Video Transcript – Kindergarten to Year 10 2015 Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Update

# Welcome

Hi. I’m Allan Blagaich, Chief Executive Officer of the School Curriculum and Standards Authority.

When the Authority came into being in 2012, we picked up responsibility for curriculum and standards in Western Australian schools not just for Years 11 and 12 but for all students across the state. That’s all students from Kindergarten right the way through to Year 10 and on to Year 12. I want to be clear that we’re not just about senior secondary.

The Authority is committed to working together with and for ALL schools on curriculum, assessment and reporting to improve standards for all West Australian students. We work across the school sector and systems – with the Association of Independent Schools, Catholic Education Office and the Department of Education. This ensures we have broad representation.

The Authority has the final responsibility for setting the curriculum and standards in Western Australia.

Our collaborative approach means we draw on the expertise of teachers from across the State and therefore the curriculum is developed in response to school contexts and needs. This is really important.

Today I want to update you about what we have achieved in 2014 and, in particular, outline what 2015 holds for our work with teachers from Kindergarten through to Year 10.

# P–10 Curriculum Implementation

Developing a robust inclusive curriculum for Western Australia is a priority and the Authority is responsible for this work. We are ensuring that the curriculum developed for Western Australia is appropriate for the specific needs of all Western Australian students.

The *Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline*, which already hosts the Phase 1 Australian Curriculum, is the source of Kindergarten to Year 10 curriculum for all Western Australian students. It provides comprehensive information that schools can use to plan student learning programs, assess student progress and report to parents.

Phase 1 of the Australian Curriculum is made up of the learning areas of English, Mathematics, Science and the subject of History (which is part of the Humanities and Social Sciences) for Pre-primary to Year 10.

In a letter to Principals in January 2014, the Minister for Education announced that Western Australia would be adopting and adapting Phases 2 and 3 of the Australian Curriculum. A copy of that letter is available on our website.

The work we are doing to adopt and adapt the Australian Curriculum is to ensure that the knowledge, understandings and skills across all disciplines suit the needs of Western Australian students and teachers.

We are working with teachers to review the subjects of History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship and Economics and Business to ensure a complete Humanities and Social Sciences learning area. Consultation processes are also on-going to refine the content in the Arts, Technologies and Health and Physical Education and develop year-by-year syllabuses.

Over 2014, the Authority developed 99 year level syllabuses in each of the learning areas/subjects in Phases 2 and 3 identifying the core to be taught to all students. During 2015, the Assessment Snapshots, Assessment Activities, Judging Standards and Annotated Work Samples will be developed.

This work has already involved hundreds of teachers in schools from the across the State and will be a feature of our efforts in 2015.

The P-10 Australian Curriculum for Languages, as developed so far by ACARA, requires significant review before it can be implemented in Western Australian schools. The Authority will commence this work in 2015.

## Accessing the syllabuses

The P–10 curriculum will continue to be located within the Outline on our website.

We have an online curriculum to allow for flexibility in how the curriculum can be accessed and organised.

It will be reflective of ACARA’s design but I must emphasise that the curriculum in the Outline is Western Australia’s. It has been adopted and adapted from ACARA’s version of the Australian Curriculum. Teachers in Western Australia should be accessing information through the Outline.

This is a critical point to note, folks. The curriculum that is endorsed and mandated for Western Australia is the one that you’ll find on our website.

## Syllabus Structure – the content

The work we’ve been doing with the syllabuses for Phases 2 and 3 means that we’ve made things more explicit and useful for teachers.

Each syllabus contains a year level description that sets out the blueprint for teaching the content and any rules surrounding delivery. It indicates the context to teach the content in and the progression and pitch of the content. The year level descriptions do not restate the content.

Adapted from the Australian Curriculum, the Western Australian content descriptions for Phases 2 and 3 have been written to stand alone. The ACARA elaborations have been utilised within the content description itself if they have been identified as necessary for exemplification or clarity.

An achievement standard describes the characteristics of student achievement and is supported by annotated student work samples as part of the Judging Standards material which exemplify student work as an A, B, C and D.

# ABLE*WA*

We are making progress towards providing a curriculum that is inclusive of students with disabilities and additional needs. We have been working with teachers to identify ways to respond to the needs of students who require additional support to access the Pre-primary to Year 10 curriculum.

We have negotiated access to the ABLES curriculum and assessment resources developed over the last few years by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, in Victoria, and the University of Melbourne. ABLES stands for Abilities Based Learning Education Support. In Western Australia, we will be renaming the tool and curriculum as ABLE*WA*, standing for Abilities Based Learning and Education, Western Australia.

The ABLE*WA* tool and the curriculum will provide teachers with explicit guidance through material and resources that will assist them to effectively plan for and teach students based on their individual learning needs.

In Semester 1 this year we are conducting a validation trial with 16 schools. The schools come from across the sector and systems, are metropolitan and country, primary and secondary.

In Semester 2 we will be conducting a broader trial, via Expression of Interest.

ABLE*WA* enables students to be assessed on the basis of their abilities, not their disabilities.

We are working towards providing access to the curriculum and assessment tool for all Western Australian schools in 2016.

## Differences between the Australian Curriculum Phases 2 and 3 and the Western Australian Curriculum

The Australian Curriculum was written in bands for Health and Physical Education, Technologies and The Arts. The Western Australian Curriculum consists of year level syllabuses for these learning areas with content being identified as core – what every child should be taught – and separated between the year levels in line with the stages of development.

We are developing a coherent learning area for the Humanities and Social Sciences. A single learning area overview was developed with a single rationale, aims, organisation, a generic skills set sitting across all disciplines and a single year level description reflecting the suite of subjects to be taught in that year with a single achievement standard. Core content was identified from each of the subjects to develop the year level syllabuses reflecting all four subjects.

In the Australian Curriculum, content descriptions are supported by elaborations. In the Western Australian Curriculum the content descriptions stand alone and reflect the core content in each learning area or subject and elaborations have been embedded in the content where necessary for exemplification.

## Judging Standards

We’re seeing that teachers are keen to use the Judging Standards section of the Outline. Having confidence in the standard of student achievement is a big driver in our work. From 2015, teachers are required to make an on-balance A to E judgment about student achievement, twice a year.

I want to thank everyone who has been involved in the mammoth task of developing the materials that have led to the production of the pointers.

We use an evidence-based process to determine the achievement scale. This relies on teacher judgments of actual assessment samples.

This is a powerful method because teachers are generally strongly consistent in their judgments about relative quality, as far as achievement is concerned.

We began work on the materials for the Phase 2 and 3 Judging Standards in Term 4, 2014. It is a big project; 247 teachers at 134 schools – across the systems and sector, participated in administering the 236 assessment tasks in the 16 Phase 2 and 3 subjects – from Pre-primary to Year 10. Over 14,000 assessment work samples have been produced so far. With the aim of having over 30,000 by the time we’ve finished.

Being part of this project is great professional development. We have a number of learning areas which still need school and teacher support with implementing tasks and collecting student work samples. You can find more information by contacting our Standards Development team.

# Implementation Timeline

Full implementation of the P-10 curriculum for Western Australian schools will occur when we have completed the refinement and adjustment of the curriculum content and the development of resources and materials, including standards of achievement, to fully support all primary and secondary teachers.

It is Western Australia’s responsibility to implement timelines and pathways for its schools, and therefore, any advice provided by ACARA as a consequence of the Review of the Australian Curriculum, will be considered by Western Australia as part of its normal syllabus review cycle.

Given the feedback received from schools about the implementation process, the Minister for Education has confirmed a revised timeline, which provides schools with a longer period to familiarise themselves with The Arts, Technologies and Languages P to 10 curriculum.

This was communicated at the start of Term 1 in a letter to schools. The letter is available on our website.

# Stay in touch

That brings us to the end for today. I want to thank everyone who is working so hard with us in developing materials that will support teachers and students across the State. There is much to do and working together we can achieve something fantastic.

I look forward to working with you over the coming year.