



Review of the Australian Curriculum – Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why do we need a national curriculum?

Many countries, including most high performing ones, take a national approach to curriculum. Australia has moved towards a national curriculum over some time. The Howard Government started the process, and the previous government continued the work.

A national curriculum improves the quality and transparency of Australia's education system. It recognises the entitlement of each student to knowledge, understanding and skills and makes clear to teachers what is to be taught across the years of schooling. It also makes clear what students should learn across Australia and the quality of learning expected of them as they progress through school.

A national curriculum also enables efficiency in development, and implementation, such as through the sharing of learning and teaching resources.

2. Why and when was the Review of the Australian Curriculum established?

The Review was established by the Australian Government in January 2014 to evaluate the robustness, independence and balance of the development and content of the Australian Curriculum.

The Government appointed expert independent reviewers and asked them to identify opportunities for change to ensure that we have a world-class, 21st century curriculum that encourages and fosters choice, diversity and is what parents expect.

3. Who reviewed the Australian Curriculum?

The Australian Government appointed Professor Ken Wiltshire AO and Dr Kevin Donnelly, to undertake the Review.

Both of these reviewers have expertise and extensive experience in the Australian education system. Both Professor Wiltshire and Dr Donnelly have knowledge of curriculum issues and have been involved in curriculum bodies or reviews in the past.

4. Who was consulted as part of this Review?

The Review was highly consultative. Members of the public were able to have their say through an online submission process which ran from 10 January to 14 March 2014.



The reviewers also held consultations with representatives from 72 organisations around Australia between February and May 2014 including: state and territory government and non-government education authorities; teacher associations; principal associations; subject associations; parent associations; teachers' unions; academics; and business groups.

In addition, they reviewed national and international research and commissioned 15 reports from subject matter specialists.

5. How many submissions did the reviewers receive?

The Review received almost 1600 public submissions.

6. What does the Review of the Australian Curriculum mean for my child's schooling?

There will be no sudden changes made to the Australian Curriculum that will impact on your child's schooling in the short-term. Many of the reviewers' recommendations will need to be considered by state and territory governments before they can be acted upon.

Education is a matter of national interest and the Australian Government will do all it can to ensure that we get the curriculum right. This is essential if we are to improve the quality of education for all students.

7. Will teachers have to change all their lesson plans now?

No, there will not be any sudden changes made to the Australian Curriculum.

The Australian Government will be working through the recommendations, suggested actions and options for implementation with the states and territories through the Council of Australian Governments' Education Council. Many of the Review's recommendations will need to be considered by state and territory governments before they can be implemented or acted upon.

8. When will changes be made to the Australian Curriculum?

The Australian Government will discuss the Review's recommendations with states and territories through the Council of Australian Governments' Education Council. It is expected that the timeframe for any changes will also be discussed at these meetings.

9. How many recommendations have the reviewers made?

The Review of the Australian Curriculum has made 30 key recommendations about ways the Australian Curriculum could be improved.

There are also a number of more specific recommendations made by the Reviewers against each learning area, such as maths, science, English and history. All of the recommendations can be found in the Review of the Australian Curriculum Final Report.

10. Why does the Australian Curriculum need to be improved?

The Review of the Australian Curriculum found that the Australian Curriculum was supported and seen as a positive development in school education. But like any such document, the Australian



Curriculum can be improved and strengthened and this is what the Review of the Australian Curriculum was about.

The Australian Government is not suggesting there needs to be a complete overhaul of the Australian Curriculum, but that we could improve and strengthen the robustness, independence and balance of what we currently have.

Much has been achieved to date and with this in mind, the Australian Government will work with the states and territories to ensure that we deliver a world class education for all our students.

11. Does the Australian Government support all of the recommendations in the Reviewer's final report?

The Australian Government's initial response to the Review of the Australian Curriculum Final Report can be found on the *Students First* website.

12. What happens now?

Many of the recommendations from the Review will need to be considered by state and territory governments before any changes to the Australian Curriculum are made.

The Australian Government is keen to work with the states, territories and non-government education authorities to make sure we get the curriculum right. This is essential if we are to improve the quality of education for all students.

13. When will any changes to the Australian Curriculum be made?

The timing of any changes to the Australian Curriculum will need to be agreed to by all education ministers in each state and territory.

14. Where can I find further information about the Review?

Information on the Review, including the Final Report of the Review of the Australian Curriculum, Initial Australian Government Response, public submissions and subject matter specialist reports are available on the *Students First* website at: www.studentsfirst.gov.au.

