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Student Diversity

The School Curriculum and Standards Authority is committed to the development of a high-quality curriculum that promotes excellence and equity in education for all Western Australian students.

All students are entitled to rigorous, relevant and engaging learning programs drawn from the Western Australian Curriculum: Languages. Teachers take account of the range of their students' current levels of learning, strengths, goals and interests and make adjustments where necessary. The three-dimensional design of the Western Australian Curriculum, comprising learning areas, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities, provides teachers with flexibility to cater for the diverse needs of students across Western Australia and to personalise their learning.

Students with disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Disability Standards for Education 2005 require education and training service providers to support the rights of students with disability to access the curriculum on the same basis as students without disability.

Many students with disability are able to achieve educational standards commensurate with their peers, as long as the necessary adjustments are made to the way in which they are taught and to the means through which they demonstrate their learning.

In some cases, curriculum adjustments are necessary to provide equitable opportunities for students to access age-equivalent content in the Western Australian Curriculum: Languages. Teachers can draw from content at different levels along the Pre-primary – Year 10 sequence. Teachers can also use the general capabilities learning continua in Literacy, Numeracy and Personal and social capability to adjust the focus of learning according to individual student need.

Teachers may also need to consider adjustments to assessment of students with disability to ensure student achievement and demonstration of learning is appropriately measured.

English as an additional language or dialect

Students for whom English is an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) enter Western Australian schools at different ages and at different stages of English language learning and have various educational backgrounds in their first languages. While many EAL/D students bring already highly developed literacy (and numeracy) skills in their own language to their learning of Standard Australian English, there are a significant number of students who are not literate in their first language, and have had little or no formal schooling.

The Western Australian Curriculum: Languages is founded on contemporary understandings of language acquisition, where development and learning all the languages students experience in their socialisation and education form part of students'

distinctive linguistic and cultural repertoires. These are variously developed by both the experience of schooling and broader social community experience. These repertoires are an integral part of students' identities and what they bring to the learning of additional languages as part of the languages learning area within the school curriculum.

While the Western Australian Curriculum: Languages primarily addresses the learning of languages, this learning cannot be separated from the development of students' more general communicative repertoires. It is through such a relational and holistic approach to languages education that students develop their capabilities in knowing and using multiple languages. Students extend their communicative and conceptual development, learning and identity formation.

In various kinds of bilingual programs, students are afforded an opportunity to learn through the medium of English and another language (students' first or additional language). These programs are of particular value in ensuring students continue to develop at least two languages that are of value to them. They are of value to both their conceptual development and learning and to their identity formation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities recognise the importance of literacy to their children. They support literacy education programs that are founded on establishing literacy in their children's first language. These are the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages their communities use. Literacy in English is regarded as concomitant on first establishing students' literacy in their first language. Although most bilingual programs in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are designed to help students' transition into learning in English, their fundamental value is in the development of bilingual literacy. Strengthening the bilingual literacy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students can significantly contribute to improving their overall academic achievement and success.

While the aims of the Western Australian Curriculum: Languages are the same for all students, EAL/D students must achieve these aims while simultaneously learning a new

language and learning content and skills through that new language. These students may require additional time and support, along with teaching that explicitly addresses their language needs. Students who have had no formal schooling will need additional time and support in order to acquire skills for effective learning in formal settings.

Gifted and talented students

Teachers can use the Western Australian Curriculum: Languages flexibly to meet the individual learning needs of gifted and talented students.

Teachers can enrich students' learning by providing them with opportunities to work with learning area content in more depth or breadth (e.g. using the additional content descriptions); emphasising specific aspects of the general capabilities learning continua (e.g. the higher order cognitive skills of the critical and creative thinking capability); and/or focusing on cross-curriculum priorities. Teachers can also accelerate student learning by drawing on content from later year levels in the Western Australian Curriculum: Languages and/or from local, state and territory teaching and learning materials.