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Chapter 1

Inclusivity and the Australian Curriculum

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The Nature of the Australian Curriculum

The Australian Curriculum sets out the essential knowledge, understandings, skills and general capabilities important for all Australian students. It is designed as a platform to:

- ▶ Launch students into future learning, growth and active participation in the Australian community.
- ▶ Clarify what all young Australians should learn as they progress through their schooling.
- ▶ Highlight the high quality teaching required to meet the needs of all Australian students.

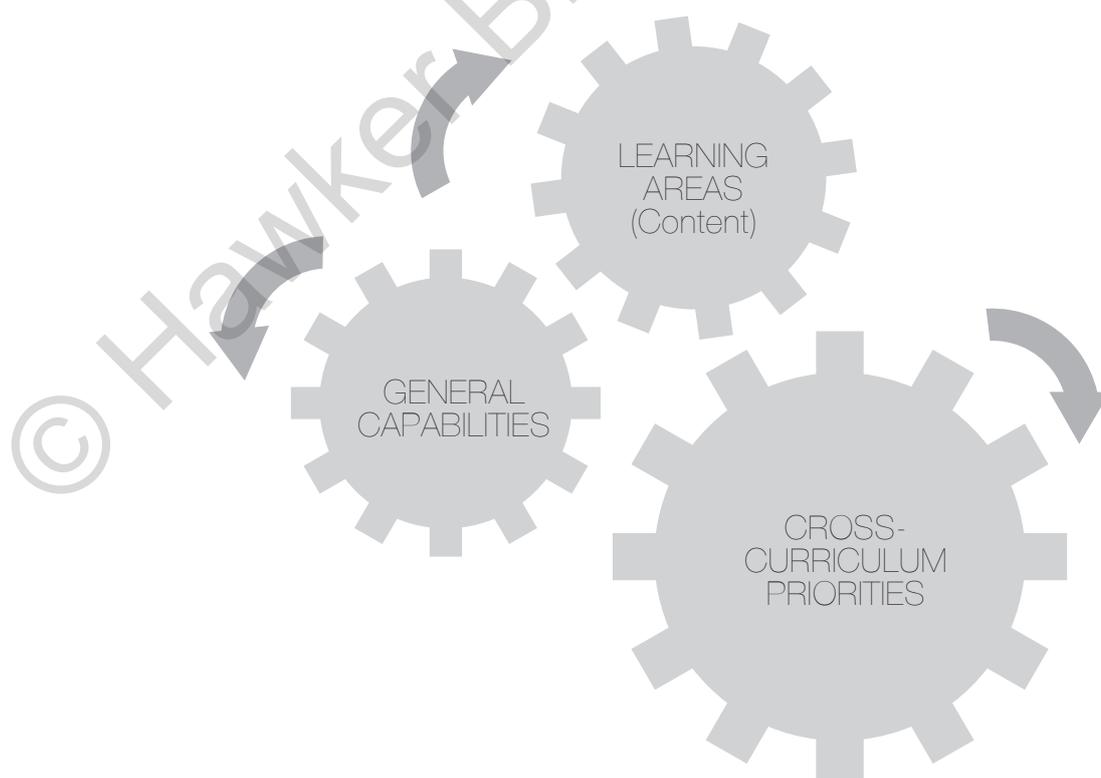
The Australian Curriculum acknowledges the need to meet diverse learning needs, including:

- ▶ students with a disability
- ▶ gifted and talented students
- ▶ students for whom English is an additional language or dialect

As suggested in the diagram below, outcomes such as knowledge, understanding and skills are targeted within each of the learning areas.

The General Capabilities and Cross-Curriculum Priorities are seen as the other basic elements necessary to support a robust curriculum for 21st-century learning.

Australian Curriculum



The Australian Curriculum is framed by these three dimensions, and it is the relationship between them that encourages the flexibility to create inclusive classrooms by attending to the diverse needs and capabilities of students in Australian schools. This includes students with disability; gifted and talented students; and those for whom English is an additional language or dialect.

Teachers can help meet individual learning needs by:

- ▶ emphasising one or more of the three dimensions of the curriculum.
- ▶ Infusing the specific teaching of the general capabilities into the content within learning areas
- ▶ Incorporating specific teaching of the cross-curriculum priorities through the content within learning areas
- ▶ Taking account of the range of their students' current levels of
 - ▶ Learning
 - ▶ Specific abilities and strengths
 - ▶ Individual goals and interests
- ▶ Personalising learning where necessary through adjustments made to the learning program. This may mean drawing from learning area content at different levels along the Foundation to Year 10 sequence; using the general capabilities and / or cross-curriculum priorities to adjust the learning focus and / or aligning individual learning goals with age-equivalent learning area content.

In a general sense, teachers can enrich student learning by:

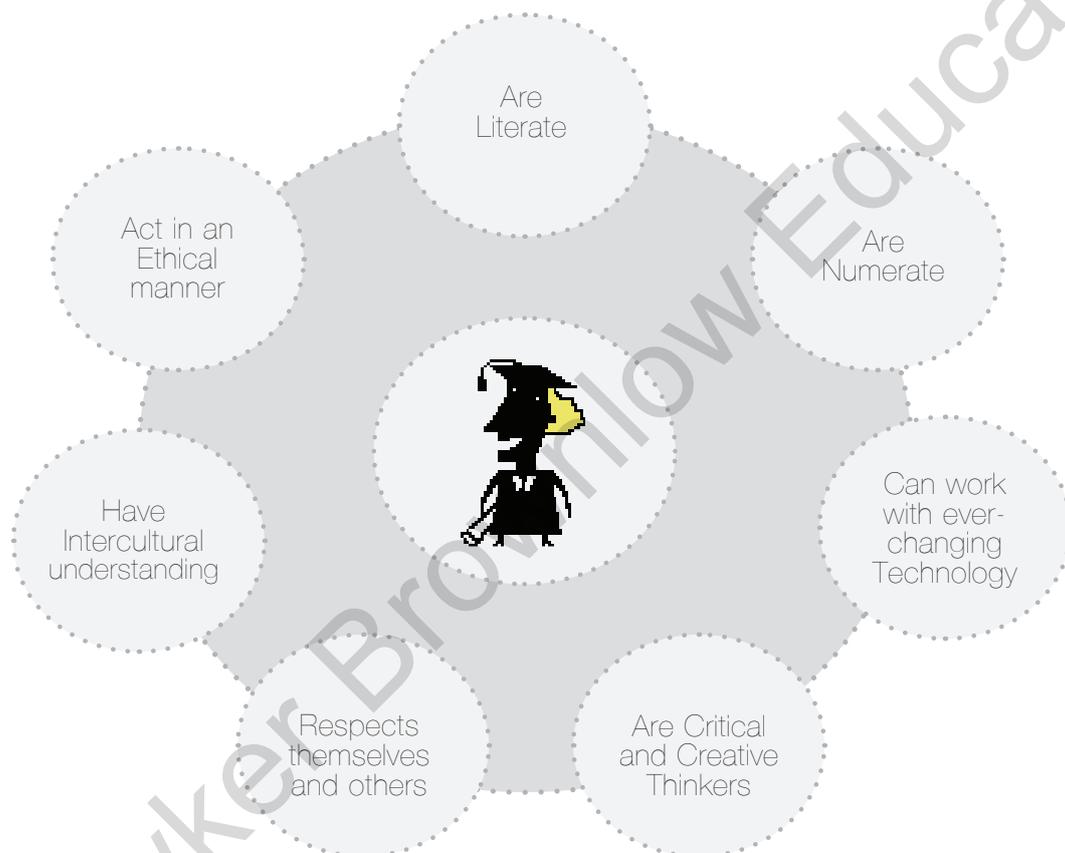
- ▶ providing students with opportunities to work with learning area content in more depth
- ▶ providing students with opportunities to work with learning area content in more breadth
- ▶ targeting specific aspects of the general capabilities (e.g. the higher order cognitive skills of the critical and creative thinking capability)
- ▶ focusing on cross-curriculum priorities.
- ▶ accelerating student learning by drawing on content from higher levels.

The General Capabilities

The General Capabilities comprise a core component of the teaching and learning framework.

The Australian Curriculum aims to create successful learners who are confident, creative individuals, and who are active, informed citizens. Consequently, students will need to be adept at a range of General Capabilities if they are to be successful beyond school.

Successful learners, who are confident and creative individuals, and who are both active and informed citizens...



As suggested earlier, in an inclusive classroom, the learning content focus is adjusted for individuals through the lens of the general capabilities.

The chapters that follow explore what this may look like in the context of an inclusive classroom, both from a teaching and learning perspective.

This publication contains many work units, all of which have been created by the author or by Australian teachers working in consultation with the author. The units are all designed to infuse thinking into content delivery. As a consequence, they all relate strongly to developing the Critical and Creative Thinking element of the General Capabilities.

Strands and Sub-strands in the Australian Curriculum

Supporting students’ growing understanding within each of the Foundation to Year 10 curriculum areas, are Strands and Sub-strands.

In English, for example, there are three strands that focus on developing students’ knowledge, understanding and skills in listening, reading, viewing, speaking and writing. The three strands are:

- ▶ Language: knowing about the English language
- ▶ Literature: understanding, appreciating, responding to, analysing and creating literature
- ▶ Literacy: expanding the repertoire of English usage.

The work units contained in later chapters indicate the Strands that are addressed by the activities presented within each of the units.

Content descriptions in each strand are grouped into sub-strands that, across the year levels, present a sequence of development of knowledge, understanding and skills. The sub-strands are:

Language	Literature	Literacy
LANGUAGE VARIATION AND CHANGE	LITERATURE AND CONTEXT	CREATING LITERATURE
LANGUAGE FOR INTERACTION	RESPONDING TO LITERATURE	INTERACTING WITH OTHERS
TEXT STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION	EXAMINING LITERATURE	INTERPRETING, ANALYSING AND EVALUATING
EXPRESSING AND DEVELOPING IDEAS	CREATING LITERATURE	CREATING TEXTS
SOUND AND LETTER KNOWLEDGE		

The work units contained in chapters to follow also indicate the Sub-strands that are addressed by the activities presented within each of the units.

Below is an example of this connection for a work unit that appears later in this publication. The shaded areas indicate the sub-strands targeted within each of the strands identified for each curriculum area.

“Of Mice and Men – John Steinbeck”

Strands and sub-strands addressed in this topic:

Language	Literature	Literacy
LANGUAGE VARIATION AND CHANGE	LITERATURE AND CONTEXT	CREATING LITERATURE
LANGUAGE FOR INTERACTION	RESPONDING TO LITERATURE	INTERACTING WITH OTHERS
TEXT STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION	EXAMINING LITERATURE	INTERPRETING, ANALYSING AND EVALUATING
EXPRESSING AND DEVELOPING IDEAS	CREATING LITERATURE	CREATING TEXTS
SOUND AND LETTER KNOWLEDGE		