Outcome 5.4. The evidence provided for language is unrealistic for my students. They do not use punctuation and most are unable to write or read independently.

Need some examples of how to implement and record this in line with other areas of study. Examples of work relating to different levels of the scales.

The examples are Ok but they still sit in a pretty vague context. Many of the genres that are used in the progression throughout school based literacy. Clearly major examples of complete genre cannot be included here but they should be compiled in support materials.

The sheer number of examples was flagged by some as being a negative aspect of the document. It would appear that these respondents viewed application of these examples as being mandated. There is strong evidence to show the examples are being viewed by as a curriculum checklist rather than a non exclusive or non exhaustive descriptor set to illustrate what the outcomes should look like.

There are too many indicators under the outcomes. We need some examples of assessment tasks as a guide.

The range of evidence examples is daunting and unmanageable as a tool for designing assessment tasks and recording results. It would be helpful if examples of assessment tasks were given as a guide. As much learning in Early Years is oral, gathering evidence examples from a large number of students is time-consuming undertaking, and some ideas on doing this efficiently would help.

Neither of us at this point feel compelled to use this document in compiling assessment tasks for the students we teach. That's disappointing but at this stage it's a bigger leap of faith than we are prepared to take.

One respondent suggested a greater need for sample test and assessment rather than examples of evidence, as the examples made work for teachers too prescriptive.

Hopefully students can be assessed through the use of project work and activities they're already doing without the teacher having to design too many separate assessment tasks. Either that or at the risk of becoming overly prescriptive, such tasks should perhaps be designed for teachers and included in the document. Designing assessment tasks which are actually valid (i.e.: ones which test exactly what they're meant to test and not something else) is not as easy as it might seem. At the very least it might be useful to have some sample tests/assessment tasks included in the Scales document, some reference to and explanations about how to determine whether your test/s is/are valid and even an example of a test which is valid and an explanation about why it's deemed to be valid. This may sound like I'm suggesting that teachers be taught how to 'suck eggs' but good teachers will understand that one can't be too careful when making assurances about the validity of assessment and testing.
To assist with improved understanding of the examples, changes in the format and language were suggested. Training and Development was sought by one respondent to improve this understanding.

The outcomes and examples of evidence (although there could be more of these) are satisfactory but the format or layout of the Scales makes it more difficult to readily design an assessment task. I don’t believe it is a user-friendly document.

This will be the criterion used for planning, programming and assessing children’s learning. They will be useful in designing assessment tasks, but whether a Year 10 teacher with a student at Scale 2 will find the examples given useful, is debatable. Again, T&D to support an understanding of the language articulated in the descriptors will be a key element of the overall success.

Not familiar with some of the language

The word ‘identifies’ is too obscure eg ‘identifies boundaries between clauses in written texts in order to analyse patterns of grammatical choice in texts...’ How is that demonstrated?

Language of document needs to be much more accessible and digestible.

One respondent suggested that the examples of evidence were trying to achieve too much.

The key words in the outcomes are more useful for designing assessment. The examples of evidence try to cover too many aspects and could result in over assessment.

An example with very specific comments, include:

Where they are sequential in their development they certainly do assist in identifying and reporting on learners achievements and in designing assessment tasks. Some of the earlier scales seem to be written from the perspective of a mature ESL student, one who has already learnt how to read and / or write in their own language.

Scales 1, 2 and 3 are expecting some evidence, especially in regards to written work, that would not necessarily be expected by a reception teacher.

Outcome 1.1 Written copying may happen at early reception and although desirable it is not an expectation that students can do it. Not all early reception students begin to copy and write.

Outcome 1.4 Most students would still be non readers if they have started school at 5 and would not necessarily be aware of different written texts. Last evidence in Language seems more suited to Level 2 or 3.

Outcome 2.4 Language - last evidence identifies words with the same initial sound - recommend at scale 6 Texts in Contexts - last evidence Although copying of letters and groups of letters may be introduced by some teachers very few teachers would expect their early receptions to copy simple sentences.

Need to check all the writing examples.

Outcome 4.2 using first language dictionaries to find English equivalent - this seems to be written for an older ESL child or adult not a 5 year old.

Outcome 4.4 last evidence Texts in Context writes very brief examples - this is higher than year 1.

Outcome 6.2 Most students aren’t using English dictionaries confidently at this stage.

Outcome 6.4 Some students are emailing at year 2 but not many. (in the future they may) The last evidence seems to be at too high a level - codes for food labels - maybe yr.5 or 6.
Outcome 7.1  written arguments - this is a very high skill.

Outcome 7.2  Students are beginning to use dictionaries with confidence.
**Issue 22: The extent to which the examples of evidence from the two strands can work together to illustrate the outcome**

**Analysis of responses to the questionnaire**

Of the respondents who answered the question, 69% viewed the examples of evidence across the two strands as a positive tool for identifying the outcomes. Though there was a majority view that the strands work together well to represent a singular outcome, there is a substantial group of respondents who feel more work is needed in this area. In particular, further clarification of the differences between the two strands is sought through the examples provided.

Table 22: The extent to which the examples across the two strands work together to illustrate the outcome

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not answered</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little extent</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great extent</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures 22a and 22b indicate that generally both non-trial and trial teachers and ESL and mainstream teachers view the examples of evidence across the two strands in the same way.

Figure 22a: The extent to which the examples across the two strands work together to illustrate the outcome – non-trial and trial teachers.

Examples across the strands work together to illustrate the outcome
The following samples of comments illustrate the tenor of the positive responses.

*The examples of evidence that provide an example as an illustration of what is being described are very useful.*

*Even though we struggled with this for some time, we do acknowledge that the two strands do work together and could assist in illustrating the outcome.*

*The evidence from the two strands provides a good range of examples, which demonstrates student achievement of the outcome. It is very easy to understand student progression towards the outcome and we particularly like the format of this section. Having the one outcome is a bonus and the evidence from the two strands work companionably together to illustrate this.*

However, it was frequently suggested that familiarity with the content of each strand would need to be gained to allocate scales appropriately, as it differs from the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework English Standards.

*I think they work pretty well. The Texts in context describes the general nature of the English communication necessary for successful achievement and then the Language Strand teases out the required grammatical aspects. Users will still need to be familiar with the break down within the Strands particularly when this is different to the organisation used in the English Standard.*

*We found that Language was hard to match up with Texts and contexts as well as SACSA.*

Notwithstanding the usefulness of the examples in allocating scales, in some cases they were identified as being unrealistic when applying to current students.

*Whilst the examples of evidence are sometimes unrealistic for my students, I have found them useful when assessing children and allocating scales.*
For some respondents there is confusion about how the strands work together as the differences between the two strands appear difficult to distinguish. The need for examples to clarify the perceived differences was sought.

The outcomes have now become more complex. It is probably easier to have them listed together however it does make the task of assigning a level a more difficult task. As the outcome is broad and the list of examples quite specific it will take time for teachers to become familiar and confident in using them.

How do they work ‘together’? What is the difference between Texts in Context and Language? As they both overlap each other they could be more explicit or cover a third area in literacy.

Would like to see more examples of oral and written student responses.

Some respondents challenged the compatibility and large number of the examples provided.

If the examples aren't linked, then they can't work together.

The range of evidence examples is daunting and unmanageable as a tool for designing and recording assessment results. Language strand examples are more specific than Texts in Context examples, which are too open to interpretation and difficult to assess individuals.

We found that Language was hard to match up with Texts and contexts as well as SACSA.

It would be useful if Language indicators matched Text in Context indicators.

The Language strand examples are more useful because they are very specific. Texts in Context examples are too open to varied interpretation and very difficult to assess in individuals in a classroom situation.

The format and language of the two strands was also found to be a challenge.

The headings of Text in Context and Language need to be put below Outcomes and directly above Evidence. ‘Language' heading easily missed.

Again however, the language of the document needs to be simplified so it will be accessible enough for more of the teachers who use it to work out how the evidence from the two strands can work together to illustrate one or more outcomes.
**Issue 23: The extent to which the glossary is useful**

**Analysis of responses to the questionnaire**

The glossary has been viewed by many respondents (77%) as a useful part of the ESL Scope and Scales document. However, improvements are still sought by many to make the glossary more comprehensive, and in particular, more user-friendly to the uninitiated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 23: Usefulness of the glossary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not answered</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderate extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures 23a and 23b show that there is a similarity in the answers among the respondent groups.

Usefulness of the glossary

Figure 23a: The extent to which the glossary is useful – by non-trial and trial teachers.
Usefulness of the glossary

The positive issues are illustrated by the following responses.

*Essential to the understanding of the Scope and Scales. Needs to remain at the start of the document and throughout the document words from the glossary should be *, to remind the reader they can find the explanations in the glossary.*

*Fantastic !!!!!! The glossary is extremely useful and comprehensive. We found that we referred to it at times during our reading / planning / programming / reporting back. It was a good reminder of the linguistic structure of SAE.*

*Most useful for non-ESL teachers and those teachers who are unfamiliar with linguistic terms and ESL methodology!*

Nevertheless, some improvements were suggested by many of the respondents to make the glossary more self-explanatory and easier to work through, especially for those new to the area. Where technical language is used in the document, it was seen as essential to include definitions within the glossary.

*It would be useful for some mainstream teachers to read the document and highlight unknown vocabulary for inclusion in the glossary. There were a lot of words I looked for in the glossary that weren’t there.*

*Macro-genres, grammatical metaphor, lexical metaphor, genre, field, tenor, mode, scaffold, add symbols, ellipsis, subject matter, nominal*

*It is vital but needs to include all the technical language used in the document*

*There are still a number of words and descriptions of language that need to be explained.*
Some viewed the technical terms as jargon and suggested this be removed from the document itself. Notwithstanding the general support for the glossary, some respondents suggested the document should be self-explanatory and not require a glossary.

*It was useful, but I would prefer less jargon!!*

*It would be useful to a great extent if it used common language in the descriptions of meaning*

*This indicates the need for simpler, user-friendly language in this document.*

*If we have to use a glossary to understand the document, then the document isn’t accessible and therefore not useful.*

A few respondents indicated that the glossary itself was dense and not well set out.

*Not clear at all to teachers who have not completed the Language and Literacy Course.*

*The only suggestion that we have is visually there is a lot of text on the pages, this could be spread out more. The terms being defined could be printed in bold, with a space between each explanation.*
**Issue 24: What are the implications of the document for teaching practice?**

**Analysis of responses to interviews and focus groups**

In the main, ESL teachers felt that the document reaffirmed their practice. Some mainstream teachers agreed with this assessment though many found it provided new information that established the needs of this group of learners and their place in the curriculum.

> I like the fact that this is not foreign – if we are doing guided and explicit teaching it *is* our practice.

> Was useful to look back at last term’s work and see what I was going was OK.

> All educators will need to acknowledge key ideas and examples of evidence and adapt their own activities to ensure they are more culturally relevant, age appropriate and engaging.

> Classroom teachers need to be aware of the special needs and include the activities as part of regular teaching practices.

> Intuitively, while there are 8 equity groups there are only 7 perspective. Language learning has been missed out. People who use the document will be able to put language at the centre of learning.

> Better understanding of learners’ needs; better ability to structure learning to meet those needs.

The main use for the Scope and Scales was in planning and programming and it was seen by many as a very sound working document from this regard.

> I will use the Scales in planning for NESB students within the planning for the class. This is a working document to be used – excellent.

> Understanding of English Standards. Knowing where kids are to work out which scales they are at! Need to have a better understanding where the students are performing.

> Awareness/activities/reference in planning – road map. Working document whereas previously was for info only.

> Use info to help guide planning, assignments and assessment for ESL students to meet their needs.

> The document may encourage liaison between the mainstream classroom and ESL support.

However, some saw it simply as a reference.

> A valuable reference for teachers of ESL students (especially mainstream teachers who are not trained in ESL teaching).

Others, especially from the mainstream and within learning areas indicated it was “too much” or too “on the periphery” of their main tasks to be useful. The main issues were the language and approaches, as well as the time needed to understand the relevance of, and implement, ESL within a busy mainstream teacher schedule. The need for support for such people to use the document was emphasised.

> Limited for non-ESL teacher due to language – needs summary that may be read.

> No tech studies teacher will look at it.
If teachers cannot understand/engage with the philosophical discussions, they may not be able/willing to provide the range of practical applications of ESL Scope and Scales.

Time for T&D for teachers who have different backgrounds/knowledge will need relevant support documents.

If mainstream teachers are to use it, they will need T&D and especially release time from class commitments to become familiar with it.

Two views on the technical orientation – will intimidate some, who will be turned off and reject it; some will be challenged by it and see it as a standard about what they should be doing (about explicit teaching). Cannot be used by most teachers without additional professional development. Can be used in conjunction with the schools ‘literacy’ audit to know where all students are at.

They say assessment is the tail that wags the dog - assessment attainment and curriculum aims are always linked. We need to link the ESL Scope and Scales to the English curriculum. Support documents needed eg, subject specific and related to classroom teachers. Some excellent examples given. Paid T&D necessary to help use document.

Critical implications relating to – addressing Aboriginal students as well would mean a huge amount of time taken from current other ESL students unless staffing was greatly increased (their slow learning rate of written/reading literacy skills requires very special intensive programs). Support documents needed; eg assessment tool to assess/identify English dialect for Aboriginal students.

Workload issues – need time/money in T&D. Primary teachers will need to have an understanding of this document as well as other curriculum areas – in some cases all but LOTE – a big ask!

Will intimidate teachers with its use of grammatical terms. If used well with T&D will encourage explicit teaching

Primary teachers may need to revisit the technical aspects of language teaching / may refuse to? Change is inferred – change needs in-servicing within the professional arena.

These documents are somewhat intimidating to read and we need a framework. But this one is out of reach for mainstream and perhaps ESL teachers who do not have an English language background.

I don’t see however that the regular mainstream high school teacher will even use it, because they may not understand it.

Remove the jargon – try to write in very clear to the point terms (make it user friendly). Need for diagrams and pictures.

One issue around the early years arose from a few sources and is illustrated by the quote below.

Importance of mother tongue language (mainstream) appears to have been dropped from the early years section. Is this a document for ALL students? It is for all teachers. Examples will need further support to make relevant in the classroom.

Implications for modes of delivery were mentioned.

Support documents will be needed. Intention is that all teachers are teachers of ESL (not just the ESL teacher) in a withdrawal context. There may be organisational consequences for schools (a good thing).
ALL teachers responsible for teaching ESL across the Learning Areas – programming/planning/accountability. Organisational frameworks for staffing of ESL programs may need to be rethought eg. The withdraw model might need to go.