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Building Harmony & Wellbeing

A Review of Australian Educational Policy and Curricula for Intercultural Understanding

Prepared by Cultural Infusion

On the occasion of the UNESCO 2021 Forum on Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Where do we stand on Target 4.7?

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About us

About Cultural Infusion

Established in 2002 to foster global harmony through intercultural understanding, Cultural Infusion is internationally recognised as an innovator in culture and education technology.

Cultural Infusion is regularly invited to advise state and federal government on multicultural and social cohesion policy, and provide diversity and inclusion data and advisory services for the public, private, not for profit, and university sectors.

Cultural Infusion has a strong track record in delivering professional services and digital technology. Our latest platform, Diversity Atlas, a diversity mapping tool for organisations, has been featured both in Australia and internationally at leading D&I conferences.

Cultural infusion is an official partner of the Australian National Commission for UNESCO, located within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

About Author

Cultural Infusion's National Education Coordinator, Christine A. Hale BA, Grad Dip Ed, MEd, PhD (University of Sydney), has prepared this report for the Australian National Commission for UNESCO.

The purpose of this document is to provide key material on Australian educational programs and curriculum aimed at progressing students towards the aims of UNESCO Target 4.7: Sustainable development and global citizenship.

This review is Stage One of a two stage submission -UNESCO

Author Christine A Hale holds a PhD in trans-cultural education in the globalised space with particular emphasis on educational outcomes of the whole self, specifically in the developing world.

With a background in anthropology and education, her main focus is on flexible educational models incorporating local cultural knowledge embedded within national Westernised curricula.

Connection, sharing of diverse knowledge, and belonging in a globalised world without cultural homogenization is the pivotal goal of her work. She is the author of The Chinese Continuum of Self-Cultivation (2016) and various academic articles. Her research areas include social anthropology, trans-cultural education and the philosophy of education.

Preliminary Report – April 2021[1]

In achieving Target 4.7 the Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report states:

"Further research into subject curricula would aid in understanding progress on target 4.7. Systematic lists of national curriculum frameworks and related materials are needed. GEM Report analysis of over 110 national curriculum framework documents for primary and secondary education in 78 countries showed that, over 2005–2015, three-quarters of countries had some emphasis on sustainable development issues, **but far fewer made reference to terms related to global citizenship.**"[2]

Due to the large scope of Target 4.7 and the need for more information regarding global citizenship as a focus in education per the above GEM Report quote, this review will focus on global citizenship in the form of Intercultural Understanding as currently extant in the Australian pre-tertiary schooling system, Foundation to Year 10[3] curriculum. Also considered in this review are any strategic Intercultural Understanding educational policies – of all Australian jurisdictions – effective currently and going forward into the future.

Accordingly, the literature addressed herein is not only the key material on Intercultural Understanding (ICU) that currently influences policy and curricula development in Australia – nationally and by states (6) and territories (2) – but also considered is the extended literature and departmental releases that inform, influence, and initiate the specific ideas by which the educational directions for ICU are implemented in the various educational jurisdictions. This review is Stage One of a two stage submission.

Stage Two – to be completed by end of August 2021 – is an Australia-wide online survey of approximately 15,000 teachers to identify the ICU learning resources used from Foundation to Year 10, either as set teaching resources or discretionary resources chosen by individual schools and/or teachers. The survey will also attempt to identify teachers' approach to and confidence in teaching ICU.

To systematically cover the relevant areas, this review of the selected literature is divided accordingly:

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"Most definitions emphasise ICU as an ongoing process which encompasses one's knowledge, awareness and affective domains when interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds … In more recent years, ICU has been replaced with 'intercultural competence' (ICC) and 'cross-cultural competence' (CCC).

The shift in the language has been useful in underlining some of the active components that allow for 'effective' and 'appropriate' intercultural interaction, which goes beyond mere understanding" (Denson et.al., 2017)

Brighton Beach Bathing Boxes, Brighton Beach, Victoria, Australia

Preamble

There are also terms such as 'global mindedness' and 'global citizenship', but for the purposes of this review, the terminology will remain Intercultural Understanding as this is the predominant term that refers to global mindedness and intercultural competence in the Australian education system.

As background, the details of the accountability, financing, and government structuring of education in Australia can be found in the UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report - **Australian Country Case Study 2017/8** and so will not be addressed here. This study is focused on the development of the concept of ICU within education; the focus ICU is given within the curriculum, and implementation and future directions of ICU in Australian schools as currently understood in the literature and policy documents extant.

The last significant study undertaken in this area was in 2003 by Daniella Tilbury and Kate Henderson, **Education for Intercultural Education in Australia**, whereby Australia was found to be severely lacking in addressing this area of education policy. The historical socio-political issues that could account for this is outlined in the article 'Intercultural dialogue under a multiculturalism regime: pitfalls and possibilities in Australia' (2017) by Geoffrey B. Levey. Nevertheless, since the Tilbury and Henderson report of 2003, there are now strong counterforces to bring ICU into schools as a cross disciplinary priority across all learning areas as exemplified in the Australian Curriculum (ACARA - Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority).

The key document that instigated this process, The **Melbourne Declaration of 2008**[4], was signed by the then Prime Minister, and Ministers of Education from the Commonwealth and all states and territories to achieve common educational goals for a globalised 21st century. The **Melbourne Declaration** became the basis for the development of the ACARA curriculum over subsequent years.[5]

Excerpts from the opening statement of the Melbourne Declaration outlining the agreed vision for Australia's educational future:

In the 1989 Hobart Declaration and the 1999 Adelaide Declaration, the State, Territory and Commonwealth education ministers committed to working together to ensure high-quality schooling for all young Australians. The Melbourne Declaration acknowledges major changes in the world that are placing new demands on Australian education:

- *Global integration and international mobility have increased rapidly in the past decade. This heightens the need to nurture an appreciation of and respect for social, cultural and religious diversity, and a sense of global citizenship.*

- *India, China and other Asian nations are growing and their influence on the world is increasing. Australians need to become 'Asia literate', engaging and building strong relationships with Asia.*

4 Accessed 14 July 2020 National Declaration
5 Accessed 23 March, 2021 ACARA Curriculum

- *Globalisation and technological change are placing greater demands on education and skill development in Australia and the nature of jobs available to young Australians is changing faster than ever...*

- *Complex environmental, social and economic pressures such as climate change that extend beyond national borders pose unprecedented challenges, requiring countries to work together in new ways. To meet these challenges, Australians must be able to engage with scientific concepts and principles, and approach problem-solving in new and creative ways.*

As signatories to the Melbourne Declaration, Australian education ministers seek to achieve the highest possible level of collaboration with the government, Catholic and independent school sectors and across and between all levels of government. Australian education ministers also seek to achieve new levels of engagement with all stakeholders in the education of young Australians.[6]

A revised and updated version of the Melbourne Declaration was launched in December 2019 titled the **Alice Springs (Mparntwe)[7] Education Declaration.[8]** This was undertaken after a review of the original **Melbourne Declaration** and further consultation with stakeholders: young people, educators, trainers, industry and business leaders with over 900 people contributing to the review

by either lodging submissions (250+) or attending consultation events. **(Council of Australian Governments Education Council, 2019)**

To quote from the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration:

Building on the success and impact of the 2008 Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians, Ministers agreed that education should continue to promote excellence and equity and enable all Australians to become confident and creative individuals, successful learners, and active and informed community members...

Through the [Alice Springs Mparntwe] Declaration, Australian Governments also renewed their commitment to celebrating and learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, knowledge and histories and ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are supported to imagine, discover and unlock their potential (Education Council, Australia).[9]

In 2016, the Australian government's Department of Education and Training released a document titled the **National Strategy for International Education 2025**, an overview of education in the global environment, with an emphasis on attracting overseas students to Australia's shores.

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6 Accessed 21 March, 2021 National Declaration on Education Goal pp 4-5
7 Mparntwe (pronounced M-ban tua) is the Arrernte name for Alice Springs. The Aboriginal Arrernte (pronounced arrunda) people are the traditional custodians of Alice Springs and the surrounding region.
8 Accessed 22 March, 2021 Alice Spring Education Declaration
9 Accessed 22 March, 2021 Alice Spring Mparntwe

Nevertheless, domestic intercultural education takes a prominent position in the strategy. Namely:

"All sectors—business, industry, academia and government—now require a highly mobile, highly competent workforce that is culturally aware and has strong problem-solving skills. Australia's student-centred approach to teaching encourages students to be self-directed, critical thinkers. At the same time, our multicultural society, highly internationalised institutions and international outlook, along with programs that encourage foreign language learning and intercultural awareness, foster the acquisition of cultural competencies." (p 15)

An earlier 2009 document commissioned by the Australian Government's Department of Education and Employment and Workplace Relations under the Values Education program, **Teaching for Intercultural Understanding: Professional Learning Program,**[10] was a precursor for this initiative.

The rationale for its development is outlined in the introduction:

"Previous professional learning resources continue to be made available to Australian schools through the Values Education website (www.curriculum.edu.au/values/values_homepage,8655.html).

This Professional Learning Program (PLP) is designed to support two newly developed curriculum resources – the Early Years big book Side by Side and the online digital resource for middle primary

to upper secondary World of Values – that explore values in intercultural and global contexts.

These resources have been developed and selected to develop knowledge and understanding of personal and community values and foster the capacity of students to actively participate in local, national and global contexts." (p 1)

The Values in Education site that hosts these resources has not been updated since 2012, although the resources cited are still available to teachers.[12] This lapse may be due the development of the Australian Curriculum gaining momentum during this period with the consultation process well under way.[13] The General Capabilities and Cross Curriculum Priorities within the Australian Curriculum were being identified as foci to be considered throughout all learning areas.[14]

In Australia, the states (6) and territories (2) decide and implement their respective curricula, but increasingly refered to the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) outcomes developed at the federal level. Between 2014 - 2018 all states and territories had begun to implement the Australian Curriculum in part or fully[15] with it being constantly under review with feedback from states, territories, and stakeholders.

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10 Accessed 22 March, 2021 Curriculum Values PLP
11 This site is now not available. Attempted access 22 March, 2021. It is now this link although it has not been updated since 2012.
12 See Curriculum Values listing the research informing these initiatives. The publications cited are up to and including 2012.
13 Accessed 22 March, 2021 History of the Australian Curriculum
14 Accessed 22 March, 2021 General Capabilities Consultation Report
15 Accessed 23 March, 2021 ACARA Infographic

As a result of the Melbourne Declaration in 2008, it was decided to create an Australian curriculum with encouragement for all states and territories to adopt, or at least use as a guideline in an attempt at Australia wide universality in educational outcomes.

Springbrook National Park, Springbrook, Queensland, Australia

The Australian Curriculum (Foundation to Year 10)

Introduction

The consultation process began in 2008 and is constantly under review. The Australian Curriculum is the result of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) Act (2008) which legislated the establishment of ACARA, a national education authority which brought together, for the first time 'the functions of curriculum, assessment and reporting at the national level' (Julia Gillard, [then Prime Minister] media release, 2008).

The design and intent of the Australian Curriculum was to bring a national standard of education that states and territories can adopt, bringing student skills into the 21st century and the needs of a globalised world.

There are seven General Capabilities[17]:

- Literacy capability

- Numeracy capability

- Information and Communication Technology capability

- Critical and Creative Thinking capability

- Personal and Social capability

- Ethical Understanding capability

- Intercultural Understanding capability.

As well as three Cross Curriculum Priorities:[18]

- Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia

- Sustainability

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures priority is designed to ensure all Australians address, acknowledge and respect the cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, bringing the knowledge of Australia's First People into the curriculum.

This Capability, that is embedded throughout the curriculum across almost all learning areas, can also be seen as a part of 'closing the gap' on inequalities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people[19] by educating all Australians to the original cultures of the land.

16 Accessed 16 July, 2020. History of Australian Curriculum
17 Accessed 22 March, 2021 ACARA Foundation 10
18 Accessed 22 March, 2021 Cross Curriculum Priorities
19 For the 2021 Close the gap 2021 Report on progress and shortcomings in this area. Accessed 18 March, 2021

To quote:

Therefore, the Australian Curriculum is working towards addressing two distinct needs in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education:

- *That Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are able to see themselves, their identities and their cultures reflected in the curriculum of each of the learning areas, can fully participate in the curriculum and can build their self-esteem.*

- *That the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority is designed for all students to engage in reconciliation, respect and recognition of the world's oldest continuous living cultures.[20]*

New Science elaborations addressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures (developed in 2019).

In response to feedback from community and educators, ACARA has developed 95 new elaborations[21] with accompanying teacher background information to help teachers to incorporate the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority in the Australian Curriculum: Science.

These elaborations were developed with the assistance of ACARA's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group and Taskforce, and Science and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum specialists, and provide practical examples across all three strands of the science curriculum and all year levels.

The elaborations acknowledge that Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have worked scientifically for millennia and continue to contribute to contemporary science. They are scientifically rigorous, demonstrating how Indigenous history, culture, knowledge and understanding can be incorporated into teaching core scientific concepts.

Each elaboration is accompanied by teacher background information that explains in detail the cultural and historical significance of the chosen topic and how it connects to the core science curriculum content. It also includes a list of consulted works, provided as evidence of the research undertaken to inform the development of the teacher background information. The teacher background information is accessible through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures icon appearing next to the elaboration.[22]

The elaborations and accompanying teacher background information support teachers in providing a more culturally responsive curriculum experience for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students resulting in increased engagement and better educational outcomes. They also provide an opportunity for teachers to engage all students in respect and recognition of the world's oldest continuous living cultures.

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20 Accessed 22 March, 2021 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories
21 "Elaborations" is ACARA terminology for educational outcomes.
22 "Cross Curriculum Priorities." The Australian Curriculum. Accessed July 8, 2020 and F-10 Curriculum also teacher handbook

Studies and Influences Informing the Australian Curriculum

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) uses an extensive and collaborative curriculum development process to produce the Australian Curriculum.[23]

The **Shape of the Australian Curriculum,** first approved by the council of Commonwealth and state and territory education ministers in 2009, guided the development of the Australian Curriculum as a result of the **2008 Melbourne Declaration**.

The **Shape of the Australian Curriculum** reflected the position adopted by ministers collectively in the 2008 Melbourne Declaration and was approved by the ACARA Board in late 2012, reflecting the evolving processes used in the development of the Australian Curriculum.

The process and specifications for the development of the Australian Curriculum is described in two key documents:

- The Curriculum Development Process Version 6[24]

- The Curriculum Design Paper Version 3[25]

ACARA drew on national expertise to draft the curriculum informed by feedback from stakeholders – teachers, academics and parents to business, industry and community groups – to make improvements along the way. ACARA's consultation processes in the development of the Australian Curriculum are described on ACARA's website.[26]

Nonetheless, as expected with a sweeping and universal educational initiative, criticism of the new curriculum was wide, particularly in New South Wales (NSW):

In an education editorial in the NSW based daily Sydney Morning Herald on the 15th of May, 2010, Anna Patty wrote:

"Teacher associations fear many of the changes threaten the rigour of the HSC syllabus. The national curriculum specialist maths course covers only some of the more challenging areas of the extension two HSC course [Higher School Certificate – Years 11 and 12].

For most students studying English the focus will shift from literature to language and literacy. But a specialist literature course will be available for brighter students.

A spokeswoman for the NSW English Teachers Association, Eva Gold, said: ''The problem for NSW is that all our top students, even those with an inclination towards maths and the sciences, engage in a rigorous study of literature and language. In the national curriculum, top students may not have the exposure to literature that we are used to.''

The president of the Mathematical Association of NSW, Mary Coupland, said: ''A lot of work needs to be done to make it anywhere near as good as what we have in NSW [New South Wales]. I get a sense it is all being rushed.''

23 Accessed 23 March, 2021 Learning Area Consultation
24 Accessed 6 April, 2021 ACARA Curriculum Development
25 Accessed 6 April, 2021 Curriculum Design Paper
26 The Australian Curriculum. Accessed July 13, 2020

Rob Randall, general manager curriculum for the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, said the national curriculum courses would replace equivalent courses in each state and territory. States and territories could continue to offer extension courses."

By 2018 most states and territories had fully adopted the Australian Curriculum albeit with their own descriptive codes.

Outcomes for General Capability of Intercultural Understanding

In the Australian Curriculum, of the seven General Capabilities that need to be addressed in all learning areas from Foundation to Year 10, Intercultural Understanding is the one of interest for this review. The Capabilities are coupled with ACARA's three Cross Curriculum Priorities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Histories and Cultures, Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia, and Sustainability.

[From Foundation to Year 10,] students develop intercultural understanding as they learn to value their own cultures, languages and beliefs, and those of others. They come to understand how personal, group and national identities are shaped, and the variable and changing nature of culture. Intercultural understanding involves students learning about and engaging with diverse cultures in ways that recognise commonalities and differences, create connections with others and cultivate mutual respect.

Intercultural understanding is an essential part of living with others in the diverse world of the 21st century. It assists young people to become responsible local and global citizens, equipped through their education for living and working together in an interconnected world.

Intercultural understanding combines personal, interpersonal and social knowledge and skills. It involves students learning to value and view critically their own cultural perspectives and practices and those of others through their interactions with people, texts and contexts across the curriculum.

Intercultural understanding stimulates students' interest in the lives of others. It cultivates values and dispositions such as curiosity, care, empathy, reciprocity, respect and responsibility, open-mindedness and critical awareness, and supports new and positive intercultural behaviours. Though all are significant in learning to live together, three dispositions – expressing empathy, demonstrating respect and taking responsibility – have been identified as critical to the development of Intercultural Understanding in the Australian Curriculum.[27]

27 Accessed 22 March, 2021 Intercultural Understanding

Note: the following section on Australian Curriculum outcomes on a year by year basis addresses only those outcomes that focus specifically on Intercultural Understanding in the various learning areas. The following are direct quotes from the [ACARA](#) site.

Foundation to Year 2

By the end of Foundation Year in Humanities and Social Science (HASS), students identify important events in their own lives and recognise why some places are special to people. They describe the features of familiar places and recognise that places can be represented on maps and models. They identify how they, their families and friends know about their past and commemorate events that are important to them.

Students respond to questions about their own past and places they belong to. They sequence familiar events in order. They observe the familiar features of places and represent these features and their location on pictorial maps and models.

By the end of Year 1 HASS, students identify and describe important dates and changes in their own lives. They explain how some aspects of daily life have changed over recent time while others have remained the same. They identify and describe the features of places and their location at a local scale and identify changes to the features of places. They recognise that people describe the features of places differently and describe how places can be cared for.

By the end of Year 2 HASS, students describe a person, site and/or event of significance in the local community and explain why places are important to people. They identify how and why the lives of people have changed over time while others have remained the same. They recognise that the world is divided into geographic divisions and that places can be described at different scales. Students describe how people in different places are connected to each other and identify factors that influence these connections. They recognise that places have different meaning for different people and why the significant features of places should be preserved.

By the end of Foundation Year Geography, students describe the features of familiar places and recognise why some places are special to people. They recognise that places can be represented on maps and a globe and why places are important to people. Students reflect on their learning to suggest ways they can care for a familiar place.

By the end of Year 1 Geography, students, identify and describe the natural, managed and constructed features of places at a local scale and identify where features of places are located. They recognise that people describe the features of places differently. Students identify changes in features and describe how to care for places.

By the end of Year 2 Geography, students, describe how people in different places are connected to each other and identify factors that influence these connections. They explain why places are important to people, recognising that places have meaning.

By the end of the Foundation year History, students identify important events in their own lives. They identify how they, their families and friends know about their past and commemorate events that are important to them. Students sequence familiar events in order.

They respond to questions about their own past. Students relate a story about their past using a range of texts.

By the end of Year 1 History, students identify and describe important dates and changes in their own lives. They explain how some aspects of daily life have changed over recent time while others have remained the same. Students sequence personal and family events in order, using everyday terms about the passing of time. They respond to questions about the past using sources provided. Students relate stories about life in the past, using a range of texts.

By the end of Year 2 History, students describe a person, site and/or event of significance in the local community. They identify how and why the lives of people have changed over time while others have remained the same. Students sequence events in order, using a range of terms related to time. They pose questions about the past and use sources provided to answer these questions and to identify a point of view. They compare objects from the past and present. Students develop a narrative about the past using a range of texts.

Foundation Year to Year 2 Dance: Present dance that communicates ideas to an audience, including dance used by cultural groups in the community. Exploring the movements in dances with representatives of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, for example, creating movements that represent animals from their region.

Foundation Year to Year 2 Drama: Respond to drama and consider where and why people make drama, starting with Australian drama including drama of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. Identifying where they might see and hear drama in their lives and community, for example, sharing experiences of attending drama performances or taking part in drama in their community, and considering how drama sustains and communicates cultural knowledge.

Foundation Year to Year 2 Media Arts: Explore ideas, characters and settings in the community through stories in images, sounds and text. Respond to media artworks and consider where and why people make media artworks, starting with media from Australia including media artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Foundation Year to Year 2 Music: Sing and play instruments to improvise, practise a repertoire of chants, songs and rhymes, including songs used by cultural groups in the community. Learning a song used by groups in the local community, such as Aboriginal songs or Torres Strait Islander songs from their community, respecting cultural protocols. Respond to music and consider where and why people make music, starting with Australian music,

including music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. Sharing constructive observations about music from a range of cultures as a performer and audience member. Listening to and talking about music and musical instruments from different contexts and cultures.

Foundation Year to Year 2 Visual Arts: Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination to create visual artworks and design, including considering ideas in artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Respond to visual artworks and consider where and why people make visual artworks, starting with visual artworks from Australia, including visual artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Year 3 to Year 4

By the end of Year 3 HASS, students identify individuals, events and aspects of the past that have significance in the present. They identify and describe aspects of their community that have changed and remained the same over time. Students explain the role of rules in their community and the importance of making decisions democratically. They identify the importance of different celebrations and commemorations for different groups. They explain how and why people participate in and contribute to their communities.

By the end of Year 4 HASS, students recognise the significance of events in bringing about change and the importance of the environment. They explain how and why life changed in the past and identify aspects of the past that have remained the same. They describe the experiences of an individual or group in the past. They describe and

compare the diverse characteristics of different places at local to national scales. Students identify the interconnections between components of the environment and between people and the environment. They describe factors that shape a person's identity and sense of belonging.

They identify different views on how to respond to an issue or challenge. They share their points of view, respecting the views of others.

By the end of Year 3 Geography, students describe the location of the states and territories of Australia, the location of selected Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Countries/Places and selected countries neighbouring Australia. They describe the characteristics of different places at local scales and identify and describe similarities and differences between the characteristics of these places. They identify connections between people and the characteristics of places and recognise that people have different perceptions of places.

By the end of Year 4 Geography, students describe the location of selected countries using compass direction. They describe and compare the characteristics of places in different locations at local to national scales. They identify the interconnections between components of the environment and between people and the environment. Students recognise the importance of the environment and identify different possible responses to a geographical challenge.

By the end of Year 3 History, students identify individuals, events and aspects of the past that have significance in the present. They identify and describe aspects of their community that have changed and remained the same over time. They identify the importance of different celebrations and commemorations for different groups.

By the end of Year 4 History, students recognise the significance of events in bringing about change. They explain how and why life changed in the past and identify aspects of the past that have remained the same. They describe the experiences of an individual or group in the past … They develop questions about the past and locate, collect and sort information from different sources to answer these questions. They analyse sources to detect points of view. Students develop and present texts, including narrative recounts, using historical terms.

By the end of Year 3 Civics and Citizenship, students explain the role of rules in their community and the importance of making decisions democratically. They describe how people participate in their community as active citizens. Students share their views on an issue and describe how they participate in a group. They present their ideas and conclusions in oral, visual and written forms.

By the end of Year 4 Civics and Citizenship, students identify the interconnections between components of the environment and between people and the environment. They propose individual action in response to a local geographical challenge and identify some possible effects of their proposed action.

By the end of Year 4 Dance, students describe and discuss similarities and differences between dances they make, perform and view. They discuss how they and others organise the elements of dance in dances depending on the purpose. Students structure movements into dance sequences and use the elements of dance and choreographic devices to represent a story or mood. Perform dances using expressive skills to communicate ideas, including telling cultural or community stories. Identify how the elements of dance and production elements express ideas in dance they make, perform and experience as audience, including exploration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance.

By the end of Year 4 Drama, students shape and perform dramatic action using narrative structures and tension in devised and scripted drama, including exploration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander drama. Identify intended purposes and meaning of drama, starting with Australian drama, including drama of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, using the elements of drama to make comparisons.

By the end of Year 4 Media Arts, students investigate and devise representations of people in their community, including themselves, through settings, ideas and story structure in images, sounds and text. Identify intended purposes and meanings of media artworks, using media arts key concepts, starting with media artworks in Australia including media artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

By the end of Year 4 Music, students practise singing, playing instruments and improvising music, using elements of music including rhythm, pitch, dynamics and form in a range of pieces, including in music from the local community. Identify intended purposes and meanings as they listen to music using the elements of music to make comparisons, starting with Australian music, including music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

By the end of Year 4 Visual Arts, students explore ideas and artworks from different cultures and times, including artwork by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, to use as inspiration for their own representations. Identify intended purposes and meanings of artworks using visual arts terminology to compare artworks, starting with visual artworks in Australia including visual artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Year 5 to Year 6

By the end of Year 5 HASS, students describe the significance of people and events/developments in bringing about change. They identify the causes and effects of change on particular communities and describe aspects of the past that have remained the same. They describe the experiences of different people in the past. They identify and describe the interconnections between people and the human and environmental characteristics of places, and between components of environments. They identify the effects of these interconnections on the characteristics of places and environments.

By the end of Year 6 HASS, students explain the significance of an event/development, an individual and/or group. They identify and describe continuities and changes for different groups in the past and present. They describe the causes and effects of change on society. They compare the experiences of different people in the past. Students describe, compare and explain the diverse characteristics of different places in different locations from local to global scales. They describe how people, places, communities and environments are diverse and globally interconnected and identify the effects of these interconnections over time. They describe the rights and responsibilities of Australian citizens and the obligations they may have as global citizens. They explain different views on how to respond to an issue or challenge.

By the end of Year 5 Geography, students identify and describe the interconnections between people and the human and environmental characteristics of places, and between components of environments. They identify the effects of these interconnections on the characteristics of places and environments .

By the end of Year 6 Geography, students describe the interconnections between people in different places, identify factors that influence these interconnections and describe how interconnections change places and affect people. They identify and compare different possible responses to a geographical challenge.

By the end of Year 5 History, students describe the significance of people and events/developments in bringing about change. They identify the causes and effects of change on particular communities

and describe aspects of the past that have remained the same. They describe the experiences of different people in the past. Students sequence information about events and the lives of individuals in chronological order using timelines. When researching, students develop questions for a historical inquiry.

They identify a range of sources and locate, collect and organise information related to this inquiry. They analyse sources to determine their origin and purpose and to identify different viewpoints. Students develop, organise and present their texts, particularly narrative recounts and descriptions, using historical terms and concepts.

By the end of Year 6 History, students explain the significance of an event/development, an individual or group. They identify and describe continuities and changes for different groups in the past. They describe the causes and effects of change on society. They compare the experiences of different people in the past. Students sequence information about events and the lives of individuals in chronological order and represent time by creating timelines.

By the end of Year 5 Civics and Citizenship, students identify the various ways people can participate effectively in groups to achieve shared goals and describe different views on how to respond to a current issue or challenge. Students develop questions for an investigation about the society in which they live. They locate and collect information from different sources to answer these questions. They examine sources to determine their purpose and identify different viewpoints.

By the end of Year 6 Civics and Citizenship, students describe the rights and responsibilities of Australian citizens and the obligations they may have as global citizens. Students develop appropriate questions to frame an investigation about the society in which they live. They locate, collect and organise useful information from a range of different sources to answer these questions. They examine sources to determine their origin and purpose and describe different perspectives.

By the end of Year 6 Dance, students explain how the elements of dance, choreographic devices and production elements communicate meaning in dances they make, perform and view. They describe characteristics of dances from different social, historical and cultural contexts that influence their dance making. Students structure movements in dance sequences and use the elements of dance and choreographic devices to make dances that communicate meaning. They perform dance using expressive skills to communicate a choreographer's ideas, including performing dances of cultural groups in the community.

Explain how the elements of dance and production elements communicate meaning by comparing dances from different social, cultural and historical contexts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance.

By the end of Year 6 Drama, students explain how dramatic action and meaning is communicated in drama they make, perform and view. They explain how drama from different cultures, times and places influences their own drama making rehearse and perform devised and scripted drama that develops

narrative, drives dramatic tension, and uses dramatic symbol, performance styles and design elements to share community and cultural stories and engage an audience. Explain how the elements of drama and production elements communicate meaning by comparing drama from different social, cultural and historical contexts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander drama.

By the end of Year 6 Media Arts, students explain how points of view, ideas and stories are shaped and portrayed in media artworks they make, share and view. They explain the purposes and audiences for media artworks made in different cultures, times and places. Students work collaboratively using technologies to make media artworks for specific audiences and purposes using story principles to shape points of view and genre conventions, movement and lighting.

Explore representations, characterisations and points of view of people in their community, including themselves, using settings, ideas, story principles and genre conventions in images, sounds and text. Explain how the elements of media arts and story principles communicate meaning by comparing media artworks from different social, cultural and historical contexts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media artworks.

By the end of Year 6 Music, students explain how the elements of music are used to communicate meaning in the music they listen to, compose and perform. They describe how their music making is influenced by music and performances from different cultures, times and places, students [are able to] explain how the elements of music communicate meaning by comparing music from

different social, cultural and historical contexts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music.

By the end of Year 6 Visual Arts, students explain how ideas are represented in artworks they make and view. They describe the influences of artworks and practices from different cultures, times and places on their art making, explore ideas and practices used by artists, including practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, to represent different views, beliefs and opinions. Explain how visual arts conventions communicate meaning by comparing artworks from different social, cultural and historical contexts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artworks.

Year 7 to Year 8

By the end of Year 8, in all learning areas students are able to challenge stereotypes and prejudices. That is, they can identify and challenge stereotypes and prejudices in the representation of group, national and regional identities

By Years 7 to 8, Intercultural Understanding has a direct bearing on Consumer and Financial Literacy teaching, in that: The Intercultural Understanding capability has a role in developing consumer and financial literacy in young people. Intercultural understanding is an essential part of living and interacting with others in the diverse world of the 21st century. It assists young people to become responsible local and global citizens, equipped for living and working together in an interconnected world.

The Intercultural Understanding capability contributes to the development of the dimensions of consumer and financial literacy. Through this capability, students learn about the variable and changing nature of culture and appreciate how personal, group and national identities are shaped. Students develop a deep understanding of the actions of individuals and groups in specific situations, such as the influence of identities and culture on consumer and financial choices.

They learn to value their own cultural perspectives and practices and those of others while taking responsibility for their own behaviours and their interactions within and across cultures.

The Intercultural Understanding capability cultivates values and dispositions that support responsible consumer and financial decision-making such as care, empathy, respect and responsibility. Moneysmart for teachers and Tax, Super and You provide a number of interdisciplinary units and interactive activities that include aspects of the Intercultural Understanding capability.

By the end of Year 7 HASS, students explain the role of groups and the significance of particular individuals in past societies. They suggest reasons for continuity and change over time. They describe the effects of change on societies, individuals and groups and describe events and developments from the perspective of people who lived at the time. They identify past events and developments that have been interpreted in different ways Students explain the diverse nature of Australian society, and identify the importance of shared values in contemporary Australian society. Students recognise that people have different perceptions of places,

events and issues and explain how this and other factors influence views on how to respond to an issue or challenge.

By the end of Year 7 Geography, students understand the economic, cultural, spiritual and aesthetic value of water for people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and peoples of the Asia region. Exploring the multi-layered meanings (material, cultural and spiritual wellbeing) associated with rivers, waterways, waterholes, seas, lakes, soaks and springs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. The influence of environmental quality on the liveability of places.

By the end of Year 8 Geography, the student work shows an ability to identify, describe and explain a range of social, economic and environmental factors that contribute to internal migration patterns, proposing detailed explanations for the relationships and resulting distributions over time and across space, supported by examples. The student compares alternative strategies to a geographical challenge by synthesising environmental, economic and social factors.

By the end of Year 7 History, students explain the role of groups and the significance of particular individuals in past societies. They suggest reasons for change and continuity over time. They describe the effects of change on societies, individuals and groups and describe events and developments from the perspective of people who lived at the time. They identify past events and developments that have been interpreted in different ways.

By the end of Year 8 History, the student can recognise and explain patterns of change and continuity over time. The student explains the causes and effects of events and developments. The student describes in detail the motives and actions of people at the time. The student explains the significance of individuals and groups and how they were influenced by the beliefs and values of their society. The student describes and presents different interpretations of the past.

By the end of Year 7 Civics and Citizenship, students identify the ideas, values and principles that underpin the institutions and processes in Australia's political and legal systems. They explain the diverse nature of Australian society, and identify the importance of shared values in contemporary Australian society.

By the end of Year 8 Civics and Citizenship, students can explain features of Australia's democracy that enable active participation. The student recognises different types of laws in Australia and explains in detail how laws are made. They identify the diverse belief systems in Australia, analyse issues about national identity and draw conclusions about the factors that contribute to people's sense of belonging.

By the end of Year 8 Dance, students identify and analyse the elements of dance, choreographic devices and production elements in dances in different styles and apply this knowledge in dances they make and perform. They evaluate how they and others from different cultures, times and places communicate meaning and intent through dance. Identify and connect specific features and purposes of dance from contemporary and past times to

explore viewpoints and enrich their dance-making, starting with dance in Australia and including dance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

By the end of Year 8 Drama, students identify and analyse how the elements of drama are used, combined and manipulated in different styles. They evaluate how they and others from different cultures, times and places communicate meaning and intent through drama. They manipulate the elements of drama, narrative and structure to control and communicate meaning. Develop and refine expressive skills in voice and movement to communicate ideas and dramatic action in different performance styles and conventions, including contemporary Australian drama styles developed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dramatists. Identify and connect specific features and purposes of drama from contemporary and past times to explore viewpoints and enrich their drama making, starting with drama in Australia and including drama of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

By the end of Year 8 Media Arts, students identify and analyse how representations of social values and points of view are portrayed in the media artworks they make, distribute and view. They evaluate how they and other makers and users of media artworks from different cultures, times and places use genre and media conventions and technical and symbolic elements to make meaning. They identify and analyse the social and ethical responsibility of the makers and users of media artworks. Students produce representations of social values and points of view in media artworks for particular audiences and contexts. Identify specific features and purposes of media artworks from contemporary and past times to explore viewpoints

and enrich their media arts making, starting with Australian media artworks including of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media artworks.

By the end of Year 8 Music, students identify and analyse how the elements of music are used in different styles and apply this knowledge in their performances and compositions. They evaluate musical choices they and others from different cultures, times and places make to communicate meaning as performers and composers. Identify and connect specific features and purposes of music from different eras to explore viewpoints and enrich their music making, starting with Australian music including music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

By the end of Year 8 Visual Arts, students identify and analyse how other artists use visual conventions and viewpoints to communicate ideas and apply this knowledge in their art making. They explain how an artwork is displayed to enhance its meaning. They evaluate how they and others are influenced by artworks from different cultures, times and places. Experiment with visual arts conventions and techniques, including exploration of techniques used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, to represent a theme, concept or idea in their artwork. Identify and connect specific features and purposes of visual artworks from contemporary and past times to explore viewpoints and enrich their art-making, starting with Australian artworks including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Year 9 to Year 10

By the end of Year 9 Geography, students explain how geographical processes change the characteristics of places. They analyse interconnections between people, places and environments and explain how these interconnections influence people, and change places and environments.

They predict changes in the characteristics of places over time and identify the possible implications of change for the future. Students analyse alternative strategies to a geographical challenge using environmental, social and economic criteria.

By the end of Year 10 Geography, students explain how interactions between geographical processes at different scales change the characteristics of places. Students identify, analyse and explain significant interconnections between people, places and environments and explain changes that result from these interconnections and their consequences. They predict changes in the characteristics of places and environments over time, across space and at different scales and explain the predicted consequences of change. They evaluate alternative views on a geographical challenge and alternative strategies to address this challenge using environmental, economic, political and social criteria and draw a reasoned conclusion.

By the end of Year 9 History, students refer to key events and the actions of individuals and groups to explain patterns of change and continuity over time. They analyse the causes and effects of events and developments and make judgements about their importance. They explain the motives and actions of

people at the time. Students explain the significance of these events and developments over the short and long term. They explain different interpretations of the past.

By the end of Year 10 History, students refer to key events, the actions of individuals and groups, and beliefs and values to explain patterns of change and continuity over time. They analyse the causes and effects of events and developments and explain their relative importance. They explain the context for people's actions in the past. Students explain the significance of events and developments from a range of perspectives. They explain different interpretations of the past and recognise the evidence used to support these interpretations.

By the end of Year 10 Dance, students analyse the choreographer's use of the elements of dance, choreographic devices, form and production elements to communicate choreographic intent in dances they make, perform and view. They evaluate the impact of dance from different cultures, places and times on Australian dance.

By the end of Year 10 Drama, students analyse the elements of drama, forms and performance styles and evaluate meaning and aesthetic effect in drama they devise, interpret, perform and view. They use their experiences of drama practices from different cultures, places and times to evaluate drama from different viewpoints.

By the end of Year 10 Media Arts, students analyse how social and cultural values and alternative points of view are portrayed in media artworks they make, interact with and distribute. They evaluate how genre and media conventions and technical

and symbolic elements are manipulated to make representations and meaning. They evaluate how social, institutional and ethical issues influence the making and use of media artworks.

By the end of Year 10 Music, students analyse different scores and performances aurally and visually. They evaluate the use of elements of music and defining characteristics from different musical styles. They use their understanding of music making in different cultures, times and places to inform and shape their interpretations, performances and compositions.

By the end of Year 10 Visual Arts, students evaluate how representations communicate artistic intentions in artworks they make and view. They evaluate artworks and displays from different cultures, times and places. They analyse connections between visual conventions, practices and viewpoints that represent their own and others' ideas. They identify influences of other artists on their own artworks.

As these lengthy excerpts demonstrate, the ICU General Capability has been substantially embedded across most learning areas of the Australian Curriculum. After some 10+ years of continual development and consultation, the states and territories – responsible for the education sector – now effectively apply the Australian Curriculum in their schools, both government and private.

A research document released in June 2020 and titled The Intercultural Understanding Curriculum Review28 was commissioned by the South Australia Department for Education and undertaken by the Asia Education Foundation (AEF), a centre of Asialink at the University of Melbourne. The document offers an important overview of Intercultural Understanding as addressed in Australian schools. The Review was led by Associate Professor Eeqbal Hassim, Honorary Principal Fellow at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne.

Yarra River and Fed Square, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

State and Territory ICU Approaches: Influential Research, Educational Policy, Curricula and Resources

Introduction

This document is significant as it overviews the national educational approach to ICU aligned with the UN, UNESCO and OECD definitions of ICU. Namely,

" ... the capacity to examine local, global and intercultural issues, to understand and appreciate the perspectives and world views of others, to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with people from different cultures, and to act for collective well-being and sustainable development." (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD. n.d., PISA 2018 Global Competence)[29]

And,

"Education must be transformative and bring shared values to life. It must cultivate an active care for the world and for those with whom we share it ... It must give people the understanding, skills and values they need to cooperate in resolving the interconnected challenges of the 21st century." (United Nations [UN], 2015)[30]

A 2009 document funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations under the Values Education program, titled *Teaching for Intercultural Understanding: Professional Learning Program*[31] outlines the values to be fostered in ICU education. The stated purpose of the seven learning models[32] outlined in the document and aimed equally at experienced ICU educators and those educators new to the cross curriculum approach is to:

"[Reflect] a commitment to a multicultural society that values diversity, the nine Values for Australian Schooling contained in the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools (DEST 2005) imply that students understand and can act on positive values in intercultural and global contexts. Within the National Framework, eight principles suggest how schools can promote, foster and transmit values to all students. These principles recognise that education is about building personal character and the capacity for social inclusion, as well as equipping students with specific knowledge and skills." (p 2)

It is unknown the extent to which these modules have been adopted in schools. Given it is a 2009 publication, it would be expected subsequent reports as cited below within the various state jurisdictions may have superseded its approach.

28 Accessed 10 February, 2021 Understanding Curriculum Review
29 As quoted in the Intercultural Understanding Curriculum Review, p 8
30 As quoted in the Intercultural Understanding Curriculum Review, p 8
31 Accessed 3 March, 2021 Values PLP
32 See page 2 for summary of the modules.

Victoria

In July 2020, Victoria had 1,009,436 full time enrolled students across the state. Of those, 646,357 were enrolled in government schools with 46,523 full time equivalent teachers. There were 209,239 government school students with language backgrounds other than English – almost a third of the student population in government schools.[33]

Mostly driven by migration, student numbers are set to grow to unprecedented levels according to Henrietta Cook of The Age newspaper (June 6, 2019):

"The Education Department has revised its enrolment figures and now anticipates that state, Catholic and independent schools will have to accommodate 115,000 extra students [over the next five years]. The new figures, obtained by The Age and based on updated Census data, eclipse previous projections of 90,000 additional students between 2018 and 2023. While the Andrews [state] government is confident its record investment in new schools and upgrades will meet the demand, principals fear it could be a challenge if current trends continue".[34]

In 2011, the Innovation and Next Practice Division (INP) of the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) conducted a field trial on ICU in partnership with a research and evaluation team from the University of Melbourne and La Trobe University (Victoria).

The field trial was sponsored by the Languages, English as another Language (EAL) and the Multicultural Education Division of DEECD.[35]

There were 10 recommendations as a result of this field study of 26 government primary and secondary schools across metropolitan and regional areas of Victoria. The main key findings were:

- Importantly, ICU encompasses the whole curriculum and should not be limited to the traditional areas targeted for ICU such as languages and humanities.

- Moreover, for effective changes toward ICU development, an ongoing whole school approach is necessary rather than relying on isolated curriculum changes.

- Further work is needed to develop the Global Citizenship for Intercultural Understanding Framework as a tool to assist schools to consider ways to promote ICU at a whole school level.

There seemed minimal focus on actual resources and the final recommendation was "a longitudinal evaluation is necessary for future field trials to understand the relationship between improvements in ICU and student learning outcomes". The conclusion stated that "further work is needed to develop the Global Citizenship for Intercultural Understanding Framework [2015][36] as a tool to assist schools to consider ways to promote ICU at a whole school level." (p 15)

33 Accessed 9 February, 2021 Summary Stats Snapshot
34 Accessed 9 February, 2021 The Age
35 Accessed 21 September, 2020. Walton Evaluation Intercultural
36 Accessed 21 September, 2020. Learning Dev

Subsequent to this 2011 study, Deakin University's 'Doing Diversity' by Halse et.al. (2015) was a research project conducted over three years that included two years of collaborative work with six primary and six secondary schools in metropolitan Melbourne comprising a maximum variation sample in terms of geographic location, size, students' ethnic and language backgrounds, and school Index of Community SocioEducational Advantage (ICSEA)[37] and found that:

"A detailed analysis of individual students' acquisition of intercultural knowledge and skills over time revealed that the most powerful and influential learning experiences occurred outside of the classroom as a result of students' interactions with others, including family and peers". (Chapter 6).

And that the findings of the report:

"... reinforces the importance of a comprehensive, connected, school wide approach to intercultural education but also underlines the imperative for schools to attend to the role of students' outside-of-school experiences in formulating programmes and practices to equip students of all ages with the intercultural capabilities needed for a culturally diverse, global future". (Synopsis of Key Findings)

Since this report, Intercultural Understanding has been given a great deal of focus and is currently highlighted in the Victorian curriculum.[38]

The Victorian Department of Education and Training now offers an extensive set of teacher and student resources called FUSE (Find, Use, Share Education) of which Intercultural Competency is emphasized for Foundation-Year 10: English, Languages, Civics and Citizenship, Geography, History.[39]

The FUSE programs were launched in 2018 and in April 2020 – during the Covid-19 lockdowns[40]– a substantial suite of remote learning units were added to the site.

Also, their site offers resources for

- **Koorie (Aboriginal) teaching resources**

- **Multicultural education programs and resources**

- **Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture**

- **International education**

- **Sister school partnerships**

- **Languages and Multicultural Education Resource Centre**

Victoria places a strong emphasis on the General Capabilities as developed by ACARA, especially Intercultural Capabilities.[41]

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37 ICSEA is a scale that details the socioeconomic status of each school to enable numerical comparisons of the average level of educational advantage of the school student population. It is a more finely tuned proxy for socio-economic status (SES) used by education systems in Australia. The Australian Curriculum and Assessment Reporting Authority (ACARA) calculates the ICSEA score for each school in Australia using variables that include the family background of each student, including parental education and occupation, the proportion of indigenous students, and number of students with a language background other than English, and the school's metropolitan, regional or remote geographical location (ACARA, 2013).
38 Accessed 1 October, 2020 Intercultural
39 Accessed 1 October, 2020 Fuse Education
40 Schools in Victoria were locked down between March to October 2020, with a few weeks of attendance of all year levels between the first and then second wave of virus outbreaks (June). It is worth noting, that at time of writing, Victoria has had the longest and harshest Covid-19 restrictions of any jurisdiction in the world.
41 Accessed 11 February, 2021 Intercultural Education

As noted in the report *The Intercultural Understanding Curriculum Review (2020)* commissioned by the South Australia Department for Education.

"In Australia, Victoria provides a leading example of international education that focuses on the development of intercultural understanding and global citizenship. The rationale for Victorian Department of Education and Training strategy is that "Australia is one of the most multicultural societies in the world and globalisation places greater emphasis on the need for intercultural awareness and skills to sustain the cultural diversity of our richly complex society" (p 50)

The Victorian Department of Education and Training offers a variety of tools teachers can use to assist in students' development of ICU[4] of all the states and territories, Victoria has the most comprehensive and well researched approach to ICU. Victoria is, along with New South Wales, the most ethnically diverse state in Australia.

New South Wales (NSW)

In NSW, there are[42] approximately 1.2 million students in Kindergarten to Year 12. Due predominantly to migration, population numbers – and consequentially, K-12 student numbers are expected to grow substantially. According to a 2020 NSW Department of Education publication,

'Nurturing Wonder and Igniting Passion, designs for a new school curriculum: NSW Curriculum Review':[44]

"In Greater Sydney alone, the population is forecast to grow from 5.6 million to 8.4 million over the next three decades. About 75 per cent of students currently attend schools in major cities … Population projections anticipate a growing proportion of future students attending schools in metropolitan areas, including in Western Sydney, where the population is expected to grow by 70 per cent by 2041." (p 5)

The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) has legislative responsibility under the NSW Education Act (1990) for setting and monitoring Kindergarten to Year 12 curriculum for NSW schools. In 2019, Dr Jen Jackson, a Research Fellow for the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), in a paper titled 'Balancing prescriptiveness and flexibility in the school curriculum', reviewed the NSW curriculum as one of three background reports to focus particularly

"… on the issue of prescriptiveness or flexibility in curriculum, which has been identified as an area of interest in the review. The Terms of Reference require the review to consider the appropriate scope for school community choices about content.

Given that the NSW curriculum is characterised by a relatively high level of prescriptiveness (Isaacs et al., 2015), this is understood as involving consideration

42 Figures as of 2020
43 Accessed 8 February, 2021 NSW Curriculum

of whether a more flexible approach may be desirable. This paper therefore seeks to provide an evidence base, based on a rapid review of relevant research, to inform reform towards greater curriculum flexibility." (p 1)

The ACARA curriculum model purposely avoids prescriptiveness and allows flexibility, enabling states who adopt the Australian Curriculum as a guideline, including hybrid curricula with states' codes, to determine their own syllabus in keeping with the merged outcomes. NSW has opted to embed ACARA's General Capabilities fully across their curriculum, as opposed to being distinct curriculum areas.[44]

Since 2010, NSW – along with other states and territories – has been working with ACARA to develop and monitor the Australian Curriculum with a strong focus on the General Capabilities, most notably the ICU capability[45] including the Cross Curriculum Priorities, in particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Histories and Cultures priority.[47] NESA coordinates feedback from the NSW education community and makes recommendations to ACARA in relation to the Australian Curriculum.[47]

As implementation of the Australian Curriculum is the responsibility of states and territories, in consultation with key stakeholders NESA determines the timeline for curriculum development for each key learning area and the subsequent implementation of syllabuses in schools.[48]

Clearly, this is a work in progress as the above study by Jackson highlights. A review of the NSW curriculum – as an overview of submissions by stakeholders and suggested recommendations – was released by NESA in April 2020 titled 'Nurturing Wonder and Igniting Passion, designs for a new school curriculum: NSW Curriculum Review'.

This document overviews the submissions that were major influences in drafting the report. Regarding ICU specifically:

"[One] submission argued that, as a society, we 'need to be making our schools places where democracy flourishes', which in turn depended on developing the attitudes, values and cultural competencies required to live and participate in a culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse democracy. Some made particular reference to students valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures in this context." (p 15)

"As one submission noted, 'there is now significant diversity within a cohort, with additional factors such as backgrounds, cultures and languages making the diversity among students greater than it has ever been before'. To meet every student's needs, the curriculum must provide flexibility to allow schools and teachers to respond to this diversity. This includes room for schools to implement the curriculum flexibly in ways that suit their local contexts. Schools need to be able to adjust what they teach to 'take into account individual students' family, cultural and community

44 South Australian Department for Education (2020) The Intercultural Understanding Curriculum Review p 50
45 Accessed 10 February, 2021 General Capabilities
46 Accessed 10 February, 2021 Cross Curriculum Priorities
47 Accessed 8 February, 2021. NSW and the Australia Curriculum
48 Accessed 8 February, 2021. Curriculum Syllabus

backgrounds', as well as contextualising learning to help students appreciate its local relevance." (p 22)

"Submissions pointed out that many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and families experience 'a significant cultural gap' which directly impacts educational outcomes. But for many other students as well, attending school is a significant cross-cultural experience. The challenge of meeting every student's needs sometimes requires teachers to appreciate and build on the cultural knowledge and experiences that individuals bring to the classroom." (p 22)

And:

"[I]nput to the Review from Indigenous groups described the [current] school curriculum as providing learning opportunities 'targeted for children growing up in a Western culture'. This 'cultural/linguistic bias' made the curriculum inflexible in recognising and addressing Aboriginal children's different cultural and linguistic starting points and 'severely disadvantaged' many students." (p 28)

Further submissions from industry bodies highlighted the need for intercultural competencies:

"More recently, there has been a focus on general skills and attributes essential to life in increasingly globalised and multicultural societies confronting complex social, economic and environmental challenges. This has led to capabilities such as global competence, intercultural understanding, social competence and ethical behaviour also being prioritised in the school curriculum." (p 58)

The development of the NSW syllabus/ curriculum continues to become more aligned with the Australian Curriculum as reports such as the one cited above are commissioned and recommendations implemented, particularly where General Capabilities are the focus. Currently in NSW the new recommendations are planned to be completely implemented by 2022.[49]

NESA provides access to ICU teaching resources through The Henry Parkes Equity Resource Centre based in Western Sydney.[50] With some 40,000 resources including an e-library, multi-media classroom resources and professional development material, the Centre provides assistance to teaching staff, students, pre-service teachers, and university lecturers. It is unknown how many teachers/schools access this resource hub, and/or acquire their ICU teaching resources from other sources.

49 See NSW Curriculum and NSW Curriculum Nesa Accessed 9 February, 2021
50 Accessed 9 February, 2021 Multicultural Education and General Information

Australian Capital Territory (ACT)

On the 1st of January 1901 the Commonwealth of Australia was declared. Section 125 of the new Australian Constitution stated that the Seat of Government, and therefore the capital of Australia, will 'be in the State of New South Wales, and be distant not less than one hundred miles from Sydney'.

In 1911 the Federal Capital Territory – later to become the Australian Capital Territory – came into being with NSW ceding 2,360 square kilometres of land including the seaport of Jervis Bay.[51]

The ACT is the federal administrative capital of Australia. It is estimated that the Australian Capital Territory's population will reach 424,488 by the end of June of 2021[52] According to the ACT Government Education Directorate:

"At [the] February census [of] 2020, there were 80,416 students enrolled in ACT public and non-government schools … representing an increase of 1,664 students (2.1%) since February 2019. From February 2016 to February 2020, enrolments increased by 6,905 students (9.4%). Public school enrolments increased by 1,120 students (2.3%) continuing the trend of increases each year since 2016.

Public schools accounted for 62.5 percent of the total student population. Public school enrolments increased by 5,441 students (12.1%) since February 2016. Non-government school enrolments increased by 544 students (1.8%) compared with 2019. From 2016 to 2020, non-government school enrolments increased by 1,464 students (5.1%)".[53]

Schools in the ACT implement the Australian Curriculum (ACARA) F-10 for planning, teaching, and assessment. In 2018 the ACT released a report titled 'The Future of Education. An ACT education strategy for the next ten years'.[54]

This report comprises 14 research papers from various agencies and academics providing an evidence based strategy for the future of education in the ACT. Included in the document is the youth survey results undertaken by Bullot et.al for Mission Australia (a large charitable NGO in Australia) and found:

"Survey results presented in the report also identified that over a quarter of respondents (27.6%) identified the issue of equity and discrimination as an important issue, with input suggesting much more should be done to deal with these issues across Australia." (p 5, PDF version)

In this document there is no mention of Intercultural Understanding except citing the need to make education more accessible and inclusive for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as well as children from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds (p 5). At time of writing, there was no evidence of ICU designated teaching resources offered by the ACT Education Department.

51 Accessed 10 February, 2021 History National Capital
52 Accessed 10 February, 2021 Population of Australian Capital Territory
53 Accessed 10 February, 2021 February 2020 Census
54 Accessed 3 March, 2021 Future of Education Research Report

"A total of 60,485 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were enrolled full-time in Queensland state schools in August 2020, an increase of 9174 students (17.9%) from August 2016. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students represented 10.6 per cent of all Queensland's full-time state school enrolments in August 2020, up from 9.7 per cent in August 2016. The highest percentage (19.9%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were enrolled at schools in the Far North Queensland Region, followed by the North Coast Region (16.4%) and North Queensland Region (13.8%)."[56]

The Three Sisters, Echo Point, Katoomba, New South Wales, Australia

Queensland

A total of 572,046 full-time students were enrolled in Queensland state schools in August 2020. Enrolments in Queensland state schools continue to increase. From 2016 to 2020, enrolments grew by 40,456 students (7.6%).

The highest percentage (29.5%) of all state school students were enrolled at schools in the Metropolitan Region, followed by the South East Region (22.0%) and North Coast Region (20.7%).[55]

In 2019, the total student population of Queensland – including private and independent schools – was 834,816, of which 561,001 were government school students.[57] 2020 saw an increase of some 10,000+ government school students from the previous year.

The Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) implements the Australian Curriculum (ACARA) F-10 for planning, teaching, and assessment, and adopts all the General Capabilities as designed by ACARA. A 2018 study of pre-service teacher training in Queensland by Beutel & Tangen found that:

"While there is consensus that teacher education has a key role to play in developing the intercultural competences of future teachers, we posit that the greater challenge is how to embed meaningful experiences into these programs that progress preservice teachers towards more intercultural

mindsets. The effects of self-awareness in relation in developing intercultural sensitivity as a teacher is an under-researched area that warrants further scrutiny" (p 177)

In 2019 Queensland University of Technology (QUT) offered a one day professional development course for teachers in Intercultural Competence[58] (pre-Covid19). It is unclear if these courses will be continued into 2021.

South Australia

In 2021, South Australia has a population of approximately 1.7 million people, of which 1.2 million live in the capital city, Adelaide. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders comprise 1.7% of South Australia's population.[59]

In South Australia, as of February 2021, there were 4,006,974 students enrolled in 9,542 schools and teachers made up 68.1% of in-school full-time equivalent staff, with the Year 7 to 12 full-time apparent retention rate of 83.6%. The average student to teaching staff ratio for all schools was 13.5 students to one teacher.[60]

55 Accessed 11 February, 2021 Enrolment Summary
56 Accessed 11 February, 2021 Enrolment Summary
57 Accessed 11 February, 2021 National Report
58 Accessed 22 September, 2020 Teaching Intercultural Competence and awareness
59 Accessed 4 March, 2021 Population South Australia
60 Accessed 4 March, 2021 Latest Release
61 Accessed 4 March, 2021 Intercultural Understanding

The South Australian Department of Education places a strong policy emphasis on Intercultural Understanding[61] as outlined by ACARA's General Capabilities. The South Australian Department of Education implements the Australian Curriculum (ACARA). South Australia's emphasis on ICU is reflected in the document

The Intercultural Understanding Curriculum Review (released June 2020)[62], which was commissioned by the South Australia Department for Education and undertaken by the Asia Education Foundation (AEF), a centre of Asialink at the University of Melbourne. This substantial 155 page document overviews ICU education in Australia generally, and provides a detailed template for going forward in this area in South Australia's education system.

This report comes as a result of the South Australian Education Department releasing in 2019 its International Education Strategy 2019-2029[63] whereby

"... the Department's aspiration to make international and intercultural engagement an integral part of every student's experience. That aspiration is underpinned by a strong economic rationale, including innovation, productivity and global competitiveness, as well as the need for socially sustainable societies wherein diverse individuals and groups work collaboratively and cohesively towards achieving constructive, equitable outcomes for both local and global communities" The Intercultural Understanding Curriculum Review (p 41)

The key premise of the Review in approaching ICU education is its definition of cultural understanding:

"Notwithstanding the existence of individual cultures, a focus on group culture is needed for the purposes of this Review.

The Review adopts a broad view of group "culture", which is consistent with the Australian Curriculum. Culture refers to a group's shared patterns of thinking, interpreting, acting, communicating, perceiving, understanding and believing, and these patterns distinguish one cultural group from another ... Culture is not limited to national, ethno-linguistic, ethno-racial and/or religious identifiers." (p 62)

The outcome of the Review came to the conclusion that there is a lack of evidence as how to best approach ICU in the educational space. The authors underscore the lack of longitudinal studies or an effective means to assess how, or even if, students have achieved a meaningful level of international mindedness. The Review emphasizes the need to expand more evidence based research in how schools are approaching ICU, both within the curriculum structure and in assessment.

Nevertheless, in the 'What Works' series developed by the SA Department of Education[64], the *What Works 9: Achieving intercultural understanding in schools* documents and promotes what the department believes through *in situ* research is the most effective approach to achieve global mindedness: the BRIDGE program – Building

62 Accessed 4 March, 2021 Intercultural Understanding Report
63 Accessed 4 March, 2021 International Education Strategy
64 Accessed 15 March, 2021 Intercultural Understanding In Schools

Relationships through Intercultural Dialogue and Growing Engagement (BRIDGE) – as a sister-school program through the Asia Education Foundation.[65] The South Australian Education Department offers significant support and targeted guidance for teachers navigating the ICU space.[66]

Western Australia

Western Australia is the largest in geographic area of all the states of Australia, covering 2,527,013 square kilometres[67], but only has a population of approximately 2.8 million people, of which 1.7 million live in the capital of Perth.[68] As of August 2020, Western Australia had a total student population of 370,434 (kindergarten enrolments included), of which 243,722 students attended government schools and 126,712 non-government schools in the metropolitan region. In regional and remote areas there are a total of 96,035 students, of which 71,426 are enrolled in government schools and 24,609 in non-government schools.[69]

Western Australia has a similar government body overseeing educational standards as other states and territories – the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA). The SCSA follows the Australian Curriculum for its state schools, yet rather than having the General Capabilities as separate outcomes, it embeds them in the overall curriculum as they were designed by ACARA.

However, their review document (of only 12 pages) **Building on Strength: Future directions for the Western Australian Public School System** (Department of Education, 2019)[70] places a greater emphasis on promoting numeracy, literacy, STEM subjects, and school leadership, and places little focus on ICU except for a brief and general mention of Aboriginal education:

"We will increase our focus on creating culturally responsive classrooms that build on the strength of Aboriginal students, engage them in learning and enable them to thrive academically and socially. It is important that the educational opportunities we provide match the aspirations of families and communities." (p 4)

Like Queensland and the Northern Territory, Western Australia has one of the largest indigenous populations in the country with huge gaps of inequality (relative to Australia's non-indigenous population) in all areas: health, education, and socio-economic outcomes. Hence there is an imperative to focus on Aboriginal education. In fact, lifting the quality of life for our First People has become a national initiative called 'Closing the Gap'. [71]

Also, the above mentioned 2019 document, 'Building on strength', focuses strongly on skills development with the aim of economic engagement with Asia. This is predominantly due to, not only Asia being Australia's Pacific neighbours, but also relative to Western Australia Asia is closer to Perth than the east coast of Australia – Melbourne and Sydney being Australia's financial hubs.

65 Accessed 15 March, 2021 School Partnership
66 Accessed 16 March, 2021 Intercultural Understanding
67 Accessed 16 February, 2021 Area of australia states and territories
68 Accessed 16 February, 2021 Population of western australia
69 Accessed 16 February, 2021 Statistical Reports
70 Accessed 16 February, 2021 Western Australia Education
71 Accessed 16 February, 2021 Closing the Gap

Accordingly, there are very strong connections with Asia as demonstrated with the release of a government paper by the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation, titled *Western Australia's Asian engagement strategy 2019-2030: Our future with Asia,*[72] which is almost entirely focused on economic directions with Asia. The theme of the document is encapsulated in the following quote:

"We will develop and support the knowledge and skills to engage with the diversity of Asian cultures and markets, advance understanding of the political, policy and legal settings across the region, and increase cultural exchange and professional programs to empower relationships. A commitment to language capabilities will deliver competitive advantages and position business strongly for long-term growth." (p 10)

The United Nations Association of Australia Western Australian Division (UNAAWA) has developed a resource bank for teaching global citizenship.[73] It is unknown how many teachers and/or schools use this resource bank. In a study of the WA curriculum, it appears the emphasis on 'global citizenship' and 'intercultural understanding' is mainly found in the language areas of the syllabus, despite WA's stated adherence to the Australian Curriculum. WA's education policies emphasize promoting the skills needed to create strong economic ties with Asia under the guise of ICU.

Tasmania

Tasmania is an island state south of mainland Australia with an area of 68,401 square kilometres. It is extrapolated that by the end of June 2021 the population of Tasmania will be approximately 525,600 with the capital, Hobart, having a population of over 211,000.[74]

At the commencement of 2020, there were 195 Government schools across Tasmania, comprising 125 primary schools, 29 secondary schools, 25 combined (primary and secondary), and 8 senior secondary colleges (Years 11 and 12 only).[75] There are 69 non-government schools in Tasmania. [76]

Tasmania Department of Education follows the Australian Curriculum, although there is minimal emphasis on General Capabilities or Cross Curriculum Priorities in the few policy and teaching documents available, and almost no reference to ICU in the state's F-10 curriculum.

The Department of Education has an Education Ambassador[77] initiative whereby students of government schools attend community events to exchange ideas and promote the Tasmania public school system. Tasmania's global focus regarding education comes under the Department of State Growth that, as a part of raising the profile of Tasmania globally, promotes Tasmania as a destination for international students.[78]

72 Accessed 17 February, 2021 Engagement Strategy
73 Accessed 17 February, 2021 WA Global Citizenship
74 Accessed 17 March, 2021 Population of Tasmania
75 Accessed 17 March, 2021 Annual Report (p 6)
76 Accessed 17 March, 2021 Tasmania private schools
77 Accessed 17 March, 2021 Education ambassadors
78 Accessed 4 March, 2021 International Education

Northern Territory (NT)

The Northern Territory comprises 17.5% of Australia's land mass at 1,347,791 square kilometres.[79] As of June 2020, the population of the Northern Territory was an estimated 246,000 with 30.3% being the proportion of Aboriginal people; 60% of the population live in the capital city of Darwin.[80] As of Term 3, 2020, total school enrolments in the NT were 33,873, including early learning.

NT breaks up their educational statistics into Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal students to gauge the gap needing to be redressed, particularly in remote indigenous communities, between Indigenous and non-Indigenous student outcomes. It is significant that of the 14,433 Aboriginal students enrolled in Term 3, 2020, only 56.3% actually attended school. In contrast, the non-Aboriginal student population of 19,439 had an 89.1% attendance rate.[81] Nevertheless, the NT has a strong focus on not only 'closing the gap'[82] for Indigenous communities, but also fostering global mindedness. The NT's report on international education goals, the **International School Education Plan 2018–22**, outlines three pillars of approach.[83] The key goals of these pillars are:

- Prepare NT and international students for global engagement

- Prioritise internationalisation and global learning in school strategic plans

- Establish consistent communications and approaches for the delivery of international education across the NT

- Engage with the broader NT community

- Develop and maintain strong international school partnerships

This document is designed to be in alignment with the Australian government's 2016 report, the **National Strategy for International Education 2025.**

The NT Department of Education released a document, 'Implementation guide for schools. Northern Territory Social and Emotional Learning (NT SEL)'[84], which outlines classroom and extra-curricular approaches for not only social and emotional learning and general student wellbeing, but also for Intercultural Understanding and ensuring Indigenous culture is respected and made inclusive across all levels of education.

This document was informed by the Victorian Department of Education and Training's initiative **Building Resilience**, now named **Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships**.[85]

79 Accessed 18 March, 2021 Area of Australia States and Territories
80 Accessed 18 March, 2021 Population
81 Accessed 18 March, 2021 Enrollment and Attendance
82 Accessed 22 March, 2021 Closing the gap 2021 Campaign Report
83 p4
84 Although not dated, some references in the body of the work are dated 2018, so this is a recent document. Accessed 25 March, 2021
85 Accessed 25 March, 2021 Respectful

The Northern Territory has also developed an Indigenous Languages and Cultures (NTILC) curriculum in partnership with ACARA.

The document, **Culture: Cultural Knowledge and Content** is the implementation of **Keeping Indigenous Languages and Cultures Strong**, **A plan for the teaching and learning of Indigenous Languages and Cultures in Northern Territory**, which emphasises the need to keep Indigenous languages alive and in focus as a key aspect of maintaining First People's culture and giving Aboriginal youth a sense of self and belonging.

In addressing, not only indigenous languages but also all ethnicities, the Northern Territory Board of Studies (NTBOS) released the document **Changing the Conversation—A Blueprint for Languages Education in Northern Territory Schools (the Blueprint)** in 2015.

This document addresses the need to teach Languages Other than English (LOTE) specifically, and Intercultural Understanding generally. The **Blueprint** is designed to:

- Equip students with communication skills and intercultural capabilities to allow them to become confident and capable global citizens

- Enhance students' linguistic and cultural identities

- Enable students to experience rich engagement with multicultural communities within the Northern Territory and beyond (p 4)

The 2012 document **Cultural Responsiveness and School Education: With particular focus on Australia's First Peoples; A Review & Synthesis of the Literature** authored by Thelma Perso from the Menzies School of Health Research, Centre for Child Development and Education (Darwin, Northern Territory) provides detailed pedagogic guidelines for teachers to navigate through the ICU space (see Section 5). Albeit almost 10 years since writing, this document still provides highly relevant frameworks for teachers across Australia – not only the Northern Territory – to address and promote intercultural sensitivity.

Summary

All states and territories have now adopted the Australian Curriculum, albeit with different emphases on ACARA's General Capabilities and Cross Curriculum Priorities.

Victoria and the Northern Territory are the two most proactive jurisdictions in developing Intercultural Understanding in their education sectors. New South Wales and South Australia follow, then Queensland, with Tasmania and Western Australia appearing to have minimal focus on this Capability, both in policy documents, reports, and curricula.

This, despite both Tasmania and Western Australia having adopted the Australian Curriculum with its strong focus on the General Capabilities and Cross Curriculum Priorities.

Nevertheless, across Australian educational jurisdictions generally, there appears to be limited resources in assisting teachers to achieve ICU in their classrooms and/or extra curricula activities. There is a gap between policy and in situ learning tools for achieving ICU in Australian schools.

The exception to this is the BRIDGE Program (Building Relationships through Intercultural Dialogue and Growing Engagement)[86] as provided by the Asia Education Foundation of the University of Melbourne.

BRIDGE, as a sister school platform, demonstrates an effective approach in bringing Intercultural Understanding as an experience into the classroom[87] and is available to schools Australia wide.

Also, operating in the Intercultural Understanding learning resources space is Cultural Infusion. ICU resources extending outside the learning areas of languages and social sciences are rare, with the exception of those provided by Cultural Infusion[88]. Not only does this organization provide culturally diverse interactive incursions into schools and early learning centres Australia wide, but where distance or Covid restrictions make in-person access challenging, live virtual sessions are available on request of the school.

Cultural Infusion also has a suite of digital products promoting ICU[89] , most notably their musical platform Sound Infusion[90] whereby students digitally compose music from a myriad of diverse cultures and accordingly enabling experiential learning.

There is also a 16 session program to develop ICU leadership for secondary students called the Intercultural Citizenship Ambassador Program (ICAP).

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86 Accessed 4 March,2021 School Partnerships
87 Accessed 4 March, 2021 Achieving Intercultural Understanding in Schools
88 See Cultural Infusion
89 See Learning Lands
90 See Sound Infusion

The Australian outback

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