



Australian
CURRICULUM
Review

CROSS- CURRICULUM PRIORITIES



**ASIA AND AUSTRALIA'S ENGAGEMENT
WITH ASIA**

**Consultation – introductory information and
organising ideas**

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REVIEW OF THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM F–10: CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITIES

Asia and Australia’s Engagement with Asia

Introduction

The terms of reference for the Review of the Australian Curriculum F–10 (the Review), require the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), to “revisit and improve where necessary, the organising frameworks for the cross-curriculum priorities with reference to current research”.¹

Cross-curriculum priorities support the Australian Curriculum to be a relevant, contemporary and engaging curriculum that reflects regional, national and global contexts. Cross-curriculum priorities are incorporated through learning area content; they are not separate learning areas or subjects. They provide opportunities to enrich the content of the learning areas, where most appropriate and authentic to do so, allowing students to engage with and better understand their world.

There are three cross-curriculum priorities in the F–10 Australian Curriculum:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures
- Asia and Australia’s Engagement with Asia
- Sustainability.

Opportunities to apply cross-curriculum priorities to learning area content vary. Cross-curriculum priorities are embedded in content descriptions where the development of knowledge, understanding and skills relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures, Asia and Australia’s Engagement with Asia, and/or Sustainability are core to the delivery of the learning area content. They are also identified in content elaborations where they offer opportunities to add depth and richness to student learning.

Each cross-curriculum priority has:

- an **overview statement** that provides a description of the cross-curriculum priority and a rationale for its inclusion in the Australian Curriculum
- a number of **organising ideas** that provide a scaffold for developing the knowledge, understanding and skills of the cross-curriculum priority and promoting connections between the priority and learning area content.

¹ Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), 2020, *Terms of reference: Review of the Australian Curriculum F–10*, p. 5.

Review of the Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia cross-curriculum priority

The Review of this cross-curriculum priority involved:

- consideration of the education goals articulated in the [Alice Springs \(Mparntwe\) Education Declaration 2019](#), and identification of areas to be updated
- review of findings from ACARA's program of research (2016–2020), including annual monitoring reports
- review of current research, for example, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) Global Competence Framework
- collaboration with the Asia Education Foundation (AEF), an acknowledged leader in the field, to draft revisions to the overview statement and organising ideas
- consultation with key stakeholder groups, specifically ACARA's learning area reference groups, and the F–12 Curriculum Reference Group to collect feedback on the draft revisions.

The Review pointed to the need for the priority to underscore the importance for young Australians to have the capacity to examine issues of local, regional and global significance, understand and appreciate different perspectives and worldviews, establish positive interactions with people of different backgrounds, and take constructive action through connection and collaboration.

The key areas for revision are listed below:

- establish a flow between the organising ideas to enable a cycle of self-awareness for students, which builds knowledge, understanding and skills relating to
 - Knowing Asia and its diversity
 - Understanding Asia's global significance
 - Growing Asia-Australia engagement
- improve the focus on:
 - the peoples and countries of Asia and its diversity through 'Knowing Asia and its diversity', with organising ideas refocused to develop the knowledge, skills and capabilities young Australians need to navigate their neighbourhood, and through enhanced knowledge to deepen their intercultural understanding to be active and informed citizens who engage with their neighbours
 - Asia's place in the world and how it shapes global phenomena through 'Understanding Asia's global significance', with organising ideas refocused to demonstrate the need for all young Australians to collaborate and connect with the peoples and countries of the Asia region.
- emphasise the development of skills and incorporate agency through relationship-building, active citizenship, collaboration and adaptability through 'Growing Asia–Australia engagement'

- update terminology and making connections between the organising ideas and opportunities provided in learning area content.

Attachment 1 presents the updated overview and revised organising ideas for the Asia and Australia’s Engagement with Asia cross-curriculum priority.

Attachment 2 presents a comparison of current and revised organising ideas.

Attachment 1. Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia cross-curriculum priority (revised version)

Overview

The Asia region exerts enormous influence globally and in Australia. Young Australians need to develop knowledge, skills and capabilities to navigate our regional neighbourhood.

Three key elements underpin the Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia cross-curriculum priority.

The first is 'Knowing Asia and its diversity'. For this, young people need broad insight into the histories of the nations of the Asia region, including their shared history with Australia, the region's complex and diverse cultures, and an understanding of the contemporary challenges and opportunities that exist for the region. By knowing about Asian societies, cultures, beliefs and environments, students deepen their intercultural understanding, enrich their own lives and increase the likelihood of successful participation in their region for themselves and Australia as a whole.

The second is 'Understanding Asia's global significance' and influence. Asia is the most populous region in the world, being home to two-thirds of the world's people. Some of the world's most dynamic, varied and complex societies are in the Asia region. Asia's global strategic influence continues to grow and the region is the largest producer and consumer of goods and services in the world.

The third is 'Growing Asia–Australia engagement'. Australia is increasingly looking to Asia strategically, politically and culturally as well as economically. Our people, environment, economies, technology, security, culture and history are interdependent. These deep connections are reflected in our contemporary relationships and those stretching back thousands of years. Current historic shifts in global innovation networks and economic, security and technology systems, combined with global environmental and social challenges, heighten the need for all young Australians to connect with the peoples and countries of the Asia region.

Asia is our part of the world. Knowing, understanding and growing engagement with Asia are foundational for young people as Australia seeks to strengthen its ties in the Asia region and be an effective contributor to the wellbeing of the region as a whole. Young Australians will require intercultural understanding, empathy and confidence to contribute to, and understand, Asia–Australia engagement.

Connection and collaboration are essential for young people to foster global perspectives and become informed and active global citizens across local, regional and global communities who, in turn, build Australia's social, intellectual and creative capital.

Defining Asia

Asia can be defined in geographical terms, and it can also be described in terms of cultural, religious, historical and language boundaries or commonalities.

Different geographical definitions that are applied to Asia incorporate a range of sub-regions:

- North-East Asia includes China, Japan, Mongolia, North Korea, South Korea, Taiwan.
- South-East Asia includes Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar (Burma), the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vietnam.
- South Asia includes Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka.
- Central Asia includes Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan.
- West Asia includes Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, State of Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

Different geographic regions of Asia, or parts of it, can also be referred to:

- Asia-Pacific describes countries across Asia, inclusive of Australasia and the Pacific Island nations.
- Indo-Pacific includes the combined Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean, and the land masses that surround them.
- ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations) includes nations which are part of a regional intergovernmental organisation comprising the 11 South-East Asian nations with Australia included as an ASEAN partner.

Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia framework

Central to the effectiveness of this priority is for students to develop knowledge, skills, capabilities, attitudes and values about Asia that support them to be active, informed and responsible local and global citizens.

Knowledge, understanding and active engagement between Australia and Asia counteract unintended assumptions and stereotypes and build positive relationships when guided by critical thinking, respect and reflection.

The Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia cross-curriculum priority has been developed around three action-orientated key elements: 'Knowing Asia and its diversity', 'Understanding Asia's global significance' and 'Growing Asia–Australia engagement'.

The first key element, 'Knowing Asia and its diversity', emphasises the need to appreciate the diversity within and among the countries of the Asia region. This comes through exploring the experiences, beliefs and perspectives of people from the region. This is supported by understanding our interconnected environments, natural and man-made, and the political, financial and technological systems that drive our relationships.

The second key element, ‘Understanding Asia’s global significance’, examines the ways in which different nations in Asia influence the world. Exploration of this significance should span historical and contemporary relationships, and build awareness that the world is in a constant state of change. People are central to global developments, with human endeavour being expressed through aesthetic, creative, political, economic and scientific pursuits. Highlighting the impact of key individuals reinforces how they have contributed to Asia’s global significance.

The key element, ‘Growing Asia–Australia engagement’, addresses the need for active connections between students and Asia’s diverse communities in Australia and in the region. Interaction builds empathy and strengthens respectful engagement, valuing cultural and linguistic differences, and leading to greater collaborative opportunities. These active connections provide the lived experiences of global citizenship for young Australians and nurture relationships that reflect the historical and contemporary interdependency of Australia and Asia.

Organising ideas

Knowing Asia and its diversity

- People of the Asia region are diverse in backgrounds, experiences, religions, beliefs and perspectives. (AAK1)
- The interrelationships between people and the diverse environments and systems across the Asia region have global implications. (AAK2)

Understanding Asia’s global significance

- The nations of Asia have historical relationships and continue to influence contemporary global relationships. (AAU1)
- The peoples of Asia shape human endeavour through aesthetic, creative, political, sporting, economic and scientific domains. (AAU2)

Growing Asia–Australia engagement

- Australia’s developing and deepening relationships with the peoples of Asia influence both Australian and Asian citizenship and culture nationally, regionally and globally. (AAG1)
- Australia and Asia are interdependent through linked histories and contemporary realities. (AAG2)

Attachment 2. Comparison of current and revised organising ideas

Table 1: Comparison of current and revised organising ideas of the Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia cross-curriculum priority

| Current organising ideas | Revised organising ideas |
|---|---|
| Asia and its diversity | Knowing Asia and its diversity |
| The peoples and countries of Asia are diverse in ethnic background, traditions, cultures, belief systems and religions. (OI.1) | People of the Asia region are diverse in backgrounds, experiences, religions, beliefs and perspectives. (AAK1) |
| Interrelationships between humans and the diverse environments in Asia shape the region and have global implications. (OI.2) | The interrelationships between people and the diverse environments and systems across the Asia region have global implications. (AAK2) |
| Achievements and contributions of the peoples of Asia | Understanding Asia's global significance |
| The peoples and countries of Asia have contributed and continue to contribute to world history and human endeavour. (OI.3) | The nations of Asia have historical relationships and continue to influence contemporary global relationships. (AAU1) |
| The arts and literature of Asia influence aesthetic and creative pursuits within Australia, the region and globally. (OI.4) | The peoples of Asia shape human endeavour through aesthetic, creative, political, sporting, economic and scientific domains. (AAU2) |
| Asia–Australia engagement | Growing Asia–Australia engagement |
| Collaboration and engagement with the peoples of Asia support effective regional and global citizenship. (OI.5) | Australia's developing and deepening relationships with the peoples of Asia influence both Australian and Asian citizenship and culture nationally, regionally and globally. (AAG1) |
| Australia is part of the Asia region and our histories from ancient times to the present are linked. (OI.6) | Australia and Asia are interdependent through linked histories and contemporary realities. (AAG2) |
| Australians play a significant role in social, cultural, political and economic developments in the Asia region. (OI.7) | removed |
| Australians of Asian heritage have influenced Australia's history and continue to influence its dynamic culture and society. (OI.8) | removed |