

Prepared by  
Ms Kyoko Hodgkinson  
Kate Beggs  
Date: 30/11/20  
Responsible to establish: Yes / No

HSC Japanese Committee  
PO Box 1024  
Burwood North NSW 2134  
[www.hscjapanese.org.au](http://www.hscjapanese.org.au)

### Summary of Submission for the Curriculum Review

The preferred position of the HSC Japanese Committee is that there are no eligibility criteria for language study in NSW schools. Ideally this would be married with incentives to undertake higher level courses.

The most pressing issue is removal of the eligibility criterion for the HSC Japanese continuers course that "Students do not use the language for sustained communication outside the classroom with someone with a background in using the language". This is because:

- It penalises students based on decisions of their parents about the students' upbringing, often with no knowledge of the later impact on language learning. No other school educational issue intrudes into the domestic lives of students and their families in this way.
- There is a lack of clarity on what 'sustained' means in this context, contributing to inconsistent decision making from school to school.
- It is unclear whether 'communication' is just oral communication or includes/ requires written communication. It is also unclear whether 'communication' includes one person, typically a parent, speaking in the Asian language and another person, typically a student, responding in English or another language. Again this contributes to inconsistent decision making.
- The terminology 'sustained communication outside the classroom with someone with a background in using the language' is in practice interpreted by schools as 'having an Asian parent'. It seems contrived to avoid more direct language that might be seen as openly discriminatory. Students with parents from separate Asian language backgrounds, such as Korean and Chinese are particularly severely affected.
- In many cases application of this criterion to exclude students from studying at continuers level means if they do study an HSC Asian language course, it needs to be either through distance learning or at the Department of Education's Saturday School of Community Languages. This is due to the limited number of schools that offer Asian language in context and language in literature courses. Studying by distance or on Saturdays requires significant additional commitment by students and their families, reducing the number of students studying Asian languages.

# (NSW) HSC - The Higher Secondary Certificate

Continuers course eligibility criteria only apply to Japanese, Chinese, Korean and Indonesian.

Courses	Target candidature	Eligibility criteria
[Language] Beginners	Students are learning the language as a second (or additional) language. Students either have no prior spoken or written knowledge or experience of the language, or their experience is derived solely from, or is equivalent to, study of the language for 100 hours or less in Stage 4 or Stage 5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have had no more than 100 hours' study of the language at the secondary level (or the equivalent). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have little or no previous knowledge of the language. For exchange students, a significant in-country experience (involving experiences such as homestay and attendance at school) of more than three months renders a student ineligible.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
[Language] Continuers Where there are [Language] in Context and/or [Language] and Literature courses	Students are learning the language as a second (or additional) language. Students typically have studied the language for 200–400 hours at the commencement of Stage 6. (In languages where Extension courses are offered, the Extension courses are available to HSC Continuers course candidates only.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have had no more than one year's formal education from the first year of primary education (Year 1) in a school where the language is the medium of instruction. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have had no more than three years residency in the past 10 years in a country where the language is the medium of communication.</li> <li>• <b>Students do not use the language for sustained communication outside the classroom with someone with a background in using the language.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
[Language] in Context Where there is a [Language] and Literature course	Students typically have been brought up in a home where the language is used, and they have a connection to that culture. These students have some degree of understanding and knowledge of the language. They have received all or most of their formal education in schools where English (or another language different from the language of the course) is the medium of instruction. Students may have undertaken some study of the language in a community, primary and/or secondary school in Australia. Students may have had formal education in a school where the language is the medium of instruction up to the age of 10.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have had no formal education in a school where the language is the medium of instruction beyond the year in which the student turns 10 years of age (typically Year 4 or 5 of primary education).</li> </ul>
[Language] and Literature	Students have a cultural and linguistic background in the language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No eligibility criteria</li> </ul>