

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 3 – EDUCATION
INQUIRY INTO REVIEW OF THE NEW SOUTH WALES
SCHOOL CURRICULUM
HEARING – 04 November 2020

Supplementary Question

1. How will the updates to the syllabus that are occurring as a result of the curriculum review be different to the previous, most recent syllabus updates?

RESPONSE

At its meeting in September 2019, the NESA Board approved work continuing on syllabuses that were under development when the Curriculum Review was announced. However, it advised that implementation be delayed pending the outcome of the Review.

The report of the NSW Curriculum Review, published in June 2020, recommended that syllabuses should be leaner in prescribed content to allow teachers more time and flexibility to ensure that students are able to develop deep understanding of disciplinary concepts and principles.

The most recently updated Stage 6 (Year 11 and 12) NESA syllabuses were developed in light with the recommendations of the *Stronger HSC Standards* reforms. There is strong alignment between recommendations of the Curriculum Review and *the Stronger HSC Standards* reforms. In developing the updated syllabuses, NESA focused on depth and rigour of learning, and provided opportunities for the application of knowledge and skills.

The initial task in reconciling the most recently developed syllabuses with the recommendations of the NSW Curriculum Review will be ensuring that they faithfully represent these recommendations. In addition, as a result of the Review, syllabus structure will not be the same as in the current syllabuses, their presentation will be more streamlined and the way in which teachers access and interact with the syllabuses will be more user friendly.

Syllabuses that were developed prior to the *Stronger HSC Standards* reforms are likely to lack currency and require more work to ensure they adhere to the recommendations of the Review.

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(originally assigned to DoE as Supplementary Question 1)

2. How is the NSW Curriculum Review interacting with the Federal review of the curriculum? Will the NSW curriculum be updated when the Federal curriculum review is announced?

RESPONSE

NESA has legislative responsibility under the *NSW Education Act 1990* for setting and monitoring Kindergarten to Year 12 curriculum for NSW schools. While the development and monitoring of the Australian Curriculum is coordinated by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), NESA provides feedback on behalf of the NSW education community and makes recommendations to ACARA in relation to the Australian Curriculum.

NESA is working closely with ACARA on the review of the Australian curriculum. NESA has representatives on ACARA's reference groups for each of the learning areas, the Primary Reference Group and the F – 12 Reference Group. Through involvement with the various reference groups NESA and ACARA are provided with the opportunity to share updates on their respective work. Regular informal meetings also occur between the two agencies. Senior ACARA officials are on the NESA Steering Committee that provides advice to NESA and the NESA Board in relation to curriculum reform activities. Through this ongoing interagency cooperation, both NESA and ACARA are kept informed and abreast of developments on both projects.

NESA will continue to work with ACARA to ensure that, where appropriate, alignment of NSW syllabuses and key Australian Curriculum directions continues and that the NSW syllabuses continue to contain content from the Australian Curriculum.