

Overview

Nature and purpose of the Framework

Classical languages are distinct within the languages learning area of the Australian Curriculum. While they have ceased to be languages of everyday communication, Classical languages provide a key to the literature, history, thought and culture of the ancient worlds and societies that produced them. Each is removed from the others in time and place and boasts its own often large and rich body of ancient literature.

The Framework for Classical Languages (the Framework) is the first national curriculum document for Years 7–10 to guide the development of curricula and teaching and learning programs for a range of Classical languages in these years of schooling. By providing a national framework, it is intended that future educational development in Classical languages will result in curricula and school programs that are nationally consistent.

The purpose of the Framework is to guide the development of language-specific curricula or teaching and learning programs for Classical languages. The Framework was used to develop the curricula for Latin and Classical Greek. Taken together, the Framework and the language-specific curricula for Latin and Classical Greek may be used as the basis for state and territory education and school authorities to develop language-specific curricula, or for schools to develop teaching and learning programs for other Classical languages, including those that are offered in Australian schools (Classical Hebrew and Sanskrit) and others, such as Classical Chinese.

Click on the links below for the Language specific curricula for Latin and Classical Greek in the Australian Curriculum.

<http://australian-curriculum.org/languages/framework-for-classical-languages/curriculum/latin/7-10?layout=1>

<http://australian-curriculum.org/languages/framework-for-classical-languages/curriculum/classical-greek/7-10?layout=1>

Rationale

The study of Classical languages allows students to enter and explore ancient worlds that have shaped contemporary life and societies. Authentic engagement with seminal works of great literature and antiquities gives direct access to ancient ways of living in and viewing the world, and an appreciation of the languages, cultures, literatures and traditions that are derived from those of ancient societies.

Studying Classical languages enables students to develop their understanding of how language works as a system, enhances their capability to communicate and extends their literacy repertoires. It acquaints students with basic philological principles, such as consistent sound changes between related languages and the ways in which vowels shift within a language. Students become familiar with many complex linguistic operations and with the metalanguage used to denote different usages and structures. Such principles can be applied to the study of other languages, ancient or modern, related or distant. Students are able to increase their understanding of the workings of languages they seek to learn, and those already in their background.

The study of Classical languages exercises students' intellectual curiosity; strengthens their cognitive, analytical and reflective capabilities; and enhances creative and critical thinking. Students develop skills in research, communication, self-management and collaboration – skills that are essential in preparing for life at school and beyond. Through their reading, analysis and translation of texts, students of Classical languages develop their thinking processes, such as close attention to detail, precision, accuracy, memory, persistence and logic. When translating, students make sense of ancient ideas, experiences, values and attitudes, giving prominence to shades of meaning, thus increasing their dexterity of thought. Through the focus on analysis and precise translation of texts, students develop their capacity to learn in a systematic and disciplined manner.

Studying Classical languages enhances students' enjoyment and understanding of their own and other cultures. Students examine the language used to denote values in different cultures, both ancient and modern, and understand the diversity that exists, and has always existed, in cultural values. They gain a deep understanding of literature dealing with enduring moral and social issues, such as the conflict between individual freedom and the common good of society; the role of the family; discrimination based on race, gender or religion; or the causes of revolution. Through critical reflection on and comparisons with the history, culture, values and practices of the ancient world, learning Classical languages contributes to students' development as responsible citizens, locally and globally.

Aims

The Australian Curriculum: Framework for Classical Languages aims to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills to ensure students:

- engage with the language, history and culture of the Classical world through interaction with texts
- understand language, culture and learning and their relationship, through the medium of ancient texts and artefacts, and thereby develop intercultural understanding
- understand how their own experiences of learning a Classical language extend their ways of viewing, engaging in and interpreting the contemporary world.

These three aims are interrelated and provide the basis for the two organising strands: Engaging with texts and Understanding.

Structure

Sequences of learning

To reflect current custom, practice and the needs of learners in Australian schools, the Framework has been developed for Years 7–10.

Strands, sub-strands and threads

The following interrelated strands are derived from the aims, and describe different facets of learning the language, and understanding and reflecting on these processes:

- Engaging with texts: engaging with the language, culture and history of the Classical world through the interpretation, analysis and translation of (language) texts
- Understanding: analysing Classical language and culture as resources for understanding meaning and interpreting the ancient and modern worlds.

A set of sub-strands has been identified within each strand; the sub-strands reflect dimensions of language learning, through which the content is organised. The strands and sub-strands do not operate in isolation but are integrated in relation to language use for different purposes in different contexts.

The sub-strands are further differentiated according to a set of 'threads' that support the internal organisation of content in each sub-strand. These threads are designed to capture, firstly, a range and variety in the scope of learning and, secondly, a means of expressing progression of content across the learning sequence.

Table 1 identifies the strands, sub-strands and threads.

Table 1: Framework for Classical Languages strands, sub-strands and threads

Strand	Sub-strand	Description	Threads
Engaging with texts: <i>Engaging with the language, culture and history of the Classical world through the interpretation, analysis and translation of (language) texts</i>	1.1 Accessing the ancient world through (language) texts	Engaging with people and ideas in the ancient world through texts that reveal language use and social and cultural practices	Engaging with people and ideas in the ancient world, by reading, analysing and interpreting (language) texts
			Conveying information and ideas about ancient society and culture
	1.2 Responding to texts	Engaging with and responding to (language) texts as literature	Responding to (language) texts as literature
			Responding to (language) texts through reading aloud, reciting or performing
	1.3 Translating	Translating (language) texts into English, comparing different interpretations of the same text and explaining these to others	Translating and explaining (language) texts
			Comparing and evaluating translations
Understanding: <i>Analysing Classical language and culture as resources for understanding meaning and interpreting the ancient and modern worlds</i>	2.1 Systems of language	Understanding the language system, including sound, writing, grammar, vocabulary and text structure	Sound and writing systems
			Grammatical system
			Vocabulary acquisition and building
			Text structure and organisation
	2.2 The powerful influence of language and culture	Understanding how languages vary in use (register, style, standard and non-standard varieties) and change over time and place.	(Language) in the ancient world and its linguistic legacy
			Cultural legacy of the ancient world in the modern world
	2.3 The role of language and culture	Understanding the relationship between language and culture	Relationship between language and culture
	2.4 Reflecting	Questioning reactions and assumptions in response to engaging with the Classical world, and considering how this affects own identity and world view	Reactions to engaging with the ancient world
Identity as language learner			

Concepts, processes, texts and text types

Concepts

Concepts are the 'big ideas' that students work with in engaging with Classical languages. The choice of the word 'concept' rather than 'topic' is deliberate: it marks a shift from description to conceptualisation. The curriculum should invite students not only to describe facts or features of phenomena, situations and events, but also to consider how facts and features relate to concepts or principles. For example, a description of a house can lead to a consideration of the concept of 'home' or 'space'. This shift is necessary because it is concepts that lend themselves most fruitfully to intercultural comparison and engage learners in personal reflection and more substantive learning.

Key concepts for Classical languages include:

- language
- culture
- experience
- representation (words, icons, symbols)
- equivalence
- nation (origins, social order, politics, religion)
- citizenship
- relationship (family, community, government)
- history and historical appreciation
- attitude, value and belief
- power
- aesthetics
- time (the past in the present)
- modernity
- tradition
- linguistic evolution
- interconnection across concepts
- intercultural comparisons.

Further examples of concepts for languages can be found in the Australian Curriculum: Languages Foundation to Year 10 Curriculum Design.

Processes

Processes include skills (reading, listening, writing) as well as higher-order thinking processes, such as translating, interpreting, obtaining, presenting, informing, conceptualising, analysing, reasoning, connecting, explaining and comparing, evaluating, simplifying, rephrasing, intertextualising, decentering, empathising, mediating and reflecting.

Texts and text types

Texts are central to curriculum development, as all work in language learning can be seen as textual work. The selection of texts for Classical languages is important because they define and reflect the linguistic and cultural identity of the ancient world. Classical languages texts may be synthetic, modified or authentic; they may be in oral, written, digital or multimodal form. Text types for Classical languages include narratives, stories, texts in the public domain, speeches, rhetoric, poetry, plays/drama, written translation, oral interpretation, discussion and explanation.

Using the Framework to develop language-specific curricula or programs for Classical languages

It is intended that the Framework will be used by state and territory jurisdictions to develop language-specific curricula, or by schools and communities to develop teaching and learning programs for Classical languages other than Latin and Classical Greek. The Framework has been designed to be applicable to the range of Classical languages that are currently or could be offered in Australian schools.

Educational jurisdictions, schools and communities may use the Framework in differing ways. This is to be expected, and is consistent with the Framework as a document of guidance. The Framework allows the freedom to be creative and innovative in devising teaching and learning programs which will engage, excite and challenge students. The curricula and programs that are developed using the Framework should be stimulating, enjoyable and challenging, reflecting students' increasing maturity and offering them inspiration to engage closely with cultures and societies that are removed in time and place from their own, and are a bridge between the contemporary world and the civilisations of the ancient world.

The language-specific curricula for Latin and Classical Greek may also be used to support and guide the process of developing curricula or programs for other Classical languages.

In developing language-specific curricula or programs, the following aspects of the curriculum will need to be modified or developed.

- A context statement that describes:
 - the place of the language and the heritage of the ancient society
 - the place of the language in Australian education
 - the nature of learning the language
 - the learning pathway and curriculum design.
- Band descriptions for Years 7–8 and Years 9–10 that outline:
 - the nature of the learners
 - language learning and use
 - contexts of interaction
 - texts and resources
 - features of target language use
 - level of support
 - the role of English.
- Content descriptions for each thread that describe the knowledge, understanding, skills, key concepts and key processes that teachers are expected to teach and students are expected to develop at each band level.

Content elaborations that elaborate on aspects of each content description: illustrations, descriptions or examples to indicate possibilities for teaching. These are intended as complementary support material. They are neither comprehensive nor exhaustive. Content elaborations may include:

- contexts of language use
 - further detail on dimensions of the content description
 - aspects of relevant linguistic and cultural knowledge
 - key language
 - possible tasks and experiences
 - connections across concepts.
- Achievement standards for Year 8 and Year 10 that describe what students are typically able to understand and do having been taught the curriculum content for the respective band. Across Years 7–10, the set of achievement standards should describe a broad sequence of expected learning. The sequence of achievement standards should give teachers a framework of growth and development in the language area and help teachers plan and monitor learning and make judgements about student achievement.

Language-specific examples such as concepts, key words and phrases are included in the content elaborations and achievement standards. The use of language-specific examples gives teachers a point of reference when developing programs and provides indications of pitch and expected levels of performance in language use and understanding.

More information about these aspects of the curriculum can be found in the Australian Curriculum: Languages Foundation to Year 10 Curriculum Design.