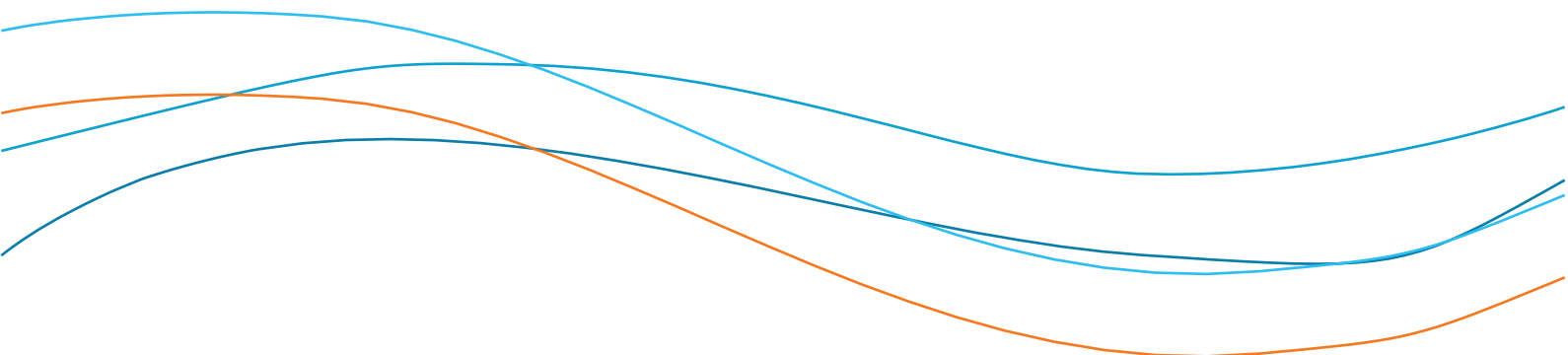
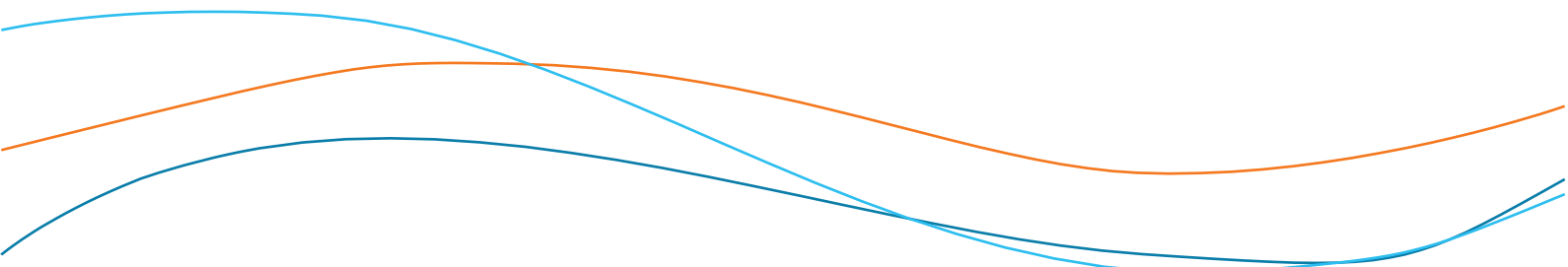




The Process of Recognition

**Recognition of curriculum frameworks as
meeting the requirements of the Australian
Curriculum**



May 2012

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1. Introduction

The following information is provided to explain the process for national recognition of well-established alternative curriculum frameworks that meet the requirements of the Australian Curriculum as required under the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) Charter and to assist organisations in preparing for submissions to the ACARA Recognition Committee.

These procedures provide organisations with a framework of questions to be addressed with supportive documentation so that an assessment can be made by ACARA.

2. Legislation

Under the provisions of the *Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority Act 2008*, Section 6 states that the functions of ACARA include:

developing and administering a national school curriculum, including achievement standards, for school subjects specified in the Charter.

ACARA's Charter (1 July 2010) includes ACARA's role in supporting the Australian Education Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs Senior Officials Committee to advise the Ministerial Council on Education and Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs on:

a nationally agreed approach and criteria for determining whether well-established alternative curriculum frameworks meet the requirements of the national curriculum.

A Recognition Review Panel will work with ACARA's Recognition Committee to assess submissions against the criteria. (See section 4)

Where curriculum frameworks are assessed as meeting the requirements of the Australian Curriculum for the life of that curriculum framework and/or until the current Australian Curriculum is replaced, state and territory Registration Authorities will be so advised - to assist them in their legislated role of registering schools.

Step 1: Notification of intention

3.1 Proponent formally advises ACARA of its intention to seek national recognition of a curriculum framework using the **ACARA Notice of Intention** template. This document provides:

- background information about the proponent,
- the title and publication reference details of the intended curriculum framework,
- the proposed alternative curriculum component with which to compare Australian Curriculum content descriptions and the proposed alternative curriculum component with which to compare Australian Curriculum achievement standards, and
- the proposed points including the end of Year 6 and the end of Year 10 for comparison between this curriculum framework and the Australian Curriculum.

3. The Recognition Process

- 3.2 ACARA provides relevant documentation about the recognition process and provides the Submission Template and timeline information.
- 3.3 ACARA notifies state and territory registration and certification authorities that the advice has been received. These authorities are able to submit any matters of interest to ACARA that are consistent with their legislative responsibilities.
- 3.4 The ACARA Recognition Committee oversees the Recognition Review Panels to assess the submission.

Step 2: Submission developed by proponent

- 3.5 Using the **ACARA Submission** template, the proponent details how their curriculum framework meets the criteria for recognition for an alternative curriculum framework to be included on ACARA's Recognition Register as to be generally comparable with the Australian Curriculum.
- 3.6 The submission is accompanied by a copy of the curriculum framework and specific relevant publishing details so that it can be readily identified and referenced. The expected life and anticipated review process for that version of the curriculum framework is also specified. Additional support materials should not be necessary and should not be provided.
- 3.7 The submission provides clear information about evidence in the curriculum framework. Where possible this information is electronically linked between the submission and the relevant section of the curriculum framework.
- 3.8 The completed Submission template and curriculum framework document(s) are submitted to ACARA.

3. The Recognition Process

Step 3: Review of submission

3.9 ACARA convenes Recognition Review Panels to review the documentation.

Review Panels comprise members with broad curriculum and school registration experience as well as relevant curriculum framework, stages of schooling and learning area experience. A panel may operate as a whole group or as sub-groups. Panel members may be drawn from ACARA and from state and territory registration authorities. A core group of the panels is retained from year to year to ensure continuity and consistency across submissions. In addition, some commonality between the Review Panel and the Recognition Committee is maintained.

3.10 The Review Panel considers whether:

- a) the curriculum framework meets the criteria (See section 5)
- b) further information is required from the proponent
- c) the curriculum framework does not meet the criteria.

3.11 The Review Panel records evidence and makes recommendations, including reasons and references to supporting material, to the Recognition Committee which reports to the ACARA Chief Executive.

Step 4a: Recommendation for recognition

3.12 If the submission is assessed as meeting the criteria, the Review Panel makes a recommendation that the curriculum framework be included on ACARA's Register of Nationally Recognised Curriculum Frameworks.

3.13 If recognition is recommended according to item 3.12, ACARA advises the proponent and the relevant state and territory registration authorities, referring to the version of the curriculum framework, learning areas and year levels that have been assessed as being generally comparable with the Australian Curriculum.²

3. The Recognition Process

- 3.14 The recommendation provides any necessary information about differences in sequencing of learning at comparison points that may have implications if students change school curriculum systems throughout years F-10.
- 3.15 The period of recognition of the national alternative curriculum framework is for the life of that curriculum framework (see section 5) and/or until the current Australian Curriculum is replaced.
- 3.16 The alternative curriculum framework is added to an ACARA register of nationally recognised curriculum frameworks, including details of any expected revision date.

Step 4b: Further information required

- 3.17 If the Review Panel determines that further information is required for the purposes of clarification, the proponent is advised and given a specified timeframe within which to respond in writing, and/or in person. This step provides the opportunity to identify and point to information in the curriculum framework that addresses any significant differences between the curriculum framework and the criteria for being considered to be generally comparable with the Australian Curriculum.
- 3.18 The Review Panel then reconsiders the submission in light of the clarifying information and decides whether to recommend recognition to the Recognition Committee.

3. The Recognition Process

Step 4c: Recognition not supported

- 3.19 If the submission is assessed as not meeting the criteria, the Review Panel recommends to the Recognition Committee that the curriculum framework not be nationally recognised as being considered generally comparable with the Australian Curriculum.
- 3.20 If the recommendation to **not** recognise the curriculum framework as meeting the requirements of the Australian Curriculum is accepted by the Recognition Committee, ACARA advises the proponent and indicates that an appeal can be made to the ACARA Board. The proponent is informed of the appeal procedure.

4. Criteria for Recognition¹

- 4.1 The submission for national recognition of a curriculum framework used as an alternative to the Australian Curriculum should address the extent to which it:
- a) aligns with the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*, specifically the expectations described within the second goal
 - b) demonstrates how the proposed curriculum framework will assist students in becoming successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens, taking account of the elaboration of this goal on pages 8 and 9 of the Melbourne Declaration.

In particular, proponents need to demonstrate how their curriculum framework supports young people to:

- be successful learners, with specific attention to developing literacy, numeracy and ICT capabilities
- become confident and creative individuals, with specific attention to developing a sense of self-worth, self-awareness and personal identity to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual and physical well-being
- become active and informed citizens.

- 4.2 The curriculum framework must meet the principles and guidelines outlined in the Shape of the Australian Curriculum, (2011, v3.0).

In particular, proponents need to demonstrate the extent to which their curriculum framework:

- makes clear to teachers what is to be taught, and to students what they should learn and what achievement is expected of them
- builds on the assumption that all students can learn, and sets high standards that apply to all learners while acknowledging the different rates at which students develop
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4. Criteria for Recognition

- connects with and builds on the *Early Years Learning Framework* (if at the appropriate level)
- helps to prepare all young Australians to become fulfilled and competent citizens and workers
- provides students with an understanding of the past that has shaped the society, culture and environment in which they are growing and developing, and with knowledge, understanding and skills that will help them in future
- provides for students to learn the curriculum content (knowledge, skills and understanding) and achieve standards described in relevant Australian Curriculum documents.

4.3 Direct comparisons are made between the Australian Curriculum and the curriculum framework submitted for recognition in relation to relevant points across year levels.

The comparisons will:

- demonstrate the similarities and differences that exist between the curriculum content of the two documents, with an explanation of how the gaps are addressed, and why different content is valued by the proponent
- demonstrate the similarities and differences in standards of achievement expected of students at the comparison points agreed with ACARA, with an explanation of any differences in these standards and how the gaps will be addressed.

5. Review of Recognition

- 5.1 Recognition of a curriculum framework as being considered to be generally comparable with the Australian Curriculum is based on a specific version of the curriculum framework and resubmission is required should that curriculum framework, or the Australian Curriculum be changed. If the basis of recognition were to change, application can be made to ACARA to review the recognition status. The review process involves consideration of whether there were any changes to the terms and facts of the original submission. If there were changes, ACARA may determine that recognition no longer applied.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority

ACARA will be responsible for:

- developing, publicising and reviewing the national recognition process
- providing information about the assessment process and documentation to support submissions being made
- establishing and conducting an annual program for receipt and evaluation of submissions for national recognition, providing two review process opportunities per year
- convening a Recognition Committee which will oversee Review Panels, (including reasonable costs of time, travel and so on) to review submissions which may comprise personnel from state and territory registration authorities
- advising proponents of the outcome of the review process
- advising state and territory registration authorities of curriculum frameworks that have been included on ACARA's Recognition Register, including the relevant publishing details so that the curriculum can be readily identified
- establishing and conducting a Board-approved appeal process.

6.2 Proponent

Proponents will be responsible for:

- accessing necessary information to guide the development of the submission
- preparing and submitting the application for recognition, including the provision of sufficient publishing details to readily identify the curriculum framework
- responding to ACARA requests for additional information where required.

6.3 State and territory registration authorities

Relevant state and territory registration authorities will be responsible for:

- nominating staff available to work on panels to review curriculum frameworks
- reviewing whether individual schools meet the state or territory requirements for registration (permission to operate), taking into account the recognition by ACARA.