

General Introduction

Birth to Year 12

FUTURES

IDENTITY

INTERDEPENDENCE

THINKING

COMMUNICATION

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The SACSA Framework

The vision and the context



The crucial role of the educator in making our futures in changing times

Children and students and their learning are at the heart of our work as educators: the partnerships we establish with learners, parents and caregivers, families and the community are crucial to the progress of learners and to the future of our society.

The continuous nature of change in society, including the generation of new knowledge, affects our centres, schools, and the communities they serve. To do justice to our important role of educating children and students to meet the requirements of the dynamic society in which they live and work, our curriculum and pedagogies need to be dynamic as well.

A reality facing educators is constructing and implementing a curriculum when the knowledge base of our society is expanding rapidly. This includes the shift to a knowledge and service-based society with an accompanying:

- acceleration in the rate of development and transfer of knowledge
- development of new technologies and forms of communication
- growth of knowledge-mediated industries and services.

This shift has a number of social and curriculum effects. Formal educational institutions no longer have the dominant role of knowledge generation and transmission in our society. As knowledge is 'democratised' through being generated and dispersed in multiple and increasingly accessible ways, so children and students acquire a range of knowledge, skills and dispositions from varied sources. Such change means that it is no longer sufficient to acquire new knowledge. It is just as important to have the capability to manage it, including the capability to bring critical understandings to bear on the selection and analysis of information and to understand the power of knowledge, the potential for both its positive and negative use, and the importance of ethical inquiry and action.

These changes are also having effects on social relations. Changes to the patterns of family life, the nature of work, the functions of government, and the social and physical mobility of people are breaking down old boundaries developed around location, class, age, gender, ability, race and ethnicity.

As people are exposed to globalising cultures through the media, consumer products and information technology, so traditional authority structures are being challenged. The interaction of

diverse cultures, both locally and globally, impact on individual and group identities. It is almost impossible to be isolated from the products, images and messages that circulate around the globe and merge with established traditions and practices to shape new meanings and cultures.

In children's services and schools we recognise the implications of these increasingly fluid social relations, including the diversity of learners and their wide-ranging and new needs in curriculum and teaching practices. This South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability (SACSA) Framework reflects these realities.

The educational response to change

It would be a mistake to imagine that children and young people are overwhelmed by changing times: rapid change has been a constant in their lives. Nonetheless the fact that they may not be discomfited by change should not be taken to suggest that without education, developed systematically and rigorously, they can manage its consequences. Far from making formal and informal education processes and educational institutions redundant, the demands of living in today's knowledge-based, globalising society make education more important than ever.

As educators, our challenge is to construct a curriculum response which meets the emerging and rapidly changing and future demands of a knowledge economy and society. This certainly has implications for the kinds of knowledge and skills that children and students need to be able to engage productively with change. It also has implications for the values and dispositions we want to foster, that is those tendencies to think and act in positive ways and to monitor and reflect on one's own thinking and actions. Like any resource, knowledge can be used for both positive and negative ends, often simultaneously. This points to the centrality of an ethical dimension for curriculum in changing times.

Of course these are not just questions engaging South Australian educators. The recent UNESCO report *Learning: The treasure within* (commonly known as the Delors Report) calls for the creation of an international educational community working together to foster in children and students powerful thinking and acting on a global scale.

... while education is an ongoing process of improving knowledge and skills, it is also—perhaps primarily—an exceptional means of bringing about personal development and building relationships among individuals, groups and nations.

Delors 1996

Nationally, Australia has declared its goals for schooling for this new century. All Australian governments have affirmed the purposes and nature of schooling for our children and students in their declaration of the *National goals for schooling in the twenty-first century*.

Schooling provides a foundation for young Australians' intellectual, physical, social, moral, spiritual and aesthetic development ... Schooling should develop fully the talents and capacities of all students.

MCEETYA 1999

The SACSA Framework has been developed in the spirit of these national and international directions. It does not mean a total recasting of the existing curriculum frameworks. Rather, the SACSA Framework has emerged from a process of reassessing current guidelines in the light of an analysis of the demands of contemporary society, informed predictions about the future, research findings and the experience of educators and learners. Given this, there is much about the SACSA Framework that is familiar.

There are also some new aspects. These build on the requirements for successfully living with and influencing change in the twenty-first century and reflect the insights of educators in relation to these matters. In particular the SACSA Framework contains several distinctive aspects and qualities.

A focus on learning through Essential Learnings

Drawing upon a constructivist view of learning, the Framework explicitly identifies five Essential Learnings which, together with concepts and processes drawn from the Learning Areas, provide the connecting threads for the whole curriculum: Futures, Identity, Interdependence, Thinking and Communication. These are understandings, capabilities and dispositions which are developed through the Learning Areas and form an integral part of children's and students' learning from birth to Year 12 and beyond. They are resources which are drawn upon throughout life and enable people to productively engage with changing times as thoughtful, active, responsive and committed local, national and global citizens.

A focus on coherence in the Framework

The SACSA Framework seeks to foster the holistic development of learners by providing a coherent Birth to Year 12 framework. This represents coherence in a longitudinal sense. In addition, holism also relates to coherence at any phase from Birth–Year 12, in that at all phases a child or student has developed a conception of learning as a whole. Thus holism and the importance of making connections are central. These characteristics have a number of effects, most importantly that they support continuity in learning and the transition of children and students across the years of their education and schooling, between educational sites, services and groupings.

A focus on Enterprise and Vocational Education

The SACSA Framework encourages a culture of lifelong learning which integrates general education, enterprise and vocational education. This enables students to develop and refine, throughout their formal education, creative, innovative and collaborative ways of living and working; and to consider the evolving future possibilities for work and recreation in their lives.

A focus on equity

The SACSA Framework reaffirms a long-held belief that education is central to the making of a fairer society. The flexibility of the SACSA Framework enables programs to be devised which do not privilege or exclude particular groups, and which encourage all learners to reach their potential and achieve success. In addition equity is made a central curriculum consideration through the Learning Areas, the Essential Learnings and a number of cross-curriculum perspectives. In this way learners come to recognise the nature and causes of inequality, and understand that these are socially constructed and can therefore be changed through people's actions.

A focus on standards

The SACSA Framework represents high expectations for all learners. It requires educators to reference children's and students' learning in relation to levels of performance or standards expected at particular points of their education. The Standards in the Framework depict the developing capabilities of children and students along a continuum of ever improving performance. In particular, this represents a change from the curriculum profiles where the emphasis was on describing or profiling learners' accomplishments at any time along the continuum of their learning.

The SACSA Framework supports a futures-oriented curriculum while building on existing practices. In South Australia the curriculum of the future is not an artefact designed by a group of 'experts'; it builds from and on the daily work of educators. Thus the SACSA Framework is the current iteration of curriculum in South Australia, reflecting curriculum discussion and debate over the past decade, and maintaining the dynamic and ongoing nature of the curriculum conversation in this state.



The SACSA Framework

The rationale



The coherence of the SACSA Framework

There is much in the SACSA Framework that will be familiar to educators, as it builds on the *Foundation areas of learning* and the *Curriculum statements and profiles for Australian schools*, using the insights of educators over the past few years.

The SACSA Framework describes a single, cohesive Birth to Year 12 curriculum entitlement for all learners within children's services and schools. It addresses both the artificial separation of the developing child's learning into stages of care and parts of schooling, and the fragmentation of learning within and across Learning Areas. It focuses on the coherence of the whole rather than the parts. It also provides flexibility through its breadth while ensuring curriculum continuity through its sequence and holistic learning through its emphasis on connections.

The Birth to Year 12 nature of the SACSA Framework is designed to support the progress of learners across phases of their education and schooling, educational sites and groupings. This characteristic has a number of effects. It allows for more flexibility in educational programs, enabling these to better suit the needs and interests of individual learners. It further encourages the active involvement of parents and caregivers in their children's education as they see the connections between where children and students have come from and where they are going in their education. And it facilitates collaboration between educators within and across the various phases of education because of an increased awareness of what is happening elsewhere in the system, and across Learning Areas.

As always, at the heart of the education process lies the relationship between the educator and the learner, no matter what the stage of development of the learner. The flexibility of the SACSA Framework places a premium on this relationship. It gives educators the responsibility for devising learning programs, and explicitly teaching knowledge and skills that are designed to meet the needs of particular learning contexts and specific groups of learners; for example English as a second language (ESL) learners as they undertake the additional learning of Standard Australian English.

Thus the SACSA Framework operates as a guide to educators, and it rests on the decisions and practices of educators to support learning and learners.

The common aspects of the SACSA Framework

The SACSA Framework is based firmly on a commitment to the principle that all children and students should have access to a common curriculum entitlement. It does not assume, of course, that equal curriculum access will produce equality of educational outcomes. We have enough evidence now to know that often curriculum can work in ways which favour some learners and exclude others. The challenge is to ensure—and here the flexibility of the SACSA Framework is important—that programs are devised which do not privilege or exclude particular groups, and which enable all learners to achieve success and become powerful shapers of our society.

The SACSA Framework seeks to resolve the tension between the commitment to a common curriculum entitlement and the concept of educators constructing different approaches to meet the diverse needs of learners. It does so by representing a number of key and common aspects which operate to integrate the Framework and provide its holism and coherence. These aspects include:

- a conception of learning which is drawn from constructivist learning theories
- a view of whole-of-curriculum learner capabilities which are captured in five Essential Learnings
- a focus on Enterprise and Vocational Education
- a focus on Equity Cross-curriculum Perspectives, inclusive of all learners, that places at the heart of the curriculum the knowledges and cultures of those groups which traditionally have been marginalised
- a commitment to high expectations for all learners and the ongoing monitoring of children's and students' learning against the Outcomes described within the Standards in the SACSA Framework.

Each of these aspects works on and through the concepts and processes of the Learning Areas in each Band. These are familiar to South Australian educators. The difference from the *Foundation areas of learning* and the *Curriculum statements and profiles for Australian schools* is the way in which the five key aspects are designed to integrate systematically what has tended to operate as compartmentalised knowledge. Each will be discussed in turn in the remainder of this section of the introduction.

Constructivism and the SACSA Framework

Every educational process contains some notion of the learner and of the society in which the learning takes place. In addition all educational work carries an implicit concept of learning: what it is, who does it, how it happens and what can be done to facilitate it. In the SACSA Framework the underpinning learning theories are made explicit.

The theoretical basis for the conception of learning in the SACSA Framework is provided by the family of theories of learning that are grouped under the title 'constructivism'. While theoretical distinctions exist between particular versions of constructivism, such as personal, social and radical, it is this family of theories which have guided the preparation of the Framework.

The central thesis of constructivism is that the learner is active in the process of taking in information and building knowledge and understanding; in other words, of constructing their own learning. Learning then is the active process of engaging in experience and its internalisation in terms of thinking. All forms of experience can be called upon here. Constructivism also has clear implications for the social situation or context in which learning happens, in so far as learners are more likely to engage in constructing their own understanding in a supportive social environment.

Learners, however, are not social islands. They exist in a cultural context with others, and in turn this social context is shared with other groups and, at a different level, with other species. Individuals enter a context where there are already many shared understandings. In their most sophisticated form such understandings can be classed as cultural knowledge. Each individual is not expected to remake or rediscover such knowledge.

Thus, while individuals actively give personal meaning to a given situation, they do so within frames of cultural understandings that are made up of some knowledge that is relatively stable and other knowledge that is very dynamic. A learner's prior experiences and prior knowledge will shape the meanings they draw upon in particular situations.

It follows that learning is an active process in which learners construct new ideas or concepts based upon their current and past understandings. That is:

- the learner selects, interprets and transforms information; constructs hypotheses; and makes decisions, relying on a cognitive structure to do so
- mental models provide the means by which an individual interprets and organises experience in order to elaborate and extend current understandings, and their overall framework of knowledge.

There are a number of implications which flow from a constructivist approach, not the least of which is that the Framework itself has been written to be consistent with constructivism in order to support the development of teaching and learning.

The SACSA Framework does not represent a prescribed body of knowledge or authorise a particular way of going about teaching. Rather, it describes a set of parameters within which educators work to design their own teaching, and promotes contexts within which children and students construct their own learning.

Constructivism, with its emphasis on holism and on learners making connections, sets up the potential for developing learning across subject areas as well as between stages of education. From this perspective the curriculum framework is best understood in terms of knowledge across fields, rather than as rigidly boxed into discrete subjects. Within this model of learning educators play a crucial role in encouraging children and students to discover deeper principles and make connections among ideas, or between concepts, processes and their representation. The pedagogy that is best suited to this process is engagement in interactive talk, through which the educator aims to offer, reinterpret and challenge relevant information, based on an assessment of the learner's current state of understanding.

In general educational terms this view of learning suggests the need for curricula that match, and also challenge, children's and students' understanding, fostering further growth and development. In a representational sense the constructivist view of learning can be depicted as a spiral in which learners continually extend and deepen what they have already learned. This view of learning calls for holistic approaches to planning, teaching, learning and assessing. For example, it involves fostering motivation by making learning purposeful, contextualised, challenging and inherently interesting. Teaching means providing a range and variety of learning tasks with appropriate kinds and levels of scaffolding. It no longer means strict adherence to a pre-determined linear series of facts, skills and sub-skills set out in a program of study. Rather, it involves professional judgment as to where learners are and what they need next in their learning. It recognises that children and students learn collaboratively in a team or social setting, within highly challenging but low threat environments, that children and students welcome challenge and prefer to

search for and find patterns for themselves. Assessment becomes a matter of judging, through a range and variety of assessment tasks, how children and students are progressing in their learning within Learning Areas, Essential Learnings, and across the curriculum as a whole.

SACSA teaching/learning principles derived from a constructivist view

- **Learning is the process of constructing knowledge.**
- **Learning is not linear; it involves learners extending, elaborating, reorganising, reformulating and reflecting upon their own frameworks of knowledge.**
- **Learning involves building on prior knowledge.**
- **Learning is making explicit the implicit conceptions, frameworks and explanatory systems in the minds of learners, which shape how they interpret and what they learn. Learners' conceptions are embedded in their culture and tied to their use of language.**
- **Learning occurs in a context, and the understandings about the context are part of what is learned.**
- **Learning involves learners communicating their questions, intuitions, conjectures, reasons, explanations, judgments and ideas in a variety of forms.**
- **Learning involves developing knowledge, skills and dispositions to think and act in ways which determine individual effort, the setting of personal goals, self-assessment and awareness of the uses (and misuses or abuses) of knowledge.**
- **Learning involves the progression of learners through cycles of growth.**

What knowledge, skills and dispositions should children and students develop within a constructivist learning framework? One of the responses to this question involves a second common aspect of the SACSA Framework: the Essential Learnings.

Essential Learnings and the SACSA Framework

To understand where Essential Learnings have come from, we need to return to the notion of changing times and consider the implications for children and students.

Social commentators now refer to our youth as the 'options generation', by which they mean that their post-school world is not one characterised by the certainty of employment and career-long pathways. Instead they engage with many possibilities and uncertainties in employment, recreation and community activities. There is a rich variety of options open to them, which are constantly changing.

The challenge is to develop the personal resources and flexibility to be able to take advantage of what is on offer, to possess the capabilities to apply knowledge, skills and experiences to new and different contexts and situations, and to be able to act responsibly with regard to others. Amidst diversity and opportunity, the challenge for educators is to facilitate the systematic learning of these capabilities. In the SACSA Framework they have been identified as 'Essential Learnings'.

These understandings, capabilities and dispositions are personal and intellectual qualities, not bodies of knowledge, and they are developed throughout an individual's life. They are intended to broaden the options for, and so enrich the lives of, all people in our society.

Within the SACSA Framework, five Essential Learnings have been identified. They are: Futures, Identity, Interdependence, Thinking and Communication. Specifically these Essential Learnings foster the capabilities to:

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

Each Essential Learning is elaborated below and the Essential Learnings are provided as an overview diagram on page 15.

Futures

What knowledge, skills and dispositions are required to maximise opportunities in creating preferred futures?

Learners develop a sense of optimism about their ability to actively contribute to shaping preferred futures and capabilities to critically reflect on, and take action in, shaping preferred futures.

Curriculum developed from this Framework provides opportunities and skills for learners to critically examine future possibilities and challenge commonly held assumptions about the past, present and future. Through such analysis learners understand that the future has connections with the present and the past, and that social, political, economic and physical environments are constantly changing and can be improved. Thus the major theme of this learning is creating sustainable natural environments, and just and sustainable human environments.

Identity

What knowledge, skills and dispositions are required to critically understand self-identity, group-identity and relationships?

Through this Essential Learning children and students develop a sense of personal and group identity and capabilities to contribute to, critically reflect on, and take action to shape relationships.

Curriculum developed from this Framework provides learnings about the nature of identity, both of the self and groups, and through these understandings the value and nature of diversity and social complexity. Learners gain understandings of, and confidence in, themselves through their capabilities to relate to others in culturally diverse communities; and by establishing relationships based on self-knowledge and respect for, and understandings of, the knowledges of others.

Interdependence

What knowledge, skills and dispositions are required to critically understand the systems to which lives are connected, and to participate positively in shaping them?

Through this Essential Learning children and students develop a sense of being connected with their world and capabilities to contribute to, critically reflect on, and take action to shape local and global communities.

Curriculum developed from this Framework provides structures and processes for learners to critically examine the social, political, cultural, economic and environmental systems to which they belong and contribute. They understand the patterns and evolutions that have shaped, and continue to shape, cultures, languages and the structures that connect and divide peoples and societies. In understanding their own interdependence and developing their own world view, they take civic action in supporting sustainable physical environments and just social environments.

Thinking

What knowledge, skills and dispositions are required to develop particular habits of mind, to create and innovate, and to generate solutions?

Through this Essential Learning children and students develop a sense of the power of creativity, wisdom and enterprise and capabilities to evaluate and generate ideas and solutions.

Curriculum developed from this Framework provides learners with opportunities to think about thinking and to develop enterprising attributes. By developing a range of systematic, logical, innovating and rigorous thinking and action processes, learners are able to solve problems creatively and generate solutions. They draw on thinking from a range of times and cultures and expand their capabilities for living in, and improving, a technologically based knowledge society and for being enterprising citizens.

Communication

What knowledge, skills and dispositions are required to construct and deconstruct meaning, and to critically understand the power of communication and its technologies?

Learners develop a sense of the power and potential of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technologies. They develop their capabilities to critically reflect on, and shape, the present and future through powerful uses of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technologies.

Curriculum developed from this Framework provides a focus on the development of literacy and numeracy skills, and of the technologies through which these are often expressed and through which information is generated and managed. Learners develop a wider understanding of the different modes of communication, and an ability to critically analyse the power of communication and the ways to access that power in order to become strong communicators in a variety of contexts.

Essential Learnings

Overview

Essential Learnings are understandings, dispositions and capabilities which are developed through the Learning Areas and form an integral part of children's and students' learning from birth to Year 12 and beyond. They are resources which are drawn upon throughout life and enable people to productively engage with changing times as thoughtful, active, responsive and committed local, national and global citizens. Engaging with these concepts is crucial to enhancing the learning culture within and beyond schools/sites.

Essential Learnings

ASPECTS of Essential Learnings

FUTURES

What knowledge, skills and dispositions are required to maximise opportunities in creating preferred futures?

Learners develop:

- a sense of optimism about their ability to actively contribute to shaping preferred futures
- capabilities to critically reflect on, plan and take action to shape preferred futures.

This includes:

- understanding patterns and connections within systems
- understanding world views when analysing future challenges
- building scenarios of preferred futures
- demonstrating lifelong learning.

IDENTITY

What knowledge, skills and dispositions are required to critically understand self-identity, group-identity and relationships?

Learners develop:

- a sense of personal and group identity
- capabilities to contribute to, critically reflect on, plan and take action to shape relationships.

This includes:

- understanding self, groups and others
- understanding the social construction of identities
- relating effectively to, and collaborating with, others regardless of their identities.

INTERDEPENDENCE

What knowledge, skills and dispositions are required to critically understand the systems to which lives are connected and to participate positively in shaping them?

Learners develop:

- a sense of being connected with their worlds
- capabilities to contribute to, critically reflect on, plan and take action to shape local and global communities.

This includes:

- understanding cultural and global connections, patterns and evolutions
- understanding what is needed for sustainable social and physical environments
- acting cooperatively to achieve agreed outcomes
- taking civic action to benefit community.

THINKING

What knowledge, skills and dispositions are required to develop particular habits of mind, to create and innovate, and to generate solutions?

Learners develop:

- a sense of the power of creativity, wisdom and enterprise
- capabilities to critically evaluate, plan and generate ideas and solutions.

This includes:

- using a wide range of thinking modes
- drawing on thinking from a range of times and cultures
- demonstrating enterprising attributes
- initiating enterprising and creative solutions for contemporary issues.

COMMUNICATION

What knowledge, skills and dispositions are required to construct and deconstruct meaning, and to critically understand the power of communication and its technologies?

Learners develop:

- a sense of the power and potential of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technologies
- capabilities to critically reflect on and shape the present and future through powerful uses of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technologies.

This includes:

- understanding the complexity and power of language and data and their pivotal role in communication
- understanding how communication works
- making effective use of language, mathematical and information and communication technology tools
- using communication in a range of modes to achieve identified outcomes.

Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technologies and the SACSA Framework

Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technologies (ICTs) are key dimensions of all Essential Learnings, and in particular the Communication Essential Learning. Skills, knowledge and understandings in these are explicitly interwoven throughout the Curriculum Scope and Standards for all Learning Areas in the SACSA Framework.

Literacy

Learners develop and use operational skills in literacy to understand, analyse, critically respond to and produce appropriate spoken, written, visual and multimedia communications in different contexts.

Numeracy

Learners develop and use operational skills in numeracy to understand, analyse, critically respond to and use mathematics in different contexts. These understandings relate to measurement, spatial sense, patterns and algebra and data and number.

Information and communication technologies (ICTs)

Learners develop and use operational skills in information and communication technologies to critically design and construct texts, search for and sort information, and communicate with others.

Enterprise and Vocational Education and the SACSA Framework

A further common aspect of the SACSA Framework is a focus on Enterprise and Vocational Education. This focus reflects the national and state education, training, work and lifelong learning priorities made explicit in the National Goals of Schooling which state 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 education is a broad concept encompassing all elements related to education, the world of work and school–industry links. It has two major components—vocational learning and Vocational Education and Training (VET).

Vocational learning

Vocational learning provides key and important contexts for general education, and so is an entitlement of all learners from birth to Year 12. It includes children and students developing knowledge, skills and attitudes through five components. These are described in the DETE Statement of Future Directions, *Enterprise and Vocational Education*, and are explicitly interwoven in the SACSA Framework through the Learning Areas and through connections with the Essential Learnings. They are:

Key Competencies: skills which underpin the transition from school to work, training and lifelong learning. These combine with the Essential Learnings to promote a range of 'Key Competencies' considered to be essential for future, socially active citizens. These competencies are:

Key Competencies	Descriptors
KC1: collecting, analysing and organising information	The capacity to locate information, sift and sort the information in order to select what is required and present it in a useful way, and evaluate both the information itself and the sources and methods used to obtain it.
KC2: communicating ideas and information	The capacity to communicate effectively with others using a whole range of spoken, written, graphic and other non-verbal means of expression.
KC3: planning and organising activities	The capacity to plan and organise one's own work activities, including making good use of time and resources, sorting out priorities and monitoring performance.
KC4: working with others in teams	The capacity to interact effectively with other people both on a one-to-one basis and in groups, including understanding and responding to the needs of others and working effectively as a member of a team to achieve a shared goal.
KC5: using mathematical ideas and techniques	The capacity to use mathematical ideas, such as number and space, and techniques, such as estimation and approximation, for practical purposes.
KC6: solving problems	The capacity to apply problem-solving strategies in purposeful ways, both in situations where the problem and the desired solution are clearly evident, and in situations requiring critical thinking and a creative approach to achieve an outcome.
KC7: using technology	The capacity to apply technology, combining the physical and sensory skills needed to operate equipment with the understanding of scientific and technological principles needed to explore and adapt systems.

Enterprise Education: developing enterprising skills and attributes which equip students to identify, create, initiate and successfully manage personal, business, work and community opportunities; and to evaluate achievements—using initiative and drive, being creative and innovative, being positive and flexible, making decisions and solving problems, planning and organising, communicating and negotiating, managing resources and people, working cooperatively, and reviewing and assessing

Career Education: learning about self in relation to work; understanding, making and implementing career decisions

Work-based learning: involving structured programs designed to promote understandings about the changing nature of paid/unpaid work and patterns of employment

Community-based learning: connecting meaningful community activity with classroom experience, and addressing specific problems, issues or practices that have been negotiated with the community.

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.

Enterprise and Vocational Education and the Essential Learnings

In the SACSA Framework, Enterprise and Vocational Education is interwoven explicitly through the Scope and Standards of the Learning Areas, and through connections with the Essential Learnings. Together they offer a powerful means by which children and students can develop the skills, understandings and dispositions to be active and creative lifelong learners in a knowledge society and economy and more enterprising and innovative within their community and working lives.

Equity and the SACSA Framework

Another common aspect which contributes to the holism and coherence of the SACSA Framework is a commitment to the belief that education is a major factor in the creation of a more just society. Thus, across the Framework consistent attention is paid to the centrality of equity perspectives and to ensuring that the Framework promotes powerful learning for all learners; in the words of The National Goals of Schooling, 'schooling should be socially just'.

Conceptualising equity in the SACSA Framework

Educators are increasingly aware of the extent to which the official curriculum and much educational practice has tended to favour some learners and disadvantage others. Significant effort has gone into trying to understand how and why the curriculum has these unequal effects. Research, policy development and educational practice have shown that, at different times and stages, the language and content of the dominant competitive academic curriculum reflects the 'cultural capital' of particular groups while marginalising that of others. That is, the curriculum tends to favour those in the community who have the largest share of financial and cultural resources, and so contributes to the maintenance of a society where there is already an unequal distribution of wealth and power.

Many years of research and action by educators have made some inroads into addressing inequities. Indeed South Australia has been long recognised as a national leader in this area; and these efforts cannot be relaxed. It is important that, as the curriculum evolves, the insights gleaned from research and educational practices in relation to equity be incorporated.

In the SACSA Framework the starting point for thinking about equity is a recognition of the increasing complexity and diversity of social relations, and of the knowledges, languages and cultures that different individuals and groups possess in a post-modern world. This diversity is something which must be critically understood and appreciated by all citizens in our society. Through education learners explore the different knowledges, in all their diversity and complexity, that represent the lives, cultures and heritages of different groups. Thus educators can facilitate increased understandings about the differences that exist among groups, and about those things which connect us as global and national citizens.

Beyond the fact of diversity are the unequal resources which exist within and between groups. This points to a second social objective, that of opportunity. We need to construct an education system, especially including its curriculum, which is accessible to, and which provides opportunities for, all people.

These two social objectives of diversity and opportunity are central to the building of a fairer and more compassionate society. However, since their achievement is dependent upon human action, it also requires citizens who possess the requisite understandings, capabilities and dispositions to work towards that end. The education system is the most important avenue at our disposal for the development of these attributes.

Developing equity through the SACSA Framework

A key aspect is the recognition that the social objectives of diversity and opportunity are pursued within a context of power, history, privilege, location, change, complexity and ambiguity. Through an investigation of diversity, learners will inevitably confront issues of social advantage/disadvantage; privilege/marginality; and differential access to power. In so doing education can provide learners with the intellectual resources to better understand, and act in relation to, equity issues as they have existed in the past, exist in the present and as they might be in the future.

The SACSA Framework places a value on critically understanding and acting to confront the forces which shape unjust social practices and relations. Learners require ways of knowing that give them access to the bases of their own understandings and knowledges; and the capabilities and dispositions to apply such ways of knowing in dialogue and debate with others, and to take action.

Clearly, if the SACSA Framework is to be a curriculum entitlement, then it must be inclusive of all learners. For this aspiration to be achieved at least two things must happen.

First, the curriculum should be inclusive: that is it should recognise and build upon learner diversity, providing every learner with learning and assessment experiences which optimise their opportunities.

Thus the SACSA Framework has been constructed with particular attention being paid to the educational entitlements of the following groups of learners:

- Aboriginal learners 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 socio-economic backgrounds
- particular groups of girls and boys
- learners from an isolated or rural background.

The Framework recognises that these are not discrete categories, but rather that individuals bring to their learning multiple experiences which can span several of these groups. Educators will create curricula and use pedagogies that enable learners from and across these groups, including Students with High Intellectual Potential (SHIP), to connect with learning and to demonstrate their achievements in a variety of ways.

Second, equity perspectives must be represented across the curriculum. The intention here is to ensure that the knowledge and cultures of those groups in society that have the least power and who are most vulnerable should form a central focus of curriculum content and practice. In the SACSA Framework the equity perspectives include the following:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' perspectives, which recognise that a cohesive and diverse society requires each child and student to develop a growing understanding and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' heritage, experiences and issues—past, present and future—and to engage all learners in a process of furthering the aims of Reconciliation

The SACSA Framework and Reconciliation

The official curriculum is always an artefact and process of its time. The SACSA Framework is being implemented during a unique and significant period of reconciliation between Indigenous Australians and other Australians. The SACSA Framework consciously and systematically reflects this moment in time by requiring all educators to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' perspectives in their curricula and pedagogies.

Multicultural perspectives, which recognise that Australia's cultural and linguistic diversity is a resource to be developed for the benefit of all individuals and the nation as a whole

Gender perspectives, which recognise that gender is a social construction organised upon unequal power relations which define and limit opportunities for girls and boys

Socio-economic perspectives, which recognise that our society is structured upon an unequal distribution of wealth, and that this defines and shapes social, political and economic power

Disability perspectives, which recognise that inclusive social and educational practices are necessary to ensure access and participation for all in our society

Rural and isolated perspectives, which recognise that geographical location and other forms of isolation influence access and opportunities in various ways, and therefore are factors in shaping people's world views.

How are the learning needs of particular groups of children and students and cross-curriculum equity perspectives drawn together in a consistent manner? The SACSA Framework facilitates the development of curricula which challenge each learner to:

- recognise and appreciate the diversity of people and points of view in our society
- understand how different backgrounds and life experiences shape different social practices and ways of seeing the world, and offer different opportunities
- critically examine the power relations, and their effects, between people and groups, including how and why they came to be that way

- interrogate their own standpoint with a view to achieving personal recognition of how their personal ways of knowing have been formed, and who benefits from these
- develop the capabilities and dispositions to challenge, individually and collectively, those social and political practices which structure and maintain inequality
- critically examine the social and emotional health aspects of individuals, groups and communities.

Standards and the SACSA Framework

The final common aspect of the SACSA Framework lies in its approach to learner assessment. This approach comes from the tradition of outcomes-based education, which lay at the heart of the documents *Foundation areas of learning* and *Curriculum statements and profiles for Australian schools*. This tradition is based on the belief that the curriculum process should begin with the explicit statement of the outcomes expected and that curriculum content, processes, structures and resources should be planned to expand children's and students' opportunities to achieve the outcomes.

There are various forms and interpretations of outcomes-based education, and indeed in the SACSA Framework it is represented in three of these forms. These are complementary and reflect the stage of learner development. In the Birth to Age 5 range there are broad Developmental Learning Outcomes which describe a child's learning and development over time. From Reception to Year 10 there are Curriculum Standards which are described at particular points in the schooling process and provide a common reference point for educators to use in monitoring, judging and reporting on learner achievement. This information provides a basis for extending and improving learners' achievements. Year 12 Standards refer to standards provided by external curriculum sources used in conjunction with the five Essential Learnings.

These five common aspects—constructivist learning theory, Essential Learnings (including literacy, numeracy and information and communication technologies), Enterprise and Vocational Education, Equity and Cross-curriculum Perspectives and Standards—permeate the SACSA Framework. They provide the threads for practitioners to weave together various parts of the Framework as they interpret it in curriculum practice in local contexts. Thus they work with and through the Learning Areas to enable a holistic and coherent curriculum.



Using the SACSA Framework



The structure of the SACSA Framework

As a single connected framework from Birth to Year 12, the SACSA Framework aims to support continuity for all learners through children's services and schooling. The chart on page 24 represents the key elements of the Framework, viz **Curriculum Bands**, through which the scope of learning is organised; **Curriculum Scope** which is organised around Learning Areas, interwoven with Essential Learnings, Equity Cross-curriculum Perspectives, and Enterprise and Vocational Education; and **Standards** which encompass Developmental Learning Outcomes, Curriculum Standards which include Outcomes, examples of evidence and work samples and Year 12 Standards.

The Curriculum Bands

In the SACSA Framework teaching, learning and assessing within the Birth to Year 12 continuum are organised through four Curriculum Bands. While these Bands are a pragmatic construction, they represent aspects of learners' physical, social, emotional and cognitive development, appreciating that within each Band learners bring with them a great diversity of backgrounds and prior learning experiences. The Bands are:

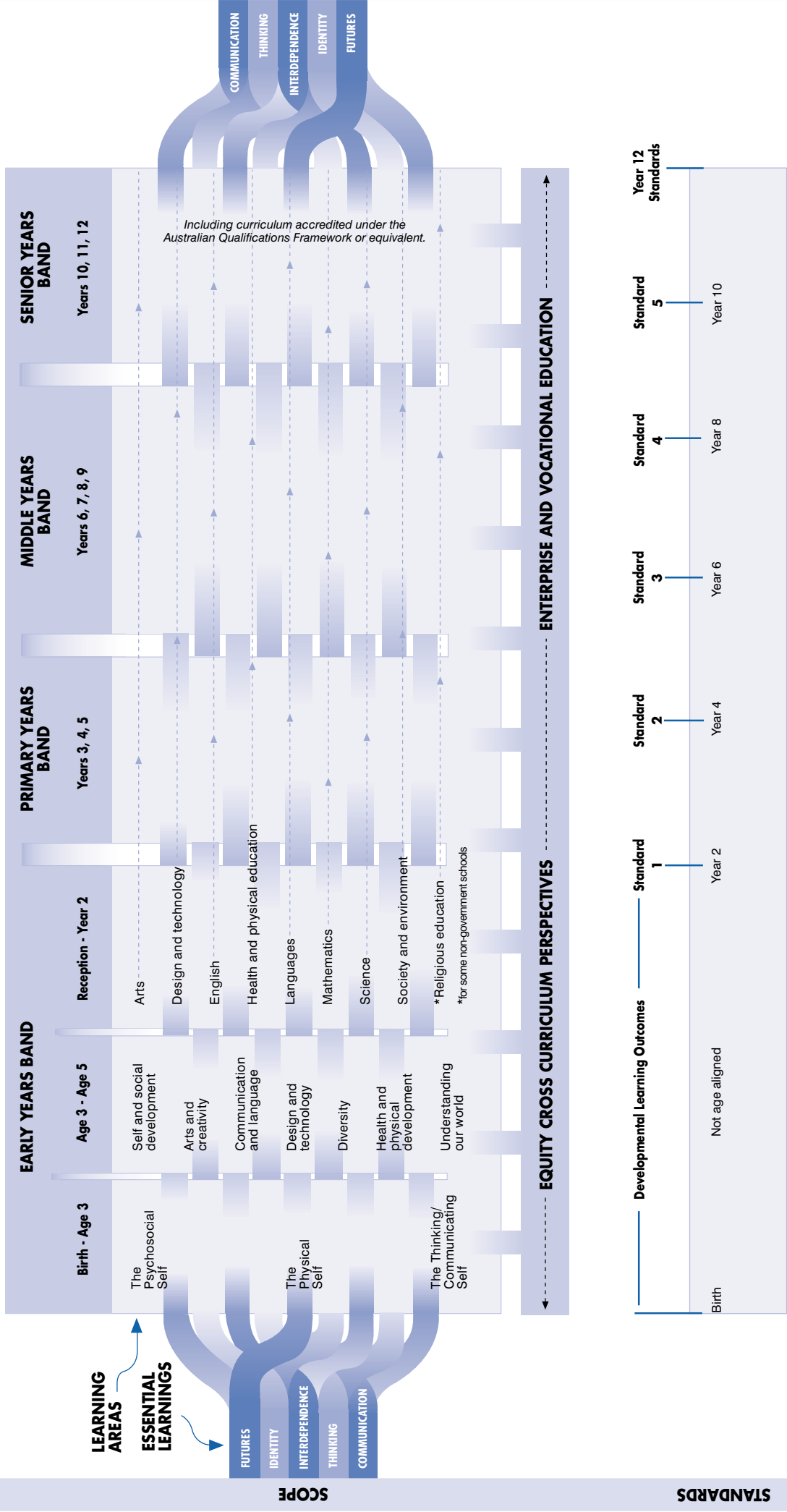
Early Years Band	Birth to the end of Year 2 of school (comprising three phases: Birth–Age 3; Age 3–Age 5; Reception–Year 2)
Primary Years Band	Years 3 to 5 of school
Middle Years Band	Years 6 to 9 of school
Senior Years Band	Years 10 to 12 of school.

These Bands are not intended to parallel school structures. Five-year-old children, for example, are represented in the Age 3–Age 5 phase of the Early Years Band as well as in the Reception–Year 2 phase.

Progression in learning across the Bands

The constructivist view of learning and progression described in Part 2 pertains to learning in all Bands. However, there is differentiation across Bands which includes changes in the kinds and range of purposes, contexts, concepts, processes, and reflection on learning. These changes are captured in tasks, texts and conditions which are selected or designed for learning and assessing.

Scope and Standards Overview



SCOPE

STANDARDS

Differentiation in learning across Bands is achieved by interrelating the following:

- tasks which become increasingly extended, involving a range of more complex and interrelated variables, and increasingly abstract
- texts which become increasingly complex in ideas and structure
- conditions which involve different kinds and amounts of support.

Curriculum Scope

The Curriculum Scope describes the span of knowledge, skills and dispositions associated with learning from Birth to Year 12. It is organised into a number of Learning Areas. Through the Learning Areas, learners are introduced to bodies of knowledge established by communities of scholars. In this way they develop the inquiring habits of mind and actions, skills and values which are so fundamental to living in a post-modern world and to being lifelong learners.

In the SACSA Framework the Learning Areas have been transformed and redefined by the interweaving of the Essential Learnings, Equity Cross-curriculum Perspectives and Enterprise and Vocational Education. The process of interweaving is deliberate and sustained, and evident in all aspects of the Framework. It models the expectation that all educators will engage with each of these dimensions of learning through a similar process of interweaving as they construct learning experiences for their particular learners.

Learning Areas for children from Birth–Age 3 are:

- the psychosocial self
- the physical self
- the thinking and communicating self.

Learning Areas for children in the Age 3–Age 5 range are:

- self and social development
- arts and creativity
- communication and language
- design and technology
- diversity
- health and physical development
- understanding our world.

Learning Areas for students from Reception–Year 12 are:

- arts
- design and technology
- English
- health and physical education
- languages
- mathematics
- science
- society and environment
- religious education is a ninth Learning Area for some non-government schools.

R–12 Learning Areas are structured and organised through strands.

Key Ideas

Key Ideas comprise the fundamental concepts of a Learning Area (for the Early Years Band: Birth–Age 3; Age 3–Age 5) or strand of a Learning Area (for Reception–Year 2 of the Early Years Band; and for Primary, Middle and Senior Years Bands), and are developed in complexity across the Bands.

The Key Ideas are followed by examples of important aspects of the Key Idea. Educators will include other aspects which are pertinent to an exploration of the Key Idea. Essential Learnings, Equity Cross-curriculum Perspectives and Enterprise and Vocational Education are interwoven and developed progressively throughout all Key Ideas and their examples.

Standards

The Standards in the SACSA Framework represent the expectations we have of all learners. They provide a common reference point for educators to use in monitoring, judging and reporting on learner achievement over time. The Standards draw attention to particular aspects of performance which are significant along the continuum from Birth to Year 12; thus it is progress that becomes important rather than notions of ‘pass’ or ‘fail’.

Educators continue to monitor learners’ progress, diagnosing carefully their strengths and areas for improvement. They constantly adjust their pedagogies and, in particular, the scaffolding they provide to support children’s and students’ progress in learning.

Developmental Learning Outcomes

In the Birth–Age 3 and Age 3–Age 5 phases of the Early Years Band, Developmental Learning Outcomes describe the dimensions of learning and development towards which children make progress. The evidence related to each Developmental Learning Outcome suggests to educators the nature and qualities of the progress which they observe in their interactions with children.

The Developmental Learning Outcomes and examples of evidence are used to track children’s progress over time. They are not specifically related to age or year level.

Curriculum Standards

From R–10 the Curriculum Standards of the SACSA Framework are based on a standards-referenced approach to assessment, which relies heavily on educators using professional judgments in considering an interrelated set of performance characteristics. For educators this means that they need to be explicit about both what is expected of learners and the level or standard of performance expected.

It is in this area that the SACSA Framework represents a shift in emphasis from the curriculum profiles. With the profiles, the emphasis was on describing or profiling student accomplishments at any time along the continuum of their learning. Within the SACSA Framework, educators are asked to reference students’ performance in relation to described levels of quality or standards expected at particular points of schooling. There is an implication then that students will be provided with the support they need to meet the expected standards.

The Curriculum Standards in the SACSA Framework are presented as performance standards, that is they depict the developing capabilities of children and students along a continuum of

ever-improving performance. They are broad descriptions of expected growth in performance. From Year 2 the Curriculum Standards are aligned with years of schooling, as follows:

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.

The alignment of standards of performance with years of schooling is intended to establish a common basis for describing the progress of learner performance at the end of a two-year period (towards the end of Year 4 for Standard 2, for example). The Standards do not depict the growth of any individual learner, but rather provide a picture of expected progress. Individual learners are likely to perform differently within different dimensions of performance at any particular point in time. Learners need to be provided with learning programs designed to help each of them reach the Standards.

Standards 1–5 in the SACSA Framework are made up of three key aspects:

Outcomes, which describe what will be observed or inferred through a student’s engagement with the Curriculum Scope

Examples of evidence, which represent qualities of performance which suggest the child or student has achieved the particular Outcome

Annotated work samples, which illustrate standard-setting performance, each accompanied by annotations which describe how the Outcomes and examples of evidence are reflected in the work sample.

Year 12 Standards

Year 12 Standards represent the performance expected of students at the end of Year 12. They comprise the Essential Learnings capabilities demonstrated along with standards from externally developed curriculum. External curriculum is quality assured at Year 12 level by the accrediting authority under the Australian Qualifications Framework or equivalent.

The SACSA Standards and students with severe disabilities

Students with a severe intellectual disability and/or severe multiple disabilities who may not be able to achieve all the Outcomes or Standards in the Learning Areas will continue to work towards individual goals identified through the negotiated curriculum planning process. These goals must be developed within the framework of the curriculum and, where possible, within the context of appropriate Standards. Early Years Developmental Learning Outcomes, as well as other priorities and needs of the learner, may also inform the identification of the individual goals. Some children and students with disabilities, as many other learners, may not progress through the Standards at an even rate.

The dynamic relationship between the three elements of the SACSA Framework—Curriculum Bands, Curriculum Scope (comprising the interweaving of the concepts and processes of the Learning Areas and the Essential Learnings, Equity and Cross-curriculum Perspectives and Enterprise and Vocational Education), and Standards—is activated through the processes of curriculum planning and assessment.

Putting the SACSA Framework into operation

Putting the SACSA Framework into operation begins with educators knowing who their children and students are: their backgrounds, prior knowledge, needs, interests, expectations and aspirations, as well as their strengths, areas requiring improvement, and their learning preferences. The profile of their learners is dynamic, and educators need constantly to adjust their curriculum planning, teaching and assessing to provide the most conducive conditions to maximise learning for all children and students.

Planning and assessing using the SACSA Framework

The SACSA Framework is a flexible framework that relies on the professionalism of educators to devise curricula which meet local requirements, and which are tailored to address the specific needs of learners. Its parameters are deliberately broad in order to encourage varied pedagogical approaches. The illustration on page 29 shows the main elements of the Framework as they are displayed for each Band. A number of teaching resources will accompany the Framework, and these will offer pedagogical support. However, although the Framework itself is not a resource about teaching, it is central to teaching in at least two important ways.

(1) Curriculum planning using the SACSA Framework

The SACSA Framework is not only a description of the required curriculum—Key Ideas and Learning Outcomes—it is also an indispensable resource for curriculum planning. What does this mean in practice? Collaborative planning across year levels has always been desirable; in the SACSA Framework it is vital. Since the Developmental Learning Outcomes and Curriculum Standards have been conceptualised as being at regular points along the learning continuum, educators must plan across year levels within and between Bands so that programs can be organised and sequenced to achieve continuity and coherence in learning towards the Standards. In addition there will need to be whole-of-school/site agreement about the ways to achieve a progressive and balanced development of the five Essential Learnings.

Once decisions have been made about long-term planning within and across Bands, individual educators will use the Framework to plan across particular year levels. When that has been completed, shorter-term planning can commence, involving decisions ranging from units of work to tasks.

Each of the following elements of the Framework should be used in these planning processes—the Key Ideas and examples; Outcomes and examples of evidence. It is a planning process which demands a high degree of professional educator judgment and collaboration.

In using the Framework, educators will recognise that Learning Areas, Essential Learnings, Equity Cross-curriculum Perspectives and Enterprise and Vocational Education are interwoven through the Scope and Standards. As such, each is integral to the process of planning, teaching, learning and assessing. This means that educators should consciously and systematically foreground them in their curriculum work.

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

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

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 arising from the solutions arrived at **F • C • (KC2) • KC3 • KC6**

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

Represents a **KEY COMPETENCY**
Represents an **ESSENTIAL LEARNING**

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

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.

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.

At Standard 2, towards the end of Year 4, the student:

2.8

Predicts, investigates and describes changes in common materials when acted upon in various ways. F • C • 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**

At Standard 1, towards the end of Year 2, the child:

1.8

Identifies and predicts materials that change and do not change.
T • 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: indicate qualities of performance that suggest the learner has achieved the particular Outcome. Other examples can be developed.

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

At Standard 3, towards the end of Year 6, the student:

3.8

Uses the changes in properties and uses of materials in product life cycles. T • C • KC1

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**

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

There is no right way or correct sequence for using the Framework in the long- or short-term planning processes. Educators in their planning can move backwards and forwards between the parts of the Framework. The important thing is that all aspects are brought together holistically. For example educators could start by reading through the entire scope of a Learning Area, getting a 'feel' for the Learning Area and for the Essential Learnings which are to be developed over a particular stage (eg Birth–Age 3 or the four years of the Middle Years Band).

They might then move to examining the Developmental Learning Outcomes or the corresponding Curriculum Standards to ascertain the broad direction they want to take and to decide upon which aspects of the evidence they want to focus. At this stage, having established the parameters, educators might then begin to sequence their program, moving between the Scope and the Developmental Learning Outcomes/Curriculum Standards in the specific strands, looking at both content (knowledge, skills, values and dispositions) and a sense of the expected standard of the work. Planning sequences of work and appropriate methodologies follow, and it is here that the teaching resources and materials will assist.

(2) Assessing using the SACSA Framework

The SACSA Framework is also a resource for assessing children's and students' learning. It is based on a standards-referenced approach to assessment which requires educators to make professional judgments about each learner's achievements based on their interpretations of assessment information in relation to a set of Developmental Learning Outcomes (Birth–Age 3; Age 3–Age 5), Curriculum Standards (Reception–Year 10) or Year 12 Standards. Its primary function is to provide feedback to learners, parents and caregivers and educators, and to help identify the next stages in the teaching and learning program.

Educators refer to the Developmental Learning Outcomes and Standards which describe learners' performance of the knowledge, skills and dispositions at particular phases or year levels. These Developmental Learning Outcomes and Standards are broadly described and enable many different teaching approaches to be used to facilitate their achievement. They vary in form from Birth to Year 12:

- in the Birth–Age 3 and the Age 3–Age 5 phases of the Early Years Band, the Developmental Learning Outcomes do not relate to specific Learning Areas, but are described to capture the range of Outcomes which emerge as children are supported to develop through play, relationships and learning activities in all Learning Areas
- from Reception to Year 10 (Standards 1–5) the Outcomes are broadly described within all of the eight Learning Areas, specifically in relation to each of the strands in the Learning Areas, and integrated with the Essential Learnings. It is expected that all Outcomes are achieved at a particular level in a Learning Area for a Standard to be assigned
- for Year 12 Standards the Outcomes are described in terms of the Essential Learnings capabilities and the outcomes described by external curriculum sources.

Judgments about the Standard require demonstration of performance. This can be done, either formally or informally, through sets of assessment tasks achieved during the process of one or more learning activities. Indeed, depending on the Outcome, it can also be observed as children and students interact informally in various settings. The common requirement is for educators to be aware of the sorts of things they are looking for as evidence to substantiate the judgments

they are forming, and to record achievement of these as children and students engage in a range of learning activities. Over time educators should build up a rich picture of the performance and progress of each child and student. As with all judgments, evidence is crucial.

Since evidence of achievement is central to decisions about Standards, a key feature of the SACSA Framework is a description of examples of evidence alongside each Outcome. These examples are made up of two parts: a major aspect of the Outcome, and a description of the qualities or features that might be inferred or observed if the learner is demonstrating the Outcome at a specific Standard.

Taken collectively, these examples of evidence help to determine whether or not an Outcome has been achieved at a particular Standard; that is, they should be considered holistically rather than treated as a checklist. Educators are encouraged to consider further examples of evidence which suit their particular learning programs and contexts. In addition to helping to determine Standards, being systematic and conscious about the type of evidence required is also useful in generating valuable feedback to inform future planning and, most importantly, children's and students' further learning.

Implications for teaching, learning and assessing

Teachers use the SACSA Framework to construct curricula which are appropriate to the learners they teach and consistent with the constructivist learning and teaching theories upon which the SACSA Framework is based. Thus, children's and students' learning occurs when:

- learning is purposeful and connected to meaningful contexts through extended and deep tasks in which they discover, construct or use knowledge
- there is a constant interplay between experience and meaning
- they make deep conceptual connections, across the curriculum, that enhance their sense of purpose and meaning, and enable them to solve relevant problems
- learning is social and interactive and learners are empowered as citizens
- they perceive that experience might have a variety of meanings among people, depending on race, ethnicity, class, gender, geography, age and so on
- they experience new and creative ways of making connections across concepts and processes, between their inner and outer worlds, and across multiple perspectives
- they make connections between school and the wider world, developing expertise in self-expression, learning how to learn, and learning to work effectively with a diversity of people
- learning is focused on progression of understanding and increasingly sophisticated tasks which are connected to an essential objective
- they are provided with appropriate feedback on their learning, both in single episodes and longitudinally
- they are assessed longitudinally through intentionally complex, multidimensional tasks. They are required to demonstrate connections in their learning over time through increasingly sophisticated tasks, with an emphasis on production, creation and performance
- they are active in making meaning about major social and learning transitions between and beyond the Curriculum Bands.

Implications for curriculum design

The learning described above requires a shift in design towards curriculum as:

- the constructed and lived experiences of students and teachers
- multiple, inclusive and subjective
- a basis for inquiry by teachers and students investigating big ideas
- interrelated experiences
- framed around multiple realities and views that ensure that students view the world through diverse eyes and diverse realities
- the means to present and validate the entire human experience through analysis of diverse perspectives, contexts and times
- primarily dialogic, participatory and engaging
- driven by inquiry, reflection, questions and challenges for increased understanding, action and empowerment
- a means of stirring students' and teachers' imagination, intellect, emotion and creativity.

(selected and adapted from Cross, in Beane 1995)

Conclusion

Any attempt to improve the learning of children and students needs to focus on children's services and schools as the most significant loci for action. Given the continuous nature of change in society, the curricula offered by centres and schools cannot remain static if they are to meet the needs of learners who face a future of wide opportunities and complex social challenges. The SACSA Framework seeks to support educators in the central task of adapting the curriculum to meet changing circumstances. Further support will be provided to educators through teaching and assessing guides, and through programs of professional development.

The SACSA Framework provides a common resource for developing and reviewing the curriculum in South Australian education sites. It is intended that it be used to generate a comprehensive and purposeful curriculum for all children and students to become citizens and lifelong learners who:

- are ethically and socially responsible members of society and have a strong sense of their own personal and group identity and respect for the identities of others
- think and take responsibility for decisions, make connections, generate ideas and innovatively solve problems
- build respectful interpersonal relationships and play an active role in their local and global communities
- contribute to and shape possible futures, while respecting heritage
- are good communicators who use the power and potential of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technologies.

The SACSA Framework builds on the insights of practitioners by enabling flexibility for curriculum decision-making at the local level. In this sense the Framework is dynamic and open-ended.

The invitation offered by the SACSA Framework is for the South Australian educational community to continue the tradition of ongoing dialogue and debate about the curriculum. The implementation phase of the SACSA Framework marks a beginning to the process of curriculum renewal. It signals the start of a new round of exciting curriculum debate and action, which will benefit learners and is the lifeblood of a dynamic educational system and a healthy democracy.

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Glossary

Aboriginal, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Indigenous: although the three terms are used throughout the Framework they are not always intended to be interchangeable. 'Aboriginal' is generally used as an adjective to refer to South Australian issues and/or learners. 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' generally refers to a context related to Australian wide issues and/or learners from all areas of Australia. 'Indigenous' generally refers to issues, topics related to a perspective, wider or broader than Australia (eg Indigenous art from the Asian–Pacific region). The term 'Indigenous' is also increasing in usage as a term to describe Aboriginal peoples/cultures and Torres Strait peoples/cultures. Educators are encouraged to consult with local people about their preferred terminology.

Agency: the individual ability to take action, to take control or to make decisions (Dockett and Fler 1999).

Bands: broad developmental stages of learning which structure the SACSA Framework: Early Years (Birth–Age 3, Age 3–Age 5, Reception to Year 2), Primary Years (Year 3–Year 5), Middle Years (Year 6–Year 9), Senior Years (Year 10–Year 12).

Class: the ways society is stratified according to wealth, power and therefore life opportunities.

Construction: descriptions of people, issues and events created in texts, thoughts and actions to serve particular interests.

Co-construction: the understanding, interpretations and sense of significance children and adults develop in negotiation with each other (MacNaughton & Williams 1998).

Constructivism: a set of theories of learning which recognise learners as the constructors of their own knowledge, values and ethical dispositions.

Critical literacy: involves the investigation of the way language practices can transform social practice. Critical literacy deals with the relationship between language and power.

Culture: an important identifying characteristic of a group, sharing certain patterns of living, core values and meanings (ie relating to family, religion, language) and sharing participation and transmission within the group, although individual differences always exist (Smolicz 1999).

Curriculum: the planned program of teaching and learning constructed by educators, in partnership with learners and others, to achieve agreed educational outcomes.

Curriculum framework: a base structure, composed of aspects united together to form a whole, on which schools and children's services build their curriculum. The SACSA Framework consists of three aspects: Scope, Standards, and Curriculum Accountability, from which educators will devise more detailed, locally relevant curriculum.

Curriculum Standards: performance standards that depict the developing capabilities of learners along a continuum of ever-improving performance. They are broad descriptions of growth in performance. From Year 2 the Curriculum Standards are aligned with years of schooling (eg Standard 1 aligns with late Year 2 of schooling).

Deconstruction: in social theory deconstruction refers to the process of taking apart concepts and meanings.

Developmental Learning Outcomes: the way in which 'standards' are represented in the first two phases of the Early Years Band. They describe growth and development over time in the Birth–Age 3 and the Age 3–Age 5 phases of the Early Years Band.

Dispositions: the emergent set of inclinations that we acquire/strengthen, that develop over a lifetime; relatively enduring habits of mind or characteristic ways of responding to experience across types of situations; shaped by the interaction of individual temperament and environment.

Educator, early childhood: all adults playing an integral part in the development and/or implementation of curriculum in early childhood settings.

Essential Learnings: capabilities, understandings, values and dispositions which are developed throughout a person's education and beyond, and which provide resources which can be drawn upon as individuals and groups live together and interact in Australian society and globally.

Equity: the concept of equal access to education and the fair and just distribution of the benefits for all learners.

Examples of evidence: descriptions which represent qualities of performance which suggest that a learner has achieved the particular Standard.

Gender: a social construction of male/female identity which is distinguished from sex, the biologically based distinction between men and women.

Goal: a broad, long-term aim that learners work towards in their learning.

Information and communication technologies (ICTs): technologies used for accessing, gathering, manipulating and presenting/communicating information.

Key Competencies: the generic abilities that children and young people need for effective participation in work, adult life and lifelong learning. These include: collecting, analysing and organising information; communicating ideas and information; planning and organising activities; working with others in teams; using mathematical ideas and techniques; solving problems and using technology.

Key Idea: the fundamental concepts of a Learning Area or strand of a Learning Area. Key Ideas are a mandated component of the SACSA Framework.

Learning Area: an area of study comprising broadly defined disciplines or bodies of knowledge.

Learning technologies: a term that encompasses all technologies used for learning, including information and communication technologies and others such as whiteboards, overhead projectors, photocopiers and film projectors.

Literacy: the ability to understand, analyse, critically respond to and produce appropriate spoken, written, visual and multimedia communication in different contexts.

Multiculturalism: (1) a demographic description of the cultural and linguistic diversity of Australia; (2) a social philosophy valuing the cultural and linguistic diversity within a framework of shared values to achieve a harmonious society; (3) a government policy which provides for the needs of a diverse society and supports social cohesion and unity within diversity.

Numeracy: the ability to understand, analyse, critically respond to and use mathematics in different social contexts.

Outcomes: describe broadly the knowledge, skills and understandings that learners are expected to develop. Outcomes enable progress in learning to be tracked from Birth to Year 12.

Pedagogy: the science and art of teaching, transmitting, scaffolding and encouraging a child (or adult) to learn, expand ideas and concepts, and become more skilful and understanding in a given area of knowledge (Gammage 2000)

Race: the concept of race is used to divide people into groups on the basis of certain arbitrarily selected hereditary characteristics. By drawing attention to noticeable but meaningless differences such as skin colour, social practices construct racial categories and the discriminating practices of racism (Moon 1992).

Scaffold: the support, assistance and temporary guidance (verbal and non-verbal) provided by experienced others that enables learners to move from one level of competence to another (MacNaughton & Williams 1998).

Scope: the span of knowledge, skills, values and dispositions to be taught through interweaving the Learning Areas with the Essential Learnings, Equity Cross-curriculum Perspectives and Enterprise and vocational education.

Standards: in the SACSA Framework Standards represent the expectations we have of all learners. They provide a common reference point for educators to use in monitoring, judging and reporting on learner achievement over time. The Standards draw attention to particular aspects of performance which are significant along the continuum from Birth to Year 12.

Standards-referenced assessment: a form of assessment by which judgments about student performance are made on the basis of described levels of quality or standards.

Strands: conceptual organisers for the Scope and Standards of the R–12 Learning Areas.

Temperament: the lens through which the child experiences the environment, the innate individual differences which shape the way we behave and cope with situations (Oberklaid 1999).

Vocational Education and Training (VET): accredited and industry specific entry level training programs.

Vocational education: an umbrella term which encompasses VET and vocational learning. It includes elements of work education and school–industry links (Key Competencies, Enterprise Education, Career Education, Work and Community-based Learning), and the activities that enable students' transition from school into various post-school pathways.

Vocational learning: the development of competencies, skills and enterprise attributes that are applicable to work and lifelong learning.

Work samples (with annotations): illustrations of learners' work which demonstrate the achievement of particular Curriculum Standards, providing tangible reference points for teachers.

Year 12 Standards: represent the performance expected of students at the end of Year 12. They comprise the Essential Learnings capabilities demonstrated along with standards from externally developed curriculum. External curriculum is quality assured at Year 12 level by the accrediting authority under the Australian Qualifications Framework or equivalent.

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