AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING AUTHORITY

Using the Australian Curriculum to meet the learning needs of students with disability

Draft Advice for Teachers

Version 1.0

July 2012

www.acara.edu.au

Table of contents

Introduction

ACARA is committed to the development of a high-quality curriculum for all Australian students that promotes excellence and equity in education. Teachers will use the Australian Curriculum to develop teaching and learning programs that build on students' current learning and which are not limited by an individual student's gender, language, sexual orientation, pregnancy, culture, ethnicity, religion, health or disability, socio economic background or geographic location.

The purpose of these advice materials is:

- to provide advice to teachers as to how the Australian Curriculum may be used to address the learning needs of all students
- to support teachers in meeting their professional obligation to ensure that students with disability[1] are able to access and participate in education and training on the same basis as those without disability

  Disability Standards for Education 2005 under the Disability Discrimination Act.
- to provide examples of teaching and learning activities that illustrate how students with disability may learn Australian Curriculum content[2] on the same basis as their year level peers.

What makes the Australian Curriculum a curriculum for all learners?

The *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (MCEETYA, 2008) provides the policy framework for the Australian Curriculum. It includes two goals:

- Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence
- All young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens

The Australian Curriculum has been designed to address these goals with the objectives of the Australian Curriculum being the same for all students. These objectives are based on a set of propositions outlined in *The Shape of the Australian Curriculum v3* that guide the development of the Australian Curriculum as a curriculum for all learners. These propositions include:

- the understanding that each student can learn and the needs of every student are important
- a recognition of the entitlement of each student to knowledge, understanding and skills that provide a foundation for successful and lifelong learning and participation in the Australian community
- high expectations to be set for each student as teachers account for the current

[1] The term 'students with disability' is consistent with terminology used in disability legislation. It reflects that which is used by government bodies such as COAG and DEEWR and in government initiatives and strategies eg the National Education Agreement, the National Disability Strategy.

[2] The Australian Curriculum content is presented as content descriptions that describe knowledge, understanding and skills drawn from learning areas, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities.

level of learning of individual students and the different rates at which students develop

- acknowledgment that the needs and interests of students will vary, and that schools and teachers will plan from the curriculum in ways that respond to those needs and interests.

The Melbourne Declaration emphasises the importance of knowledge, understanding, skills (the content) of learning areas, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities as the basis for a curriculum designed to support 21st century learning.

Goal 1:
Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence

All Australian governments and all school sectors must:

- *provide all students with access to high-quality schooling that is free from discrimination based on gender, language, sexual orientation, pregnancy, culture, ethnicity, religion, health or disability, socioeconomic background or geographic location*

- *promote personalised learning that aims to fulfil the diverse capabilities of each young Australian.*

Melbourne Declaration (MCEETYA,2008) p7

The three-dimensional design of the Australian Curriculum, comprising learning areas, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities, provides teachers with the flexibility to cater for the diverse needs of students across Australia and personalise learning.

Teachers will use the Australian Curriculum to develop teaching and learning programs that build on students' current learning. The starting point for planning is the Australian Curriculum learning area that aligns with a student's chronological age. This starting point applies to every student and represents every student's entitlement to the same opportunities and choices in their education.

Teachers can take account of the range of their students' current levels of learning and make adjustments to the level of demand by drawing from the learning area content descriptions along the Foundation to Year 10 sequence. This can be from earlier or later levels along the sequence.

Teachers can also refer to the general capabilities learning continua and the cross-curriculum priorities to make adjustments to the learning area content to build on students'

prior learning, experiences and learning goals. While the general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities are embedded in learning area content descriptions, identified by icons, they can also be viewed separately. Teachers can emphasise one or more of the three dimensions of the curriculum (learning areas, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities) depending on the individual learning needs of their students. They can incorporate specific teaching of the general capabilities or cross-curriculum priorities through the learning area content, for example teaching targeted literacy skills through a science or history lesson. For some students, adjustments made to the learning area content will reflect priority goals developed in consultation with the student and parent as part of the individual planning process.

Viewing and navigating the Australian Curriculum online

The online format of the Australian Curriculum provides flexibility in how the curriculum can be viewed. It allows for each learning area to be viewed by multiple year levels, for example, and may be downloaded and printed in those views.

A virtual tour available on the homepage of the Australian Curriculum website www.australiancurriculum.edu.au describes how the Foundation to Year 10 Australian Curriculum can be viewed in different ways – by learning area and strands, by year level or levels – and filtered for general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities.

Using the Australian Curriculum to meet the learning needs of all students

The three-dimensional design of the Australian Curriculum comprising learning areas, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities provides teachers with the flexibility to personalise learning and build on students' prior learning, experiences and goals. The process outlined below applies to all students, regardless of individual circumstances or the type or location of school they attend. The process reinforces every student's entitlement to rigorous, relevant and engaging learning experiences across all areas of the curriculum and ensures that all students have the same opportunities and choices in their education.

Teachers refer to the Australian Curriculum learning area content that aligns with their students' chronological age as the starting point for planning teaching and learning programs.

Teachers can take account of the range of their students' current levels of learning and make adjustments by drawing from the learning area content at different levels along the Foundation to Year 10 sequence, the general capabilities learning continua and the cross-curriculum priorities to personalise learning. Teachers can shift emphasis between the three dimensions of the curriculum (learning areas, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities) according to individual learning needs.

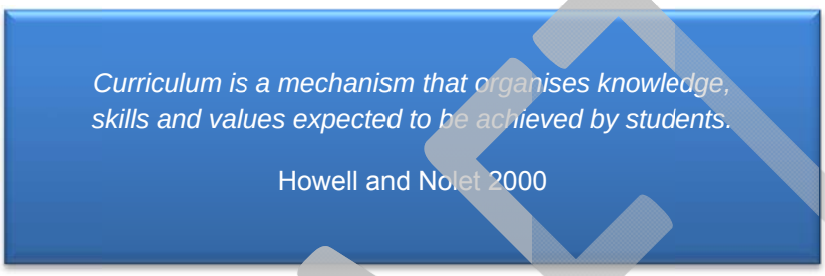
For some students, these adjustments will reflect individual learning goals developed in consultation with the student and parents as part of a collaborative planning process.

Teachers assess students' progress through the Australian Curriculum in relation to achievement standards. For some students, their progress will be assessed in relation to their individual learning goals. Approaches to assessment and reporting will differ across the states and territories as per current arrangements.

The Australian Curriculum and the Disability Standards for Education 2005 under the Disability Discrimination Act

The Australian Curriculum acknowledges the changing ways in which young people learn and the challenges that shape their learning in the future. The curriculum sets out:

- what will be taught
- what students need to learn
- the expected quality of learning



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.

Students with disability are entitled to rigorous, relevant and engaging learning opportunities drawn from the Australian Curriculum and set in age-appropriate learning contexts *on the same basis* as students without disability. Curriculum authorities, schools and teachers have an obligation to consider *reasonable adjustments* needed to enable all students to access, participate and succeed in their learning. Before any adjustments are made the school must *consult* with the student and parent.

What does 'on the same basis' mean?

- *On the same basis* means that a student with disability should have access to the same opportunities and choices in their education that are available to a student without disability.
- *On the same basis* does not mean that every student gets the same experience but they do get the same opportunities and choices to access the Australian Curriculum.
- The concept of *on the same basis* is fundamental to the operation of the requirement of an education provider not to discriminate against students with disabilities.

Commonwealth of Australia, 2010, p.7

What are 'reasonable adjustments'?

- An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students.

- An adjustment is **reasonable** if it achieves this purpose while taking into account the student's learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, the education provider, staff and other students

Commonwealth of Australia, 2010, p.7

Who is involved in the 'consultation'?

- When deciding what to include in an educational course and how to teach it, an education provider should consult with each student with a disability doing the course and consider their needs.
- Where possible the student and education providers should work together to find adjustments and solutions to help the student access and participate in education and training
- An associate of the student is consulted if it is not possible for the student.

Commonwealth of Australia, 2010, p.7

Adjustments

The design of the Australian Curriculum recognises that teachers are best placed to plan, organise and deliver learning opportunities to meet the individual learning needs of the students they teach. Teachers use the Australian Curriculum content[3], drawing on integrated approaches where appropriate and using pedagogical strategies that recognise and account for students' needs, interests, and the school and community context.

> *Evidence-based practices should interface with the professional wisdom of teachers to maximise outcomes of students with disabilities.*
>
> Cook et al 2009, p. 280

States and territories use differing terms to describe or refer to an 'adjustment'. In line with the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* ACARA uses the following definition:

> *An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with a disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students.*
>
> Disability Standards for Education 2005

- Not all students with a disability will require adjustments to the curriculum, instruction or environment.
- Not all students requiring adjustments to the curriculum, instruction or environment will have a disability.
- Not every student with a disability will require ongoing adjustments,
- It cannot be assumed that students with the same disability will require equivalent adjustments.
- 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 expected to learn and to the means through which they demonstrate their learning, for example, with the provision of assistive technology and alternative formats.

[3] The Australian Curriculum content is presented as content descriptions that describe knowledge, understanding and skills drawn from learning areas, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities.

- Before making an adjustment, the teacher must consult with the student and parent. (*Disability Standards for Education 2005, p15*)

There are many sources of advice about planning quality teaching and learning programs that are inclusive of students with disability. State and territory education systems, jurisdictions and curriculum authorities' websites are a good starting point.

What are curriculum adjustments?

Curriculum adjustments may include:

- aligning goals identified through the collaborative planning process with the Australian Curriculum
- aligning content demand to individual student need
- identifying key vocabulary for explicit instruction
- organising and connecting knowledge, skills and values to promote generalisation
- using cross curricular and naturally occurring learning opportunities to enhance individual learning goals
- providing alternative opportunities for students to represent their learning (for example using technology; alternative and augmentative communication systems)
- providing alternative representations of teaching and learning materials.

What are instructional adjustments?

Instructional adjustments may include:

- providing multiple means of engagement
- motivating students through engagement with personal interests
- modelling and demonstrating skills, knowledge and cognitive strategies
- explicit and systematic instruction
- levels of prompting
- modelling problem solving
- providing opportunities for the student to think aloud (verbalisation)
- scaffolding student learning through guided practice and supports
- providing feedback and correction
- frequent cumulative review
- providing opportunities for generalisation and maintenance.

What are environmental adjustments?

Environmental adjustments may include:

- providing multiple means of access
- peer assistance

- access to alternate equipment and furnishings
- use of support personnel
- scheduling (for example place, sequence of events)
- use of assistive technology and alternative and augmentative communication systems
- changes to buildings.

The Australian Curriculum

Learning areas

The Australian Curriculum will eventually be developed for all learning areas and subjects set out in the *Melbourne Declaration*: initially for English, mathematics, science and history; followed by geography, languages, the arts, economics and business, civics and citizenship, health and physical education, information and communication technology and design and technology.

The Australian Curriculum sets out what all young people should be taught through the specification of curriculum content and the learning expected at points in their schooling through the specification of achievement standards.

Each learning area or subject includes:

- a statement of rationale and a set of aims
- an overview of how the learning area is organised
- year level descriptions
- content descriptions (knowledge, understanding and skills) specifying what teachers are expected to teach
- content elaborations to provide additional clarity by way of illustrative examples only
- achievement standards that describe the quality of learning (the depth of understanding, extent of knowledge and sophistication of skill) expected of students at points in their schooling
- annotated student work samples that illustrate the achievement standard at each year level. As the Australian Curriculum is implemented, the available work samples will be enhanced in both volume and range of forms.
- a glossary to support consistent understanding of terms used

To ensure every student can access, participate and progress through all areas of the Australian Curriculum F−10, an education provider will sometimes need to make adjustments to:

- content - what a student learns
- process - how the student learns and instructional processes
- product - how the student demonstrates what they have learned.

General capabilities

The Australian Curriculum includes seven general capabilities which comprise an integrated and interconnected set of skills, knowledge, behaviours and dispositions (the content) that students develop and use in their learning across the curriculum, in co-curricular programs and in their lives outside school.

These include:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Information and communication technology (ICT) capability
- Critical and creative thinking
- Personal and social capability
- Ethical behaviour
- Intercultural understanding.

The skills, knowledge, behaviours and dispositions for each general capability are organised in a continuum of learning typically but not exclusively aligned with years of schooling.

These two attributes of the general capabilities – applicable across the curriculum and at any year level – provide the flexibility within the Australian Curriculum (learning areas, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities) to personalise learning for all students.

The general capabilities of Literacy, Numeracy and Personal and social capability are the focus of specific advice in these materials as they represent the essential skills, knowledge behaviours and dispositions that all students need in order to become successful learners at school and life beyond school. The Literacy and Numeracy continua have been extended to support teachers in locating the current level of students with disability who cannot be located on the Foundation to Year 10 sequence of the Learning areas.

Cross-curriculum priorities

The Australian Curriculum has been written to equip young Australians with the skills, knowledge and understanding that will enable them to engage effectively with and prosper in a globalised world. Students will gain personal and social benefits, be better equipped to make sense of the world in which they live and make an important contribution to building the social, intellectual and creative capital of our nation.

These include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures
- Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia
- Sustainability.

For each cross-curriculum priority, a set of organising ideas reflects the essential knowledge, understandings and skills for the priority. The organising ideas are embedded in the content descriptions and elaborations of each learning area as appropriate.

In the same way as the general capabilities, the organising ideas can be drawn upon in various ways to enable teachers to make adjustments to the curriculum content to support diverse learning needs.

Literacy capability

What is literacy?

In the Australian Curriculum, students become literate as they develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions to interpret and use language confidently for learning and communicating in and out of school and for participating effectively in society. Literacy involves students in listening to, reading, viewing, speaking, writing and creating oral, print, visual and digital texts, and using and modifying language for different purposes in a range of contexts.

Broadly students read, write and communicate in a variety and combination of ways including gesture, speech, sign, Braille, picture-communication-symbols and use of technology.

The Literacy general capability materials include further information about the nature of the capability and a continuum of learning. These should be referred to when reading the following advice.

Relevance of the Literacy capability for students with disability

The *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (MCEETYA 2008) recognises literacy as an essential skill for students in becoming successful learners and as a foundation for success in all learning areas. Success in any learning area depends on being able to use the significant, identifiable and distinctive literacy that is important for learning and representative of the content of that learning area.

> *Teaching communication skills should be one of the most important priorities…because the ability to communicate affects learning in all other content, as well as overall quality of life.*
>
> Browder et al 2011 (p262)

For students who are unable to communicate through a conventional mode the explicit teaching of literacy skills becomes even more essential so that they can develop alternative means of gaining information and expressing themselves.

> *Without an effective means of communication, individuals with severe disabilities can fall victim to the phenomenon of "learned helplessness".*
>
> Cited by Browder et al, 2011 (p262)

> *…when students' communicative attempts are unrecognised or ineffective, they may develop problem behaviours due to the lack of a means of self-expression."*
>
> Cited by Browder et al 2011 (p267)

How is the Literacy continuum organised?

The Literacy continuum incorporates two overarching processes:

- Comprehending texts through listening, reading and viewing
- Composing texts through speaking, writing and creating.

with the following areas of knowledge applying to both processes:

- Text knowledge
- Grammar knowledge
- Word knowledge
- Visual knowledge

Why and how has the Literacy continuum been extended?

The organising elements of Comprehending and Composing represent overarching processes and provide the basis for describing the skills, knowledge, behaviour and dispositions associated with the beginning stages of literacy development. The literacy continuum has been extended to be inclusive of all students, by including four draft levels to the Comprehending and Composing elements (see Literacy continuum, levels 1a-1d). Each level of the literacy continuum can apply to students at any point in their schooling. The additional levels 1a-1d describe, in particular, the development of communication skills.

The four stages of communication development can broadly be described as:

Pre-intentional: Students show only involuntary or reflex responses to internal or external stimuli usually associated with well-being. These must be responded to and given meaning.

Intentional: To begin with students' behaviours are voluntary but are not intentionally communicative, as learners do not yet realise they can control the behaviour of others. Students begin to communicate intentionally but in unconventional ways (for example body movement). They realise that other people can be used to obtain something they want.

Early symbolic: Students use conventional behaviours to communicate intentionally (for example gesture, vocalisation). The student 'acts on' both people and objects at the same time (for example looking at someone and pointing to an object of interest to share their experience). Students begin to use concrete symbols to represent objects/people. Such symbols may be objects of reference, pictures or actions/gestures. There must be a clear 1:1 relationship to the original object (for example a symbol must resemble the original in terms of appearance, feel, sound or action made).

Symbolic: Students begin to use one or more abstract symbols (for example speech, signs, Braille, printed words, abstract graphic symbols or 3D abstract symbols).

Adapted from Rowland, C. (1996) *Communication Matrix*. Portland, Oregon: Oregon Health Sciences University, cited by Welsh Government *Routes for Learning (2006) p29*

Concurrent work is underway to develop additional descriptions for the end of the Foundation Year. Feedback from the national consultation on these additional descriptions, the targeted consultation with teachers of students with disability, as well as the upcoming consultation on general capabilities more broadly, will inform the final presentation of the general capabilities.

How can teachers use the Literacy continuum?

Teachers can use the Literacy learning continuum to identify a student's current literacy level and plan opportunities to practise and develop literacy skills, knowledge, behaviours and dispositions through rigorous and relevant learning experiences across the whole curriculum, in co-curricular programs and in their lives outside school.

In many cases students' level of literacy does not align with their chronological age. For students to access age-appropriate learning area content teachers can make adjustments to the literacy demands of the task. For example, when asking a student to produce a science report a teacher may refer to an earlier level along the Literacy continuum under Text knowledge to inform the adjustments they make. Providing a scaffold for the science report can enable a student to demonstrate their science learning whilst supporting their literacy needs (Year 6 Science – Electricity).

Alternatively, teachers may shift the emphasis of the lesson, using the science activity to develop and apply a student's literacy skills. For example, a student whose current level of literacy is located towards the beginning of the learning continuum, can be developing their use of symbols to communicate by making choices directly related to the science task (Year 6 Science – Electricity).

Teachers can use the Literacy continuum to:

- identify a student's current level of literacy skills, knowledge, behaviours and dispositions
- identify the particular literacy skills, knowledge, behaviours and dispositions that a student needs to develop
- plan opportunities for a student to develop and use these literacy skills, knowledge, behaviours and dispositions in their learning across the curriculum, in co-curricular programs and in their lives outside school.

What are the different forms of texts with which students will engage?

A text is the means for communication. Texts can be written, spoken, visual or multimodal, and in print or digital/online forms. Multimodal texts combine language with other systems for communicating such as visual images, soundtracks and spoken word, as in film or computer presentation media. Texts include all forms of Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC), for example real objects, picture-communication-symbols, photos, Braille, gesture and signing.

The forms and conventions of texts have developed to help us communicate effectively with a variety of audiences for a range of purposes, and so texts in different learning areas can and do use language and other features in different ways. Texts may be particular to or characteristic of a learning area – for example data displays in Mathematics, reports in science, descriptions in history.

Numeracy capability

What is numeracy?

In the Australian Curriculum students become numerate as they develop the knowledge and skills to use mathematics confidently across all learning areas at school and in their lives more broadly. Numeracy involves students in recognising and understanding the role of mathematics in the world and having the dispositions and capacities to use mathematical knowledge and skills purposefully.

> *The ultimate goal for teaching mathematics to students … is to increase autonomy in managing everyday situations.*
>
> Browder et al, 2011 (p175)

The Numeracy general capability materials include further information about the nature of the capability and a continuum of learning. These should be referred to when reading the following advice.

Relevance of the Numeracy capability for students with disability

The *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (MCEETYA 2008) recognises that numeracy is an essential skill for students in becoming successful learners at school and life beyond school, and in preparing them for their future roles as family, community and workforce members. More broadly, a highly numerate population is critical in ensuring the nation's ongoing prosperity, productivity and workforce participation.

> *Improved numeracy outcomes will encourage higher school retention rates, increased productivity and support economic prosperity.*
>
> Commonwealth of Australia, 2008 (p105)

Research by Browder, Spooner, Ahlgrim-Delzell, and Wakeman (2008) has shown that instructional focus in mathematics in the USA for students with disability tends to be limited to number, number operations and measurement (cited by Ahlgrim-Delzell et al 2009). According to the National Mathematics Advisory Panel (USA, 2008) the omission of any national mathematic components from instruction will result in fragmented knowledge and limitations in application (cited by Ahlgrim-Delzell et al 2009).

In addition to compliance with the Disability Standards for Education 2005 under the Disability Discrimination Act, mathematical instruction for all students should include all elements of the Australian Curriculum including algebra, geometry and statistics and probability in order that students develop essential skills in the areas of reasoning and effective problem solving, independence, quality of life and self-determination.

How is the Numeracy continuum organised?

The Numeracy continuum is organised into six interrelated elements:

- Calculating and estimating
- Recognising and using patterns and relationships
- Using fractions, decimals, percentages, ratios and rates
- Using spatial reasoning
- Interpreting and drawing conclusions from statistical information
- Using measurement

Why and how has the Numeracy continuum been extended?

Each of the six numeracy elements has been extended to be inclusive of all students by including one additional draft level. The additional level (Level 1) describes the beginning stages in numeracy development. Each level of the Numeracy continuum can apply to students at any point in their schooling.

A specific focus of consultation and trialling with teachers of students with disability is whether this one additional level for each element of numeracy is sufficiently inclusive of all students, or whether more levels might be required for at least some elements of the numeracy continuum.

It is essential that the mathematical ideas with which students interact are relevant and meaningful in the context of their current lives as described below in relation to the organising elements of the numeracy continuum:

Calculating and estimating: The development of number sense is essential because numbers are encountered in everyday life. Daily application includes examples such as street address, clothing size, sports scores, and cooking. Number operations provide a means for developing a budget, balancing a bank account, or estimation.

Recognising and using patterns and relationships Develops skills that help students make sense of and describe change as it occurs over time.

Using fractions, decimals, percentages, ratios and rates Provides the opportunity to analyse and make judgements about the relationships between variables.

Using spatial reasoning The concepts learned give students an opportunity to practice skills essential to navigate and make sense of their surroundings.

Interpreting and drawing conclusions from statistical information Assists students to develop self-determination such as creating goals and graphing progress.

Using measurement Everyday uses include time management; estimating the appropriate capacity of a container for the storage of items; following a recipe.

Adapted from Ahlgrim-Delzell, L., Knight, V., Jimenez, B., Agnello, B., (2009). *Research-based practices for creating access to the general curriculum in Mathematics for students with significant intellectual disabilities.* p.4

Concurrent work is underway to develop additional descriptions for the end of the Foundation Year. Feedback from the national consultation on these additional descriptions, the targeted consultation with teachers of students with disability, as well as the upcoming consultation on general capabilities more broadly, will inform the final presentation of the general capabilities.

How can teachers use the Numeracy continuum?

Teachers can use the Numeracy continuum to identify a student's current numeracy level and plan opportunities to practise and develop numeracy skills, knowledge, behaviours and dispositions through rigorous and relevant learning experiences across the whole curriculum, in co-curricular programs and in their lives outside school.

Teachers can use the Numeracy learning continuum to:

- identify a student's current level of numeracy skills, knowledge, behaviours and dispositions
- identify the particular numeracy skills, knowledge, behaviours and dispositions that a student needs to develop
- plan opportunities for a student to develop and use these numeracy skills, knowledge, behaviours and dispositions in their learning across the curriculum, in co-curricular programs and in their lives outside school.

Personal and social capability

What is Personal and social capability?

In the Australian Curriculum, students develop personal and social capability as they learn to understand themselves and others, and manage their relationships, lives, work and learning more effectively. The capability involves students in a range of practices including recognising and regulating emotions, developing empathy for and understanding of others, establishing positive relationships, making responsible decisions, working effectively in teams and handling challenging situations constructively.

Students with well-developed social and emotional skills find it easier to manage themselves, relate to others, develop resilience and a sense of self-worth, resolve conflict, engage in teamwork and feel positive about themselves and the world around them.

The Personal and social general capability materials include further information about the nature of the capability and a continuum of learning. These should be referred to when reading the following advice.

Relevance of the Personal and social capability for students with disability

The *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (MCEETYA, 2008) recognises that personal and social capability assists students to become successful learners, helping to improve their academic learning and enhancing their motivation to reach their full potential. Personal and social capability supports students in becoming creative and confident individuals with 'a sense of self-worth, self-awareness and personal identity that enables them to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual and physical wellbeing', with a sense of hope and 'optimism about their lives and the future'. On a social level, it helps students to 'form and maintain healthy relationships' and prepares them 'for their potential life roles as family, community and workforce members' (MCEETYA, p. 9).

> *Research has linked students' self-determination status to the attainment of more positive academic and transition outcomes including more positive employment recreation and independent living outcomes and more positive quality of life and life satisfaction.*
>
> Wehmeyer et al 2012

How is the personal and social capability continuum organised?

The Personal and social capability continuum is organised into four interrelated and non-sequential elements of:

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Social management

When students develop their skills in any one of these elements, it leads to greater overall personal and social capability, and also enhances their skills in the other elements. In particular, the more students learn about their own emotions, values, strengths and capacities, the more they are able to manage their own emotions and behaviours, and to understand others and establish and maintain positive relationships.

How will the personal and social capability continuum be extended?

Each level of the personal and social capability continuum can apply to students at any point in their schooling. The specific focus of current consultation and trialling with teachers of students with disability is whether the existing personal and social capability continuum is inclusive of all students, or whether it needs to be extended further.

Concurrent work is underway to develop statements for the end of Foundation, Year 4 and Year 8. Collaboration on consultation feedback from both trials, Students with disability and General capabilities, will take place to inform the final presentation of the personal and social capability continuum.

How can teachers use the personal and social capability continuum?

Teachers can use the Personal and social capability continuum to:

- identify a student's current level of personal and social capability skills, knowledge, behaviours and dispositions
- identify the particular personal and social capability skills, knowledge, behaviours and dispositions that a student needs to develop
- plan opportunities for a student to develop and use these personal and social capability skills, knowledge, behaviours and dispositions in their learning across the curriculum, in co-curricular programs and in their lives outside school.

Examples of teaching and learning activities to meet diverse learning needs

Examples of teaching and learning activities are being developed to illustrate how the Australian Curriculum can be implemented to meet the needs of all students, as described in the flowchart ‘Using the Australian Curriculum to meet the learning needs of all students’ on page 4.

The examples use the content from the English, Mathematics, Science and History learning areas to establish the learning context associated with students’ chronological age, the starting point for all learners.

Adjustments to these teaching and learning activities, drawing from content at different levels along the F−10 sequence and from the general capabilities (Literacy, Numeracy and Personal and social capability), are presented to illustrate the possibilities for diverse learners to access and participate in rigorous, relevant and engaging learning activities on the same basis as their peers and aligned with their individual learning needs.

References

Ahlgrim-Delzell, L., Knight, V., Jimenez, B., Agnello, B., (2009). *Research-based practices for creating access to the general curriculum in Mathematics for students with significant intellectual disabilities.* Chief Council of State School Officers. Retrieved from: http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2009/Research_Based_Practices_Math_2009.pdf

Bloomberg, K., West, D., Johnson, H., & Iacono, T. (2009). *The triple C: Checklist of communication competencies*. Victoria: SCOPE.

Browder, D., & Spooner, F. (2011). *Teaching students with moderate and severe disabilities*. New York: Guilford.

Commonwealth of Australia, (2006). *Disability Standards for Education 2005 plus guidance notes.* Author: Canberra

Commonwealth of Australia. (2008). *National numeracy review report*. Author: Canberra.

Commonwealth of Australia. (2010). *Review of Disability Standards for Education 2005 discussion paper.* Author: Canberra

Cook, B., Tankersley, M., & Landrum, T. (2009). Determining evidence-based practices in special education. *Exceptional Children*, 75, 365-383

Council of Australian Governments. (2009). *Belonging, being and becoming: The early years learning framework for Australia*. Author: Canberra.

Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (2011).*Quest for learning: Guidance & assessment materials profound & multiple learning difficulties.* Northern Ireland Curriculum.

Gersten, R., Beckmann, S., Clarke, B., Foegen, A., Marsh, L., Star, J. R., & Witzel, B. (2009). *Assisting students struggling with mathematics: Response to Intervention (RtI) for elementary and middle schools* (NCEE 2009-4060). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee

Howell, K., & Nolet, V. (2000). Curriculum-based evaluation: Teaching and decision making (3rd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) (2008). *Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians*. Author: Melbourne.

National Mathematics Advisory Panel (2008). *Final report of the national mathematics advisory panel*. Washington, DC: US Department of Education.

OECD. (2005). Learning a living: First results of the adult literacy and life skills survey. Paris: Author.

Qualifications and Curriculum Group, (2006) *Routes for Learning*: *Assessment materials for learners with profound learning difficulties and additional disabilities.* Department for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills: Cardiff, Wales.

Rowland, C. (2011) *Communication matrix for parents and professionals*. Portland, OR: Oregon Health Sciences University.

Wehmeyer, M. Shogren, K., Palmer, S., Williams-Diehm, K., Little, T. & Boulton, A. (2012). The impact of the self-determination learning model of instruction on student self-determination. *Exceptional Children*, *78*, 135-153.