



**Shape of the  
Australian Curriculum:  
The Arts**



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# Purpose

1. The *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: The Arts* provides broad direction on the purpose, structure and organisation of the Arts curriculum. It is intended to guide the writing of the Australian Arts Curriculum from Foundation to Year 12.
2. This paper has been prepared following analysis of extensive consultation feedback to the National Arts Curriculum Initial Advice Paper (3 May 2010) and *draft Shape of the Australian Curriculum: The Arts Paper* (8 October 2010), and decisions taken by the ACARA Board.
3. The paper should be read in conjunction with *The Shape of the Australian Curriculum v2.0*.

# Introduction

4. An education rich in the Arts maximises opportunities for learners to engage with innovative thinkers and leaders and to experience the Arts both as audience members and as artists. Such an education is vital to students' success as individuals and as members of society, emphasising not only creativity and imagination, but also the values of cultural understanding and social harmony that the Arts can engender (*National Education and the Arts Statement, 2007*).
5. Through studying and engaging in the Arts, students will develop specific knowledge, skills and processes, and also create art works. Through learning to appraise and critique art works, artists and artistic practices, they will learn to value the uniqueness of each art form, and to understand that all art forms are interconnected. Students will come to understand the social, historical and cultural contexts of art forms. Students will learn that the Arts are central to creative communities and cultures. The Arts provide evidence of the creative and cultural life of a community.
6. In a curriculum for the twenty-first century, students will experience and learn about five Arts subjects: dance, drama, media arts, music and visual arts. In the Arts, students need to know what questions to ask, especially when encountering an art work of another era, culture or unfamiliar medium. Young Australians need the confidence to access the Arts, and to understand the contemporary manifestations of each art form as well as their social, cultural and historical contexts.
7. As emerging critical and creative thinkers, students will gain the confidence and the tools to understand and critique the Arts in everyday life. Students will learn that the Arts exist in process as much as in finished artistic products. Process does not have to result in a product or performance. Through their Arts studies, students will discover that artists work both individually and in groups, and that the Arts connect many creative and mainstream industries contributing to the development of a vibrant, modern and inclusive Australian society.

# The Arts Learning Area

8. The *Australian Curriculum: The Arts* will comprise five subjects:
  - Dance
  - Drama
  - Media Arts
  - Music
  - Visual Arts.
  
9. The Australian Curriculum for the Arts will be based on the assumption that all young Australians are entitled to engage with the five Arts subjects and should be given an opportunity to experience the special knowledge and skills base of each.
  - All students will study the five Arts subjects — dance, drama, media arts, music and visual arts — from Foundation to the end of primary school. Schools will be best placed to determine how this will occur.
  - From the first year of secondary school (Year 7 or 8), students will have an opportunity to experience some Arts subjects in greater depth and to specialise in one or more Arts subjects. Schools may continue to offer all Arts subjects. This will be determined by their state/territory jurisdiction and/or the school.
  - In Years 9–12, students will be able to specialise in one or more Arts subjects as part of their overall curriculum package.
  
10. The curriculum for each Arts subject will be organised in the following bands:
  - Foundation to Year 2
  - Years 3–4
  - Years 5–6
  - Years 7–8
  - Years 9–10
  - Senior secondary (Years 11–12).
  
11. Learning in the Arts and the development of aesthetic knowledge are sequential and cumulative. The new content, skills and processes specified in each band will be revisited in increasing complexity and sophistication in later bands.
  
12. Allocation of time for teaching the Arts learning area will be a school-based decision. Notional hours for each band of schooling will guide the writers of the Australian Arts Curriculum as follows: 120 hours across F–2; 100 hours across Years 3–4; 100 hours across Years 5–6; 160 hours across Years 7–8 and 160 hours across Years 9–10.
  
13. Schools are best placed to determine how learning in the Arts will be delivered. These decisions will take account of the different approaches that can be taken for each subject in the Arts. For example, some subjects in the Arts require frequent brief tuition while others require more intense immersion less frequently.

# Structure of the Australian Arts Curriculum

14. Each subject in the Arts is unique, with its own discrete knowledge, symbols, language, processes and skills.
15. In broad terms, learning in the Arts involves *making* and *responding*. Students learn as *artists*, by *making* art works that communicate to audiences. They learn as *audiences*, by *responding* critically to the Arts. These actions are taught together as each depends on the other.
16. *Making* and *responding* will provide overarching organisers for the Arts curriculum and will provide a consistent structure for the primary years and for generalist teachers. Within these broad organisers, each subject in the Arts will have specific terminology, concepts and processes that serve as subject organisers. In this curriculum, *making* will be described in art form-specific ways within each Arts subject. *Responding* will be described in more general terms, which will be applied across the five Arts subjects. The curriculum will recognise equally the distinctiveness of dance, drama, media arts, music and visual arts. It also recognises connections between art forms.
17. Students will learn to use art form-specific concepts, skills and processes in their *making* and *responding*. Students will develop aesthetic knowledge through their Arts learning.
18. Students will make art works by using the elements of an art form. They will work from an idea, an intention, an expressive or imaginative impulse, or an external stimulus. They will imagine, create and design art works. Through disciplined practice, students will learn to use and manage the materials, instruments and skills of the art form to prepare, develop, produce and present art.
19. Students will *respond* to art works through their senses, thoughts and emotions. They will come to understand and appreciate art works through critical and contextual study. As students begin to learn in the Arts they will respond to what they see or hear in an art work, and express what they feel personally about an art work. As their learning in the Arts subjects progresses, students' exploration of art works will be deepened through investigation of particular aspects including (but not limited to) those shown in Diagram 1.
20. Students will investigate aspects of art works in each Arts subject. This will involve asking questions which will increase in depth and complexity as students' study of the Arts progresses.

# Structure of the Australian Arts Curriculum

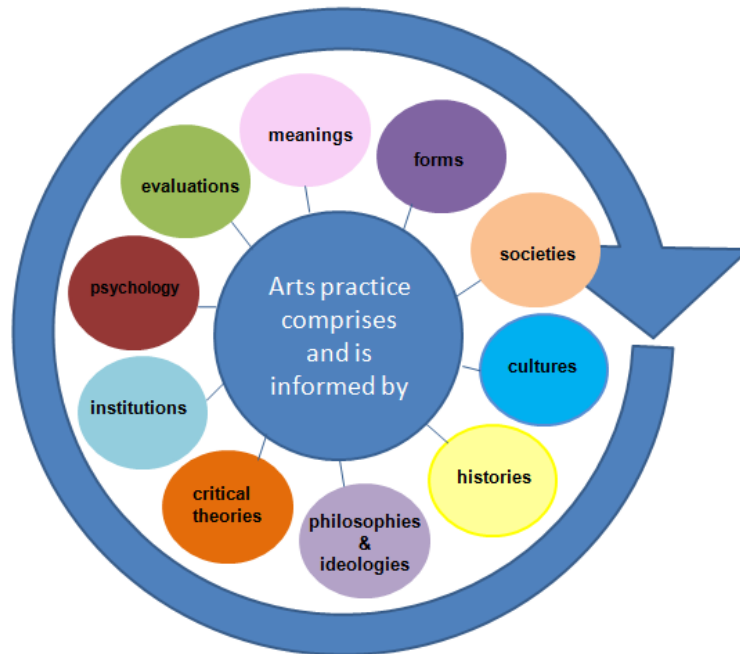


Diagram 1 Exploring practice in the Arts

21. The following sample questions illustrate the way students may explore an art work:

**Meanings:** What meanings are intended by the artist(s) and understood by the audience(s)?

**Forms:** How have the elements, media and instruments been organised and arranged?

**Societies:** How does it relate to its social context and that of its audience?

**Cultures:** What is its cultural context and what does it signify?

**Histories:** What is its place in terms of historical forces and influences?

**Philosophies and ideologies:** What are the philosophical, ideological and political perspectives?

**Critical theories:** What important theories does it include?

**Institutions:** How have institutional factors enabled or constrained its creation?

**Psychology:** What processes of the mind and emotions are involved?

**Evaluations:** How successful is it in terms of its audiences, contexts and the artist's intentions?

22. The primary years focus on more immediate questions that require students to describe and interpret the art work. In the secondary years, students address increasingly complex iterations of these questions.



## Scope and Sequence of the Australian Arts Curriculum

23. The following section provides an overview of the broad scope and sequence of learning in each subject in the Arts. Each band of year levels provides an outline of what will be detailed in the writing of each Arts subject in the Australian Curriculum. It is important to recognise that some repetition across the bands is necessary because of the progressive nature of skills development in the Arts. Skills specified in early bands will be developed and refined as students move through the bands. The curriculum for the five Arts subjects will be written discretely, but within the overarching structural framework, and with appropriate recognition of their connectivity with each other, particularly in terms of hybrid and contemporary arts.
24. The Australian Arts Curriculum will provide students with particular and unique opportunities to engage with the arts practices of contemporary and past Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and Communities. Students will learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts as expressions of the first and most sustained Arts heritages in Australia and the world. Students will develop their understanding of a range of protocols around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural arts practices and how these protocols contribute to sustained arts practices in and through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities.
25. The following pages outline the scope and sequence for learning in each Arts subject:
  - Dance
  - Drama
  - Media Arts
  - Music
  - Visual Arts.

# Dance

## Overview: Dance F–12

26. In dance, students will develop knowledge, understanding and skills to communicate ideas using the elements of dance, including space, time, dynamics and relationships. They will work with the body as the instrument and movement as the medium of dance, using dance composition processes to explore, organise and refine movement for choreography and performance. In each year the starting point will be everyday movement. Students will develop their movement vocabulary, with techniques from simple to advanced skills in locomotion, balance, coordination, alignment and expression. Safe dance practices and technical skills will be used, relevant to body type and individuals. Through the integrated practices of choreography, performance and appreciation, students will develop aesthetic knowledge. These early dance experiences will lead to later participation in a variety of genres and styles, relevant to young people's interests, capabilities and local context. They will understand that dances have always been created for multiple purposes, in past times and in contemporary life, and that social networks and technology can be used to contribute to innovation in dance. They will examine the influences of social, cultural and historical contexts, both past and present, on dance. This learning will provide a basis for composing and performing, and for the critical analysis of dance works.

## Years F–2

27. Students will gain a basic understanding of the elements of dance and improvise playfully with the body to explore and control movement. They will communicate through the body to make and share performances with their peers. They will experience connections to other Arts subjects, especially music to dance. Students will view, discuss and listen to opinions about their own and others' dances.

## Years 3–4

28. Students will make and perform dances by exploring and selecting movement, using dance elements to express ideas. They will combine these elements and movement skills with expressive qualities to communicate through the body. They will develop awareness of ownership in making dance, either using their own or others' ideas. Students will discuss the use of dance elements and meaning in their own and others' dance works. They will learn that dances are made in different cultural contexts for a range of reasons. When making their own dances they will think critically about why people make and perform dances in a variety of contexts. They will share opinions about the meaning of dances.

## Years 5–6

29. Students will choreograph and perform dances demonstrating increasingly complex movement skills and a range of performance qualities, experiencing dances from specific contexts. They will improvise, select, organise and refine movement, using the elements of dance with appropriate expressive qualities to communicate intent. They will understand how movement signs and symbols differ from the written or spoken word, and from the symbol systems of other art forms. They will explore ways of documenting and recording dance ideas using their own devised methods. Students

# Dance

will critically consider how the dance elements, physical and expressive skills have been used to communicate ideas and tell stories. They will discuss connections between content, meaning and context in dances.

## Years 7–8

30. Students will choreograph and perform dances from a range of contexts, demonstrating a wide range of movement skills and style-specific techniques, and use the elements of dance with appropriate expressive qualities for choreographic intent. They will interpret ideas through increased understanding of movement and of how the elements of dance work together to communicate meaning. Through improvising, selecting, organising, rehearsing and refining movement/dance they will express their own and others' ideas and artistic intentions. Students will discuss and analyse how dance takes place in various artistic and cultural contexts, responding critically to dance by comparing the content and meaning of dance works from a variety of contemporary and historical contexts

## Years 9–10

31. Students will choreograph and perform solo, duet and group dances to communicate ideas, experiences and artistic intentions for different purposes, contexts and audiences. They will develop and apply understanding of the processes of dance composition for choreography using a range of dance elements, genres, styles, techniques, conventions and practices. Students will develop awareness of Australian and international dance artists, companies and practices, expanding their understanding of the cultural dimensions of dance and informing their own compositions and performances. They will use the language of dance to analyse and respond critically to a range of dance works.

## Years 11–12

32. Students will consolidate and extend their development of dance skills and knowledge through the integrated study of choreography, performance and appreciation. They will choreograph to communicate ideas, experiences and artistic intentions. They will understand the roles of choreographer, dancer, audience and dance critic in the construction of meaning in dance. Students will demonstrate informed critical appreciation of dance works, considering dance practices, elements, genres, styles, techniques and conventions. They will interpret, analyse and evaluate the cultural and historical significance of dance. They will study intention and meaning in dance works. They will evaluate the significance of Australian and international dance artists and companies.

# Drama

## Overview: Drama F–12

33. In drama, students will explore, depict and celebrate human experience by imagining and representing other people through live enactment. Drama is a collaborative art, combining physical, verbal, visual and aural dimensions. In drama students will experience theatre and develop an understanding of the performer/audience relationship. Learning in drama can be both process and performance. Students will combine the elements of drama to make, present and respond to representations of human situations, characters, behaviour and relationships. They will make drama through dramatic play, role-play and improvisation, structuring the elements into play-building, directing and scriptwriting. In presenting drama they will learn, as actors, to use body and gesture, voice and language, through interpretation and rehearsal processes as well as production and performance. In responding, students will learn about how drama contributes to personal, social and cultural identity. They will study the diversity of purposes, forms and styles in drama and theatre both contemporary and from other times, places and cultural contexts.

### Years F–2

34. Students will begin to learn and use some of the elements of drama. They will explore and learn about role, relationships and narrative through dramatic play, role-play, improvisation and process drama as they explore and depict stories involving causes and consequences. They will experiment with objects, puppets and images. They will engage in informal and often spontaneous performance to classroom and in-house audiences, using their own language and movement, and sometimes simple props and costumes. Students will reflect on their own work and respond to theatre.

### Years 3–4

35. Students will learn about and use further elements of drama. They will explore basic dramatic tension, complex role and relationships, and use of space. They will develop awareness of the primary instruments of drama: movement and gesture, voice and language. They will make more intricate improvisations and process drama, and begin to play-build. They will present their performances with limited rehearsal and begin to encounter scripted texts. In responding, students will reflect on their own and others' drama and begin to learn about diversity of form and style.

### Years 5–6

36. Students will make and present drama exploring ideas and issues, roles, and character. They will work with a range of dramatic tensions, spaces, places and times, and use varied registers of language and movement. They will develop play-building skills and experiment with scripted text, beginning to explore a range of forms. They will begin learning about staging, rehearsal and acting skills, and present informal and formal performances to audiences. Students will experience and respond to a range of drama and learn about theatrical forms, contemporary and historical concepts and conventions.

# Drama

## Years 7–8

37. Students will learn to apply all the basic elements of drama, including more complex use of dramatic tension and sub-texts. They will make, refine and present student-devised drama, working in groups and as individuals, and experiment with small-scale scriptwriting. They will explore characterisation in scripted text. In performance, they will use characterisation and contrast, experiment with design, and develop a performance vocabulary as they learn the basic principles of dramatic production. They will present informal and formal performances. Students will begin to learn about contemporary and historical theatrical movements, local and global. They will experience and respond to a diversity of forms and styles, including comedy and tragedy.

## Years 9–10

38. Students will use drama for exploring and expressing their individual and social identities. They will learn to use symbols, mood, irony and multiple subtexts in making drama. They will experiment with innovative and hybrid forms and performance styles. They will practise directing and production tasks and responsibilities, and refine and practise for their performances. Students will explore and respond to more complex theatre forms and styles from a range of traditions and movements, and begin to develop and articulate a personal framework for critical study.

## Years 11–12

39. Students will learn to apply and manage all the elements of drama in their drama practice. They will combine the elements with other arts and media in their interpretation and analysis of historical, contemporary and innovative forms, genres and styles. They will make student-devised and applied theatre, using dramatic symbolism for exploring, expressing and communicating ideas and issues. They will practise scriptwriting, dramaturgy, design and scenography, and directing skills. They will explore and practise techniques of acting, both empathic and distanced, and acquire technical and production management knowledge, skills and techniques. They will perform for a range of audiences. They will experience, present and respond to a range of significant Australian and world theatre from diverse times and places, understanding the artistic, social, cultural, and ideological contexts. In responding, students will recognise and articulate the elements, and gain deep knowledge of some forms and genres of theatre and its applications in the community. They will come to understand the cultural, ethical, social and economic roles of theatre in society, historically and in contemporary society

# Media Arts

## Overview: Media Arts F–12

40. In media arts, students will develop knowledge, understanding and skills in the creative use of communications technologies and digital materials to tell stories and explore concepts for diverse purposes and audiences. Media artists represent the world using platforms such as television, film, video, newspapers, radio, video games, the internet and mobile media. Produced and received in diverse contexts, these communication forms are important sources of information, entertainment, persuasion and education and are significant cultural industries. Digital technologies have expanded the role that media play in every Australian's life. Media arts explore the diverse cultural, creative, social and institutional factors that shape communication and contribute to the formation of identities. Through media arts, individuals and groups participate in, experiment with and interpret the rich culture and communications practices that surround them. In media arts, students develop knowledge and understanding of five key concepts: the media languages used to tell stories; the technologies which are essential for producing, accessing and distributing media; the various institutions that enable and constrain media production and use; the audiences for whom media arts products are made and who respond as consumers, citizens and creative individuals; and the constructed representations of the world, which rely on shared social values and beliefs.

### Years F–2

41. Students will experiment creatively with a range of communications technologies and digital materials. They will begin to understand and make simple stories using written text, images and sound. They will view and listen to printed, visual and moving image media and respond with relevant actions, gestures, comments and/or questions. Students will understand that stories are made by different people and groups for different purposes.

### Years 3–4

42. Students will begin to learn that media products are constructed and that different versions of a story can exist. They will engage with familiar media made for different purposes and audiences. They will make media stories using communications technologies and digital materials, considering purpose and audience. They will apply the codes of different communications forms such as fonts, colours, shot types and layout. For example, they will gather a small range of digital still and moving images, undertake simple sound recording and begin to use software to gather, edit, mix and arrange digital materials. Students will respond by giving personal opinions, writing short responses and taking part in discussion. They will begin to consider themselves as media creators and audience members.

### Years 5–6

43. Students will design and produce stories for different purposes and audiences and they will purposefully apply the codes of a range of communications forms. They will undertake pre-production by using storyboards and formal scripts to design ideas for productions. They will gather a variety of digital still and moving images, record sound, and use software to edit, mix

# Media Arts

and arrange digital materials. Students' evaluation of their own work will involve simple analysis of process and outcomes. They will learn that media products represent the values and beliefs of the individuals and groups in society who make them, and of the audiences who consume them. They will engage with familiar and unfamiliar media made for different institutional purposes and audiences. They will explore their own preferences as audience members and how these influences the types of media they aim to create.

## Years 7–8

44. Students will produce stories and create representations to inform, entertain, persuade and educate audiences, and will become increasingly aware of how different codes and conventions may be manipulated to create meaning for different audiences and contexts. They will understand the specific roles and production processes used to create media products. They will select between different types of software to edit, refine images, mix sounds and distribute media products. Students will respond to media products by analysing, evaluating, reflecting, and remixing media, using different perspectives. They will consider how this relates to the construction of identity. They will learn that media present versions of reality through processes of selection and construction related to cultural beliefs and values, and they will reflect on their own involvement as producers and audiences.

## Years 9–10

45. Students will use media arts to express themselves as citizens, consumers, creators and community members. They will deepen their creative and critical knowledge and engagement with media. They will explore and control the language codes, conventions and processes of media practice and become responsive and ethical creators and users of media who can communicate stories in conventional and imaginative ways. Students will operate a range of technologies to produce media for specific purposes, including for commercial, non-commercial, independent and artistic contexts and audiences. They will experiment with different communications forms and make informed choices about the technologies they use to produce, distribute and access media. Students will learn about specific media histories and contexts, including those in Australia. They will learn about some of the artistic, social, cultural, technological, economic and legal contexts in which media are produced.

## Years 11–12

46. Students will develop their knowledge of media and culture to communicate stories imaginatively through media design, production and analysis in increasingly sophisticated ways. They will creatively and purposefully operate communications technologies, including emergent technologies, to express complex and engaging ideas, concepts and stories for diverse audiences. Students will become more aware of the artistic, social, cultural, technological, economic and legal implications of their own and others' media production, representational practices and media use. They will engage with questions about how media and popular culture operate within national and global political, regulatory and market structures. They will learn about media histories such as institutional practices, including national cinemas, generic and artistic media styles, and Australian media and popular culture traditions and industries.

# Music

## Overview: Music F–12

47. In music, students will use the concepts and materials of music to compose, improvise, arrange, perform, conduct and respond to their own and others' work. They will learn the elements of music including duration (rhythm and tempo), dynamics, form, pitch (melody and harmony), and timbre (sound texture and quality). They will apply this knowledge to the materials of music, including the voice, body, instruments, found sound sources (natural and manufactured objects including stones, household objects and so on) and information and communication technology. They will imagine and respond to their own and others' music by developing specialised listening skills as composers, performers and audience members. They will learn forms of notation to record and communicate music and musical ideas. Students will come to understand and engage with the multiple and culturally diverse practices of music, learning about Australian and international music — locally, nationally, and globally. Students will research traditions and contexts of music and music practices, and develop the skills and techniques to critique their own and others' music practices. Learning in music is most effective when composing, performing, and listening are interconnected. Music learning will be continuous, as students will develop and revisit skills, techniques, knowledge and understanding with increasing depth and complexity. They will develop an understanding of music as an aural art form and explore connections between music and other Arts subjects.

### Years F–2

48. Students will learn about and participate in the different roles of composer, performer and audience member. They will explore and experiment with voice, instruments and sound to create their own music. They will sing, play instruments and found sound sources, and move to a range of music. They will develop a repertoire of chants, songs, rhythms, rhymes and melodies. They will invent and explore ways of recording musical thinking through symbols. Students will begin to use music terminology. They will listen and respond to a range of musical works and develop their aural skills. They will learn to respond and comment on their own music making and that of others.

### Years 3–4

49. Students will use their developing aural skills and musical terminology in composing, performing and responding to their own and others' performances. They will build on their knowledge, as they use and select elements of music to structure simple musical compositions, which they will record using invented and conventional notations. They will sing, play instruments and move to music, demonstrating an understanding of musical concepts. They will use a range of technologies to record and communicate their musical ideas, and access those of others. Through performing, listening and composing, students will identify the use of musical elements in performances and share opinions about the ways these create meaning and musical effect in their own and others' music.

### Years 5–6

50. Students will use their developing understanding of music concepts and elements to arrange, compose, improvise and perform music. They will use a range of technologies to plan, organise and record their musical ideas and access those of others. Students' musical practices will be



# Music

underpinned by a developing use of music notation, aural skills and music terminology. Their music making as arrangers, composers, and improvisers will demonstrate an increased awareness of a range of musical styles and genres. They will perform an increasingly diverse musical repertoire of songs and instrumental compositions. In responding, students will identify key features in music that they perform and listen to, and make some informed judgments about musical preferences.

## Years 7–8

51. Students will develop the skills and understanding to engage in music as knowledgeable music-makers and audience members. They will arrange, compose, improvise and perform for various purposes. They will demonstrate knowledge and understandings of musical elements, materials, ideas, styles and technologies. They will sing and play instruments to realise their own and others' musical ideas and works. Students will respond critically to their own and others' musical works and practices, using the concepts of music and terminology to communicate their understandings. Through listening, performing and composing they will begin to identify cultural, social and historical contexts of music.

## Years 9–10

52. Students will develop a deepened understanding and use of music concepts and languages, practices, technologies and techniques. Through their musical practice they will develop a distinctive personal voice and engage in music making in varying contexts. As composers, they will create, shape, and refine musical ideas in a range of forms and styles, with consideration of the musical needs and practices of performers. As performers, they will demonstrate skills and knowledge in their chosen instruments (including voice), both as soloists and ensemble members, with a command of repertoire relevant to their instrument. As audience members, students will respond to music, demonstrating a command of the language and concepts of music. Through research and critical study they will develop a rich knowledge of the contemporary and historical contexts of musical works and practices.

## Years 11–12

53. Students will consolidate and extend their deep understanding and use of music concepts, languages, practices, technologies and techniques, within and beyond the classroom. Their music making, as composers and performers (instrumentalists, singers, conductors), will demonstrate a developed musical identity, knowledge and skills in the musical practices and institutions beyond their communities, and an understanding of their roles as responsible and ethical producers and users of music. Their musical practice will be founded in a broad, diverse and more musically challenging repertoire, and they will demonstrate a depth and breadth of repertoire knowledge and practice. Students will demonstrate informed musical preferences and will be able to relate and apply these across modes of musical practice and other art forms including multiple and hybrid arts. They will demonstrate an understanding and knowledge of the rich and diverse musical practices of contemporary Australian and other composers and performers and the traditions — local, national and international — from which these practices arise. They will seek and engage in critical commentary and discussion of their own and others' work.

# Visual Arts

## Overview: Visual Arts F–12

54. In visual arts students will learn through direct engagement with two-dimensional, three-dimensional and four-dimensional art and design practices and concepts, theories, histories and critiques. They will develop skills, knowledge, understandings and techniques as artists, designers, critics and audiences. Students will learn to explore ideas through imaginative engagement, making and presenting art, craft and design works, and engaging critically with these works and processes. They will work with a range of materials, design elements, technologies and processes, and develop skills, knowledge and understanding about art, craft and design practices. By using traditional and new technologies they will learn to understand and to exploit the qualities of diverse media. They will learn established codes and conventions and develop an understanding of visual arts as a field of knowledge informed by particular histories, theories and cultures. Students will learn to critically analyse, evaluate and understand personal and collective contexts for art making and responding and will be able to consider these from various perspectives. They will actively participate in the art and design world, and arts industries, as artists and designers, audiences, historians and critics.

## Years F–2

55. Students will learn through making and responding to visual art works. They use a range of equipment, materials, media and technologies to make art, craft and design works that communicate their ideas, feelings and observations of personal and community experiences. In so doing they will begin to develop skills and to learn about processes. Students will look at artworks and talk about what they see, beginning to use the language of visual arts. They will start to recognise different purposes and contexts of art, thus starting to discriminate and engage as audiences. They will start to understand that works of art, artists and designers have a place in their communities, and that specific works of art tell narratives about themselves and about their own and other cultures.

## Years 3–4

56. Students will develop skills as they consciously start to experiment with equipment, materials, media and technologies. They will make choices in selecting codes and conventions to suit intentions, express ideas and produce art works. They will learn to present their work for others to view, and to understand that presentations (including exhibitions) have a purpose. In responding, students will discuss processes and meanings of their own and others' artworks, offering opinions and preferences, using vocabulary appropriate to visual arts. Through learning about traditional and popular cultures, students will develop visual and aesthetic understanding, and begin to gain awareness of codes, symbols and meanings in visual culture. They will discuss the place and function of art, craft and design in their communities.

# Visual Arts

## Years 5–6

57. Students will synthesise, edit, refine and extend ideas through art and design practice. They will explore, create, make and present art, craft and design works with more deliberate planning and increasing skills in selecting and manipulating technologies, processes and forms for their expressive needs. They will identify and manage increasing complexity in design elements, techniques and forms, and evaluate, review and refine decisions in practice. They will present their work with awareness of venue, space, purpose and context. Students will respond to a range of art works and styles, applying aesthetic criteria and communicating reasons for preferences about their own and others' works. They will critically analyse art, craft and design works in historical and contemporary cultural contexts, and respond through art-based vocabulary as artists, designers, audiences, historians and critics. They will demonstrate increasing understanding of the role of artists and designers in community and arts industries.

## Years 7–8

58. Students will create, make and present more complex ideas, and develop knowledge of different technologies, genres and subject matters in historical and contemporary art, craft and design practices. They will identify and understand cultural codes and symbols. They will explain their decisions, analyse choices of approach in practice, and review outcomes. They will plan and manage presentations and respond by expressing opinions about their own and others' works. Students will learn about significant contemporary and historical art movements and styles, and learn to analyse, compare and evaluate using appropriate art and design terminology. They will understand how art and design practice is influenced by cultural and historical concerns, attitudes, values and beliefs, and will be able to use their skills to demonstrate this knowledge. They will learn about and engage actively with the arts industry through the work of artists and designers, historians and critics.

## Years 9–10

59. Students will explore and investigate materials through critical selection and manipulation of a range of media and technologies. They will engage in image and object making, designing, fabricating and constructing, digitally and materially, to evaluate and make critical, cognitive and aesthetic decisions. They will use art and design thinking, and create works that embody conceptual and problem-solving processes. They will produce and curate a presentation of a body of work in their chosen medium. Students will develop a more critical understanding of visual arts as an aesthetic and cultural body of knowledge. They will understand its historical, theoretical, social and material contexts and interrogate their own art and design works within these knowledge frameworks. They will understand cultural forms and practices in historical and contemporary contexts, and respond with specific art and design conventions and terminologies. They will understand relationships between art and design works, artists, audiences and users in the visual arts and design industries.

# Visual Arts

## Years 11–12

60. Students will develop a strong visual arts identity as creators, audiences, critics and users of art. They will specialise in studio practice to develop a cultural and aesthetic voice and demonstrate a critical understanding of the way the art and design world functions. They will exercise their knowledge, skills and understanding to visually articulate their conceptual processes of creating and problem solving, in order to develop and curate a body of work to public exhibition standard. Students will develop a critical understanding of how art and design works operate in the world to make, reflect and interrogate social and cultural meanings. They will develop the cognitive skills of critical commentary and analysis of their own and others' art and design works. They will understand how audiences, critics and institutions contribute to meaning-making strategies. They will learn art and design histories and theories, and will be able to make aesthetic judgments and articulate them in both written and oral communication.

# Considerations

There are several other areas that will be considered in the development of the Australian Curriculum for the Arts. These include:

## Links to other learning areas

61. Some Arts subjects have direct relationships with other subjects. All the Arts are relevant to history and geography studies, because the Arts embody some of the most significant and recognisable products and records of all cultures. Drama and media arts have a strong focus on language, texts and narrative, and aspects of these two Arts subjects are taught as part of English. Dance has links to health and physical education. Visual arts has links to design and technology. It is important that students can see connections to other learning areas within the curriculum.

## The place of design in the curriculum

62. Design will have a significant place in the Australian Curriculum for the Arts. Design involves, in varying portions, a combination of creativity, concept analysis and synthesis, aesthetics, and problem resolution. It encompasses, and is widely applied in creative industries and innovative systems. All art forms use the design process when creating and shaping elements and materials as a part of the activity of art making. In some curricula and industries, design is recognised as a separate art form, although related to the visual arts.
63. Learning design within the Arts involves analysing needs, understanding and selecting and testing materials and processes, and providing solutions that satisfy social, cultural, communicative and environmental needs and understandings. Teaching design through the Arts involves divergent and convergent thinking, visualisation, imagination and immersion in and beyond material and technological solutions.

## Safe practices in the Arts

64. Safe practices in the Arts will be embedded in all Arts subjects. It is an essential component of the curriculum. It refers to all necessary aspects of health, safety and injury prevention for anyone participating in the Arts at any level, any age and in any genre. The Australian Curriculum for the Arts will address safe practices in each Arts subject, when using potentially dangerous tools, materials and equipment, and when participating in performance tasks that might lead to physical injury or emotional distress.

## Students with disability

65. The Australian Curriculum for the Arts provides opportunities for all students to develop awareness and understanding of the diverse society in which they live. One aspect of this diversity is disability. The study of the Arts is an ideal platform for developing inclusive attitudes and beliefs, and for challenging stereotypes based on difference.

# Considerations

66. Students with disability are entitled to the creative learning opportunities that all five Arts subjects can provide. The Arts are a powerful tool for learning and offer alternative means for students with disability to:
- explore and develop their sense of identity
  - perceive and respond to instruction
  - communicate and comment on themselves and their world.
67. Participation in the Arts also encourages the development of important and foundational skills such as early attention, cognitive, motor, communication/language and social skills.

## Key terms

The following key terms will be used in the Australian Curriculum for the Arts.

## Audience

68. In this curriculum, the term ‘audience’ will be used to denote people perceiving art through all the senses. Audience may be individual and personal, or incorporate a group dimension. The audience may themselves be involved in creating the art work. In all Arts, the artists themselves form one of the primary audiences, and there may be no other external audience.

## Culture

69. ‘Arts’ and ‘culture’ are sometimes used almost synonymously, but they are not the same. However, all Arts are directly related to the cultural contexts of the participants — artists and audiences. Cultures express themselves and portray their images, in and across time and place, through their arts. The Arts are shaped by their culture and its history and traditions, and in turn help to shape and re-shape it.

## Play-based learning

70. Play-based learning is an important part of the Arts. This is partly because play and art are fundamentally related. Play-based learning is developed through engagement, communication and a sense of purpose. Play is a context for learning through which students organise and make sense of their world, as they engage actively with people, objects and representations. Learning through play is one of the principles of early childhood pedagogy in the *Early years learning framework: belonging, being, becoming* (Department of Education, Training and Workplace Relations 2009). Play provides opportunities for students to:
- learn through imagining, discovering and experimenting
  - create social groups
  - challenge each other’s thinking
  - build new understandings.

Structured play is challenging and rigorous, and teachers can nurture the artistry in play.

# The Arts and the Cross-Curriculum Priorities

71. The Australian Curriculum must be relevant to the lives of students and address the contemporary issues they face. With these considerations in mind, the Australian Curriculum gives special attention to three cross-curriculum priorities:
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures
  - Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia
  - Sustainability.
  - In the Australian Curriculum: The Arts, these priorities will have a strong but varying presence, depending on the subject.

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

72. The Australian Curriculum: The Arts incorporates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures as a priority for learning. Students will expand their knowledge and understandings of Identity, Country/Place, People and Culture through learning in each of the five Arts subjects. They will recognise the significance of the concept 'Living Communities' — the meanings it holds for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and for artists working through and within those Communities.
73. The oral histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are contained in and communicated through cultural expression in story, movement, song and visual traditions. The transmission of those histories and cultural expressions in a diversity of contemporary, mediated and culturally endorsed ways enables artists to affirm connection with Country/Place, People, Culture and Identity.
74. Students will appreciate the intrinsic value of art works and artists' practices as well as their place and value within broader social, cultural, historical and political contexts. The Arts scope and sequence will enable students to revisit, at developmentally appropriate stages and in increasingly more complex ways, their understandings of the relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, Culture, Identity and Country/Place.

## Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia

75. The Australian Curriculum: The Arts will explore the art forms of Asia and the way these have arisen from the rich and diverse cultures, belief systems and traditions of the peoples of the Asia region. It will examine their significance aesthetically and their impact both regionally and globally.
76. Australia's evolving ethnic composition and the increasing national importance placed on our geographic location in the Asia-Pacific region brings with it a variety of cultural, social, and ethical interests and responsibilities. These interests, and the collective cultural memories that have accumulated around them, are represented in a diversity of Arts across Australia.

# The Arts and the Cross-Curriculum Priorities

77. Students will experiment with, learn to use and respond to art forms, media, instruments and technologies of the Asia region. They will learn the intrinsic value of the art work and artists' practices, as well as their place and value within broader social, cultural, historical and political contexts.

## Sustainability

78. The Australian Curriculum: The Arts will investigate the concept of sustainability and the interrelated nature of social, economic and ecological systems. It will provide opportunities to consider the sustainability of practices and traditions in the Arts.
79. Using the exploratory and creative platform of the Arts, students will develop a world view that recognises the importance of social justice, healthy ecosystems and effective action for sustainability. They will use the Arts to communicate their developing understanding of the concept of sustainability.



# The Arts and the General Capabilities

80. General capabilities (as defined by the Australian Curriculum) are the knowledge, skills and dispositions that will assist students to live and work successfully in the twenty-first century. Students develop and use general capabilities in the course of their schooling, as well as in their lives outside school. The following information is an example of how these general capabilities will be embedded in the Australian Curriculum for the Arts. The emphasis on each general capability will differ from one Arts subject to another. The definitions of the general capabilities can be found at <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/GeneralCapabilities>.

## Literacy

81. In the Arts, visual and critical literacy skills will enable students to access knowledge, make meaning, express thoughts, emotions and ideas, interact with others and participate in a range of communication activities, using a wide variety of printed, audio, visual and digital materials. In each of the five Arts subjects, students will find opportunities to interpret, analyse, respond to and construct increasingly complex works.

## Numeracy

82. In the Arts, numeracy will occur naturally as students are asked to learn, design, make, create, evaluate and complete activities that require significant numeracy skills. Students will develop their ability to interpret and use symbols and graphic texts, diagrams, charts, tables, graphs and time, from score reading and composition in music, to management of time and space in drama and dance, to working with design, animation and effects software in media arts and visual arts.

## Information and communication technology (ICT) competence

83. In the Arts, students will develop and use skills that lead to ICT competence through forming ideas, plans, processes and solutions to challenges or tasks. They may use ICT in learning a concept, completing an activity or responding to a need. It may be self-generated or requested to investigate questions and issues. They will also communicate ideas and information to others while considering purpose, audience and technology and applying appropriate social and ethical protocols and practices.

## Critical and creative thinking

84. In the Arts, students will be encouraged to engage in high order thinking. By using logic and imagination and by reflecting on how best to tackle issues, tasks and challenges, students will be increasingly able to select from a range of thinking strategies and employ them selectively and spontaneously in an increasing range of arts learning contexts. They are able to analyse art works and to identify possible meanings, consider and hypothesise on artists' motivations and intentions, influencing factors and possible biases.

85. Communication is integral to each of the thinking processes. In the Arts students apply their imagination and higher order thinking to express and communicate their ideas and innovations. By sharing thinking, visualisation and innovations, and by giving and receiving effective feedback, students develop flexibility and precision and learn to value the diversity of learning and communication styles.

# The Arts and the General Capabilities

## Ethical behaviour

86. In the Arts students develop and apply ethical behaviour when they encounter or create content that requires ethical consideration, such as content that is controversial, involves a moral dilemma or presents a biased point of view. Students develop their understanding of values and ethical principles as they use an increasing range of thinking skills to explore and evaluate art works and their meaning, and the actions and motivations of artists. Students actively engage in moral decision making when creating art works that involve the intellectual and cultural property rights of others.

## Personal and social competence

87. In all the Arts subjects, students will work individually and collaboratively. In the Arts, students will have regular opportunities to identify and assess personal strengths, interests and challenges. They will recognise and respond to the viewpoints and experiences of others. They will discuss their emotions, reactions and interactions with others. They will observe modelling of effective personal and social skills and they will apply and practise their own personal and social skills. They will receive feedback and support from teachers and peers and monitor and reflect on their personal and social development.

## Intercultural understanding

88. In the Arts, intercultural understanding combines personal, interpersonal, cultural and social understandings, skills and dispositions. Students learn about their own languages and cultures, and those of others, as they explore and experience the Arts subjects and works of art from diverse cultures, considering the historical, cultural, social and political contexts. Students make connections between their own worlds and those of others, building on shared interests and commonalities, and negotiate or mediate difference in their own art works. The Arts subjects offer opportunities for students to consider and represent their own beliefs and attitudes in different and new ways, gaining insight into both themselves and others, developing their abilities to empathise with others and to analyse intercultural experiences critically.

# The Arts Industry and Community

89. The Arts industry and community are essential to a twenty-first century Arts curriculum that seeks to strengthen the opportunities the Arts offer young Australians.

## Participation and the community

90. The Arts is one of Australia's major industries and a vital part of community life. Young people are important audiences. They take part, with their families and communities, in artistic events involving professional artists and organisations and they visit designated arts locations such as galleries, theatres, cinemas and concert halls, either physically or virtually. Young people of school age are increasingly recognised as enthusiastic, creative and critical consumers of and participants in the Arts. The Australian Curriculum for the Arts will facilitate opportunities for young people to engage with professional artists and arts organisations in numerous ways, as appropriate.

## Careers in the Arts

91. All fields within the Arts industry depend hugely on appropriately and highly trained specialists — artists, production staff, administrators and so on. Knowledge in and of the Arts, and of the creative, innovative and problem-solving skills that are developed through arts learning, is necessary for many vocations in diverse industries. Although the basic entitlement of all young people to the Arts is primarily educational rather than vocational, identifying these potential specialists, and providing them with the foundation to build a career in the Arts industry, is a complementary function of schooling. The Australian Curriculum for the Arts will provide students with the opportunity to engage with all five art forms, and discover the degree of their potential interest and aptitude in one or more as they progress through their schooling. Knowledge of the Arts is also necessary for many tertiary courses besides courses in the Arts.

## The Arts industry and schools

92. Teachers in schools are the key to providing students with rich, sustained, rigorous learning in each of the subjects in the Arts. The Arts industry complements the Arts provision for young people in schools, through programs, partnerships and by increasingly providing specialist services for schools, as appropriate. This includes enriching and complementing the curriculum through experiences such as visiting performances, demonstrations and exhibitions, artists in residence, teacher professional development and access for students and teachers to specialised facilities in galleries, concert halls, theatres and other arts venues. The Arts curriculum will provide opportunities for teachers in schools, professional artists and arts organisations to develop students' learning and experiences in the Arts. Relationships between schools and the Arts industry provide teachers and artists with mutual professional development opportunities.

# Glossary

Some of the most commonly used terms in arts education have a diversity of meanings, or are sometimes used ambiguously. These are given a precise definition here, and used consistently in context.

- aesthetic*** Describes the fusion of our thoughts, senses and emotions with the diversity of our personal, social and imagined experience which comprises our response to art works.
- connectivity*** There is interplay between art forms. They share common elements and sometimes use the same media and instruments in their presentation. This is why this term is preferred in this paper to another commonly used term, *integration*.
- context*** This means the circumstances or settings in which art work occurs, or to which it refers. Many layers of context are present as art makers invent or re-invent situations, events or objects, and audiences respond to them.
- creative industries*** This term embraces a wide range of arts-based or related industries. They are knowledge-based and innovative, often focusing on commercial application, employment and economic outputs.
- media/Media Arts*** The word media (and its singular, medium) is used in this document with two different, but related meanings, which will be clearly distinct in context. All art forms use essential mediums (media) of communication, through which their art is ‘mediated’. *Media Arts* is a contemporary combination of these communication mediums using mainly two-dimensional forms and electronic technologies, which is separately identified as an art form within this curriculum.

## References

This paper has built on several reports and a wide range of literature on the Arts, learning and the teaching of dance, drama, media arts, music and visual arts. The key reports and reviews are listed below, along with items referred to in the paper.

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