South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework

An Overview

What is the SACSA Framework?

The South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability (SACSA) Framework describes curriculum Key Ideas and Outcomes upon which learners from birth to Year 12 can expect their education to be built.

Key Ideas and Outcomes comprise the required elements of the new curriculum framework for all government schools and children's services. These core elements provide the basis for educators to design detailed learning and assessment programs which suit the needs of children and students in their settings and which emphasise local priorities. This recognises the contribution of local decision making in successful learning while also ensuring that all learners have a common curriculum.

Government of South Australia
Department of Education and Children's Services

What theory of learning underpins the Curriculum Framework?

The framework is based on constructivist theories of learning which view the learner as active in the process of taking in information and building knowledge and understanding; in other words, of constructing their own learning. The Framework's Key Ideas and Outcomes provide the basis for constructivist approaches to teaching and learning which build on learners' prior knowledge and experience and engage them in purposeful, contextualised, challenging and inherently interesting learning activities.

How will learners benefit?

- Learners are placed at the centre of the learning process.
- The experiences, expertise, interests and needs of all learners form the basis for constructing curriculum. The characteristics of learners, as well as the characteristics of groups of learners, are acknowledged by the use of appropriate teaching and learning methods.
- A cohesive curriculum framework, rather than isolated segments of content, will enable learners to develop values, skills, dispositions and understandings to:
  - respond to change and plan for futures
  - develop a positive sense of self and group
  - work well with a variety of others
  - be independent critical thinkers
  - communicate powerfully.
- There are high expectations of all learners with the Standards providing common reference points for assessing and reporting learners' achievement over time. Learners will:
  - receive feedback about their learning
  - be supported with specific intervention strategies as needed
  - participate in designing their learning programs.

What are the key elements of the Curriculum Framework?

CURRICULUM BANDS

The single framework has been designed for all 4 curriculum bands from birth to year 12.

- Early Years Band (birth to Year 2)
- Primary Years Band (Years 3, 4 and 5)
- Middle Years Band (Years 6, 7, 8 and 9)
- Senior Years Band (Years 10, 11 and 12).

Band Introductions have been developed to assist educators to consider in their curriculum planning the distinctive characteristics of learners and learning at particular stages in their education and care.

CURRICULUM SCOPE

The Curriculum Scope is organised around Learning Areas through which Essential Learnings, Equity Cross-curriculum Perspectives and Enterprise and Vocational Education are interwoven.

The **Key Ideas** within each Learning Area contain the fundamental concepts of the Framework. They increase in complexity across the Curriculum Bands from Early Years to Senior Years. The Key Ideas are a required part of the Framework. Examples of important aspects support each Key Idea. Educators will add other aspects pertinent to their learners' explorations of the Key Idea.

Learning Areas

The Learning Areas change through the Early Years to capture the rapid growth and broadening horizons of young children. The Learning Areas for students from Reception to Year 12 are drawn from the *Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century* (MCEETYA, 1999). In the SACSA Framework, these Learning Areas are structured and organised through strands. The diagram on page 6 lists the Learning Areas for all Curriculum Bands.

Essential Learnings

Essential Learnings describe the values, dispositions, skills and understandings that are considered crucial in the education and development of all learners in our care. The development of these learnings is an ongoing, lifelong process and occurs in every context of a learner's life. All curriculum Learning Areas contribute to learners' development of the Essential Learnings. They are coded throughout the framework.

Futures	Learners develop the flexibility to respond to change, recognise connections with the past and conceive solutions for preferred futures.
Identity	Learners develop a positive sense of self and group, accept individual and group responsibilities and respect individual and group differences.
Interdependence	Learners develop the ability to work in harmony with others and for common purposes, within and across cultures.
Thinking	Learners become independent and critical thinkers, with the ability to appraise information, make decisions, be innovative and devise creative solutions.
Communication	Learners develop their abilities to communicate powerfully using literacy, numeracy and information and communication technologies.

Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technologies

A part of the scope of Essential Learning, Communication, literacy and numeracy skills and information and communication technologies are explicit and developed throughout the Framework in all Learning Areas. This provides a basis for all educators to address the critical aspects of children's and students' education. Implicit within the Framework are the National Literacy and Numeracy Benchmarks, and an industry-recognised certification in information and communication technologies for students by the end of Year 10.

Equity Cross-curriculum Perspectives

The framework maintains and extends South Australia's reputation and tradition for inclusive curriculum and practice.

Equity perspectives are represented throughout the framework as important learning for all children and students.

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' perspectives
- Multicultural perspectives
- Gender perspectives
- Socioeconomic perspectives
- Disability perspectives
- Rural and isolated perspectives.

The framework has been designed so that it includes all groups of:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners
- learners from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds
- learners who have English as their second language
- learners with disabilities or learning difficulties
- learners from low socioeconomic backgrounds
- particular groups of girls and boys
- learners from an isolated or rural background.

Enterprise and Vocational Education

This focus reflects the national and state education, training, work and life long learning priorities made explicit in the *Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century* which states that students leaving school should have:

> *'employment related skills, and an understanding of the work environment, career options and pathways as a foundation for, and positive attitudes towards, vocational education and training, further education, employment and lifelong learning…'.*
>
> (MCEETYA, 1999)

Vocational Learning

Vocational learning provides key and important contexts for general education, and so is explicitly interwoven in the framework.

- Enterprise education
- Career education
- Work-based learning
- Community-based learning

Key Competencies are skills which underpin the transition from school to work, training and lifelong learning. They are included explicitly and coded:

KC1: collecting, analysing and organising information
KC2: communicating ideas and information
KC3: planning and organising activities
KC4: working with others in teams
KC5: using mathematical ideas and techniques
KC6: solving problems
KC7: using technology.

Vocational Education and Training (VET)

In the school context this refers to nationally accredited and industry-specific entry level training programs which deliver competencies endorsed within the National Vocational Education and Training Framework and provide credentials within the Australian Qualifications Framework.

STANDARDS

The Standards in the framework represent the expectations we have of learners. They provide a common reference point for educators to use in monitoring, judging and reporting on learner achievement over time.

Standards are also organised around Learning Areas in which Essential Learnings, Equity Cross-curriculum Perspectives and Enterprise and Vocational Education are interwoven. They are made up of Outcomes and examples of evidence. Outcomes are a required part of the framework. Examples of evidence represent features and characteristics of performance at a particular Standard, and suggest those qualities of learner performance which provide evidence of achievement.

There are three types of Standards:

1. Developmental Learning Outcomes for learners in the first two phases of the Early Years Band (Birth to Age 3 and Age 3 to Age 5). These describe the dimensions of learning and development towards which young children make progress.
2. Curriculum Standards 1 to 5 for reception to Year 10 learners. The Curriculum Standards are aligned with years of schooling:

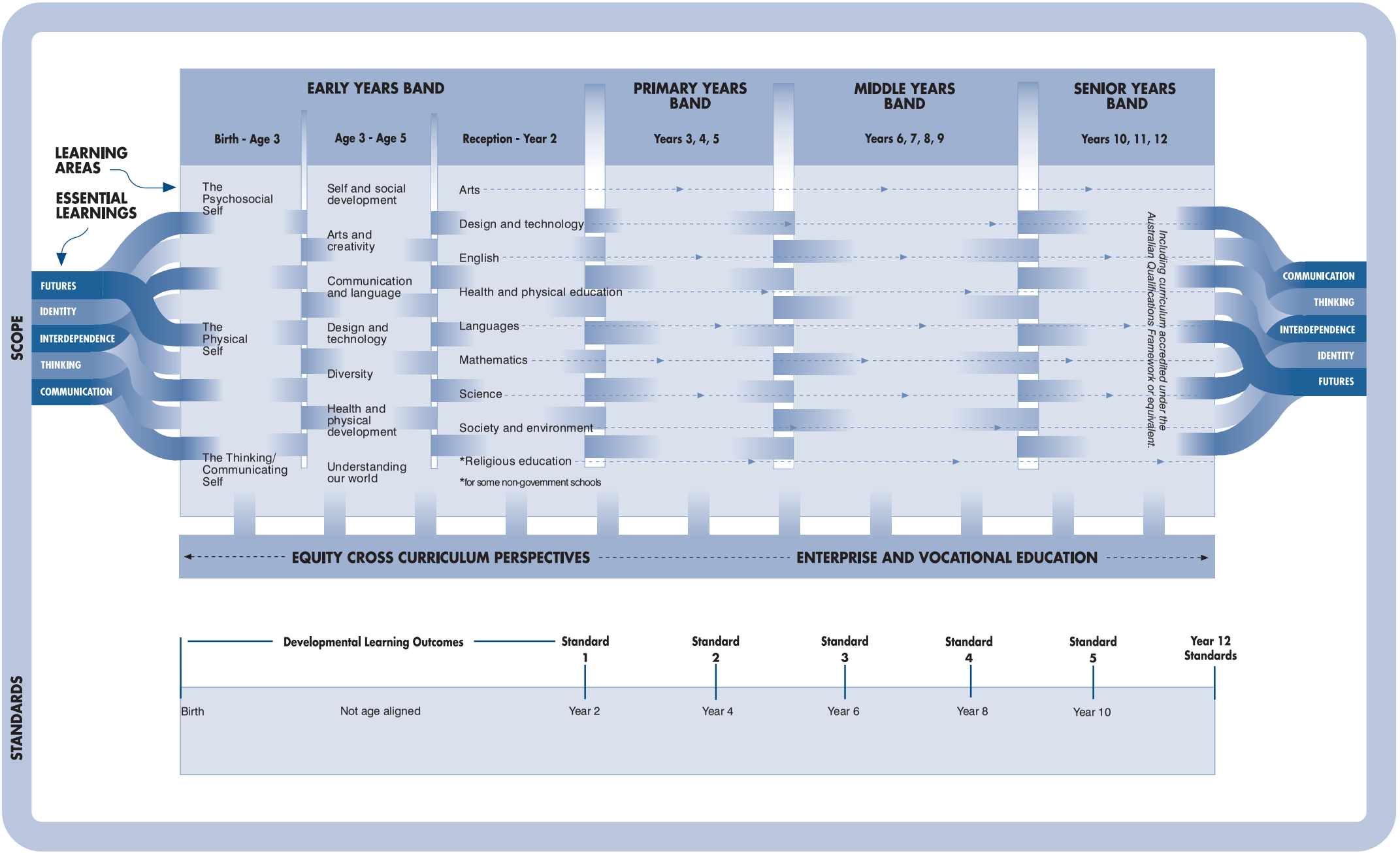
Towards the end of year 2	Standard 1
Towards the end of year 4	Standard 2
Towards the end of year 6	Standard 3
Towards the end of year 8	Standard 4
Towards the end of year 10	Standard 5

   Achievement of a Curriculum Standard means the learner has achieved all Outcomes in all strands for a particular Learning Area.
3. Year 12 Standards for senior secondary students. These include the use of externally accredited curriculum coupled with the Essential Learnings.

The diagram on the following page illustrates the relationship between the Curriculum Scope and Standards.

The diagram on page 7 explains how the Scope and Standards are presented in the Primary Years Band of the Framework.

Scope and Standards Overview



Example of Scope and Standards pages

From **Primary Years Band** • *Learning Area:* **Science** • *Strand:* **Matter**

KEY IDEA: fundamental concept within a strand of a Learning Area – a required element of the Framework.

CURRICULUM SCOPE

CURRICULUM STANDARDS

STANDARD: represents the expected performance of all learners at the end of a two-year period along a continuum of ever-improving performance. It is the common reference point for monitoring, judging and reporting on learner achievement.

Strand: matter

Students study and report on the stability and changes that occur in materials in and around their homes and relate these to processes, attitudes and future needs.
F • C • KC2

Key Idea

This includes such learning as:

- investigating and describing reversible and irreversible changes to material states (eg whipped cream, boiled eggs, bread, salt/sand mixtures, cooked pizza, melted ice, wax, decomposition of garden waste, and corrosion of metals) **T • C** • KC1 • KC2
- comparing alternative processes for preserving and distributing foods (eg drying, freezing, smoking, preserving, canning), the ways in which these construct the nature of work in homes and relevant industries, and their implications for natural environments **In** • KC1
- critically examining properties of materials with respect to composting, recycling and reusing. They set up safe investigations, collate data, create databases, make informed decisions and take appropriate action **In • F** • KC1 • KC2 • KC3 • KC6
- describing changes of state from solid to liquid, liquid to gas and vice versa (using common materials such as water vapour, water and ice) and relating these to energy use in their homes and other places in their communities **T • C** • KC2
- identifying some issues with environmental implications (eg litter on a beach, polluted water or air) and discussing why the issues exist. Students take part in projects that involve planning and taking appropriate action to address the issues, including consideration of new problems arriving from the solutions arrived at. **F** • **C** • KC2 • KC3 • KC6

EXAMPLES of important aspects of the Key Idea. Other examples can be developed.

Represents an **ESSENTIAL LEARNING**

Represents a **KEY COMPETENCY**

At Standard 1, towards the end of Year 2, the child:	*At Standard 2, towards the end of Year 4, the student:*	*At Standard 3, towards the end of Year 6, the student:*
1.8	2.8	3.8
Identifies and predicts materials that change and do not change. **T** • KC1	***Predicts, investigates and describes changes in common materials when acted upon in various ways.*** **F • C** • KC6	***Uses the changes in properties and uses of materials in product life cycles.*** **T • C** • KC1
Examples of evidence include that the child: • predicts changes that occur in food during the storage, preparation and cooking process **T** • KC6 • chooses one property of a material, plans an investigation, and observes changes over time **T** • KC1 • KC3 • works with others or in teams to contribute ideas about how to make investigations about materials fairer. **T • C** • KC4 • KC6	*Examples of evidence include that the student:* • investigates variables which determine the rate of change (eg dissolving sugar in water) **T • F** • KC1 • predicts, plans and safely conducts an investigation to find out which materials will compost **In** • KC3 • KC6 • organises and presents findings in multiple ways about changes in materials over time (eg diagrams, tables, slide show presentations) **C** • KC2 • KC3 • debates the value of composting, recycling and reusing materials for the sustainability of future environments and human life. **F • C** • KC2	*Examples of evidence include that the student:* • explains how the behaviour of particles affects the properties of materials. They demonstrate the behaviour of particles in solids, liquids and gases (eg by participating in a role-play) **T • C** • KC2 • reviews and evaluates processes of recycling, reusing and disposal and when these are appropriate **T • C** • KC3 • uses websites and search engines to research world reserves of fossil fuels, evaluates their use and distribution, and communicates these findings to others. **C** • KC1 • KC2 • KC7

EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE: indicate qualities of performance that suggest the learner has achieved the particular Outcome. Other examples can be developed.

OUTCOME: describes what will be observed or inferred through the learner's engagement with the Curriculum Scope – a required element of the Framework.

Each Key Idea (on left hand page) is aligned with the related Outcome sequence (on right hand page).

Each Standards page highlights (in the middle column) the Outcome expected of learners towards the end of a two-year period within the Band. The left hand column shows performance expected at the previous Standard and the right hand column indicates performance at the next Standard.

Note: Essential Learnings, Equity Cross-curriculum Perspectives and Enterprise and Vocational Education are interwoven through all Key Ideas and their examples and Outcomes and examples of evidence.

Note: Achievement of a Standard means that the learner has achieved all Outcomes in all strands for a particular Learning Area.

CURRICULUM ACCOUNTABILITY

Curriculum Accountability is defined as the professional responsibility of educators, site leaders and state office personnel to:

- provide a comprehensive account of the Developmental Learning Outcomes and Curriculum Standards achieved by learners
- explicitly account for the steps taken to improve learning outcomes.

The key dimensions of Curriculum Accountability are:

1. Constructing a responsive curriculum, based on the SACSA Framework and on an understanding of the diversity of learners and their needs.
2. Providing ongoing feedback to learners, based on a range of assessment strategies.
3. Implementing intervention and support programs, based on analyses of learner achievement data.
4. Reporting to learners, parents and caregivers, and the community, the learning Outcomes and Standards achieved.

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