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In response to this extensive feedback, we made further changes:

Decluttering: the removal and reduction of content so the curriculum can be taught with depth and rigour, including a 21% overall reduction in the number of content descriptions, which describe what is to be taught and what students are expected to learn

English: a stronger focus on phonics – this means a strengthening of phonics in reading

Maths: a stronger focus on students mastering the essential mathematical facts, skills, concepts and processes, and being introduced to these at the right time

making clear what mathematical computations need to be done without a calculator, reinforcing the importance of becoming proficient in foundational skills

a revision of the sequencing of content in Mathematics, in particular, telling time, introduction of fractions, recall of multiplication facts and the solution of linear equations

History: prioritising Australian history in Year 9 and 10 within a global context deepening students' understanding of First Nations Australian histories and cultures, the impact on First Nations Australians of the arrival of British settlers as well as their contribution to the building of modern Australia

Civics and Citizenship: strengthening teaching about the origins and heritage of Australia's democracy and the diversity of Australian communities, with specific reference to the role of Christianity

Technologies: addition of privacy and security in the Digital Technologies curriculum

Health and Physical Education: strengthening the teaching of consent and respectful relationships from F– 10 in age-appropriate ways

strengthening the focus on students being physically active and content with a focus on activity in natural and outdoor settings.

We're also doing some more work in the important area of mental health for young Australians, however this won't be an occasion for cluttering the HPE curriculum or imposing on teachers the expectation that should be quasi mental health professionals, or that schools must solve all the social pathologies and problems that have been caused by developments beyond the school gate.

Meeting the aims of the review

So, a year on from the end of the consultation window the result is the Australian Curriculum Version 9.0 which:

sets a high standard and expectations for what all students should know and be able to every student, regardless of where they live.

supports deeper conceptual understanding and improvement in educational performance,

is a stripped-back and teachable curriculum that identifies the essential content our children should learn

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the content was revised and realigned to ensure it is up-to-date, has a strong evidence base and matches the high standards expected in other high-performing countries.

Ministerial endorsement is not the end of the story. In fact, it really only the beginning. It set out the intended curriculum, but as teachers all know, the intended curriculum has to be effectively delivered in the classroom, which means it has to be presented in a way that is useful for teachers.

The curriculum, at the end of the day, should be seen as a tool for the profession, a document that specifies what to teach and how well students are expected to learn this content. Teachers have to use this information to create the enacted curriculum

NAPLAN REFORM

2022

As you can see there has been significant change in the Australian Curriculum - but we have also seen the shift in NAPLAN.

The NAPLAN test event just completed in May this year was an important milestone that marked the first year all schools took the test online and the last year that the test took place in May.

The test event went exceptionally well, with a record 4.3 million tests successfully submitted by more than 1.2 million students in 9,315 campuses and schools across Australia.

Thank the students, teachers and schools who helped make that happen, particularly those who grappled with the unique challenges of staffing and attendance impacted by COVID-19 and, in some cases, floods.

It was an important milestone for the program and for ACARA because NAPLAN online is a better, more precise assessment that is more engaging for students and the tailored testing means students are given questions that are better suited to their abilities, so they can show what they know and can do.

NAP Reform

Earlier this year we had more significant changes made to the National Assessment Program.

In July of this year Education Minister announced that ACARA will be moving the NAPLAN test event to June 2023.



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economic profile of the student community, which has nothing to do with the quality of the teaching taking place at the school.

In an attempt to combat this, Ministers agreed to an important change in the way NAPLAN results are reported on My School, doing away with the similar schools comparisons and having a much stronger focus on the amount of progress that students achieve between one test and the next, taking into account their initial starting score and their socio-educational background.

This approach helps identify those schools who are consistently achieving above expected progress. In December 2020 ACARA published profiles of 24 such schools, and identified some of the practices being implemented in those schools. These included

- explicit teaching, including the use of clear learning intentions and success criteria for lessons
- use of formative assessment to generate data on student progress
- analysis of that data to inform teaching strategies, which can include differentiated teaching depending on the level of support students need
- strong focus on sustained professional development, with more skilled teachers acting as instructional leaders and mentors; and
- collaborative approaches to planning and teaching, which build collective efficacy among teaching staff.

### NAP Reform II - Opt-in tests

In terms of some other changes coming down the pipeline, Education Ministers also



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The NAP Sample program, and the opt-in tests, will also move forward in the year. They'll take place in term two.

These are big changes, and we understand they will be potentially challenging for schools. Education jurisdictions and sectors, and ACARA, will be providing transition support to schools and teachers to make this as seamless as possible.

These decisions by the Education Ministers are the next step in the evolution of the National Assessment Program. It's critical we continue to evolve NAPLAN and these new improvements enhance the program by providing the results earlier in the year, and expanding the options for assessments available to schools.

Of course, the release of the Version 9.0 Australian Curriculum will have implications for NAP assessments in the future as there are new curriculum content descriptions and standards.

ACARA is currently considering the implications of these changes and will take account of the implementation plans of jurisdictions in determining our approach to the timing of the introduction of new assessment items, aligned to the new curriculum.

As test items are developed many years in advance of their use in test events, we have started the procurement of additional items aligned to new curriculum content. These items will be trialled in 2024. One of the issues that we need to be crystal clear about is the relationship between the achievement standards in the Australian Curriculum and the new proficient and highly proficient standards in NAPLAN, to which I referred a few moments ago, that we are looking to introduce next year, pending Ministerial approval later this year.

We need to avoid the situation where teachers are tempted to use NAPLAN scores in literacy and numeracy as a substitute for their own professional judgement, based on a broad range of classroom assessment data.



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Assessment is generative of continuing improvements for teachers and for students. It allows teachers to exercise independent and informed professional judgment, as well as coordinate with colleagues on a substantive basis.

The relative lack of confidence in key concepts or generally understood definitions is therefore an acute problem for teaching, or put in more positive terms, an obvious point of leverage for constructively building the capacity of the teaching profession.

With the development of important national initiatives as the new Australian Curriculum, and the literacy and numeracy progressions which have been aligned to it, it is now more important than ever that there is confidence and capacity built in the profession in assessing achievement, analysing student needs and sharing judgements.

In Conclusion, the last two years of COVID have been a time of change for schooling in Australia, where everyone has had to adapt to a new working environment. For ACARA, it has also been a time of delivering, on behalf of all education ministers, a work program of innovation, improvement and evolution in providing world-class curriculum, assessment and reporting with the objective of inspiring improvement in the learning of all young Australians.

I hope you can see how our work is helping to drive that learning and help prepare young Australians for the world they will inherit, for the jobs, challenges and opportunities of the future. We see ourselves as your partners in your educational mission.