

QSA curriculum advisory structures

Learning Area Reference Committees and writing teams

The Queensland Studies Authority's (QSA's) vision is to provide quality, innovative and future-focused products and services to assist all Queensland educational communities. It is committed to working with Queensland teachers and school administrators to:

- provide the best education and training for students
- enable educational choice for students across the schooling sectors
- promote public confidence in our products and services.

To achieve high-quality, high-equity curriculum P–12, in the context of a changing state and national curriculum landscape, the QSA is implementing new curriculum advisory processes including formation of Learning Area Reference Committees (LARCs) and writing teams.

LARCs provide:

- expert analysis of the curriculum resources and materials needed for a learning area, both in a state and national context
- informed, technical advice about the development of P–12 syllabuses and the nature of documents developed to support their implementation.

Writing teams provide:

- expert analysis of the curriculum requirements for the development or revision of a subject syllabus or guideline for a learning area
- informed advice about the development of a subject syllabus or guideline for a phase of learning, for example, *Early Years Curriculum Guidelines*.

The LARCs are established for two years. Writing teams are formed as required to develop or revise a specific syllabus or guideline.

The terms of reference for LARCs and writing teams have been developed in the context of the future advisory needs of the QSA in a national environment of transition and change.

Learning Area Reference Committees (LARCs)

The LARCs align to the eight learning areas described in the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*¹. Two additional LARCs have been formed. The QSA's Business and Economics LARC covers economics and business, whereas the Melbourne Declaration included these in the Humanities and Social Sciences learning area. The Early Years LARC will provide specific advice on the integrated curriculum and learning needs for Years P–3.

The ten LARCs are:

- English
- Mathematics
- Sciences
- Humanities and Social Sciences
- The Arts
- Languages
- Health and Physical Education
- Information and Communication Technologies and Design
- Business and Economics
- Early Years.

Terms of reference

The Learning Area Reference Committee is a committee of the Office of QSA and provides expert curriculum advice to the P–12 Curriculum Committee on:

- the suitability of the syllabuses, guidelines and other curriculum materials and resources² to provide:
 - differentiation, or the degree to which the learning meets the needs of the full range of students and pathways including, but not limited to extension, applied studies, special needs
 - specialisation, or the range of alternatives within a discipline or learning area including, but not limited to extension, applied studies, special needs
 - assessment that is rigorous and valid and allows students to demonstrate their achievements against clear standards
 - clarity about articulation from and to corresponding phases of learning
 - learning that is appropriate for the phase of learning
- changes necessary to the learning area using the criteria to revise, maintain and develop syllabuses
- current trends in curriculum development for the early, middle and senior phases of learning

1 Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs 2008, *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*, viewed 04 Dec 2009, <www.mceecdya.edu.au/mceecdya/melbourne_declaration,25979.html>

2 e.g. Years 1–9 Essential Learnings and Standards, Year 10 Guidelines, P–9 Literacy and Numeracy Indicators, syllabuses, study area specifications, short courses

- directions of the Australian Curriculum and implications for Queensland, including advice about courses to complement nationally developed subjects and courses
- syllabus, guidelines and curriculum material for development, revision and evaluation
- the suitability of syllabuses or courses developed by schools, school systems, authorities or other institutions to be offered in Queensland schools
- curriculum and assessment matters that the P–12 Curriculum Committee or the Assessment, Moderation and Certification Committee may determine.

LARC committees will be established for two years from January 2010 and meet at least four times a year and as business dictates.

Members of LARCs must have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the following key documents:

- QSA documents, available through the QSA website <www.qsa.qld.edu.au>:
 - *Learning P–12*
 - *P–12 syllabus design principles*
 - *Developing, maintaining and revising senior syllabuses: criteria for decision making*
 - Indigenous perspectives strategies and resources
- Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) documents, available through the ACARA website <www.acara.com>:
 - *The Shape of the Australian Curriculum* (May 2009)
 - the shape of the Australian curriculum in relevant curriculum area.

Membership

The membership of the nine learning-area-specific LARCs will be:

- Chair
- one practising teacher from a state or non-state school across middle years with curriculum experience in the learning area
- one practising teacher from a state or non-state school across senior years with curriculum experience in the learning area
- one practising teacher from the Queensland Teachers' Union with curriculum experience in the learning area
- one practising teacher from the Queensland Independent Education Union with curriculum experience in the learning area
- one tertiary teacher educator with expertise in primary and/or secondary education and curriculum experience in the learning area
- one tertiary educator with curriculum experience in the discipline/learning area
- one senior officer of Education Queensland or nominee with primary and/or secondary curriculum development expertise in the learning area
- one senior officer of the Queensland Catholic Education Commission or nominee with primary and/or secondary curriculum development expertise in the learning area
- one senior officer of the Independent Schools Queensland or nominee with primary and/or secondary curriculum development expertise in the learning area
- one senior officer, with expertise in the learning area nominated by Student Achievement Division, QSA.

The membership of the Early Years LARC will be:

- Chair
- one practising teacher from a state school across early years (P–3) with curriculum experience in the learning area
- one practising teacher from a non-state school across early years (P–3) with curriculum experience in the learning area
- one practising teacher from the Queensland Teachers' Union with curriculum experience in the learning area
- one practising teacher from the Queensland Independent Education Union with curriculum experience in the learning area
- one tertiary teacher educator with expertise in early and/or primary education and curriculum experience in the learning area
- one tertiary educator with curriculum experience in the discipline/learning area
- one senior officer of Education Queensland or nominee with early and/or primary curriculum development expertise in the learning area
- one senior officer of the Queensland Catholic Education Commission or nominee with early and/or primary curriculum development expertise in the learning area
- one senior officer of the Independent Schools Queensland or nominee with early and/or primary curriculum development expertise in the learning area
- one senior officer of the Office for Early Childhood Education and Care
- up to two nominees of relevant professional associations.

Writing teams

Terms of reference

- Writing teams are appointed by the Office of the QSA to develop specific syllabuses, guidelines and other materials.
- They will be established to develop or revise a syllabus or guideline and provide advice about assessment for a learning area.
- The specific syllabus, guideline and other materials developed by a writing team is endorsed by the P–12 Curriculum Committee for approval by the Governing Body.
- Writing team members are not members of the LARC. Writing teams will use advice provided by the LARCs during the writing process.
- They will meet at least four times during the development or revision cycle, and as business dictates.

Membership

Each writing team will consist of:

- one QSA officer from the Teaching and Learning Division
- four or five teachers with curriculum expertise in subject/learning area
- one tertiary educator with curriculum experience in the discipline/learning area
- one nominee of the relevant subject/professional association
- one nominee from the relevant industry.

LARCs and the Australian curriculum

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is responsible for the development of the Australian curriculum from Kindergarten to Year 12 in specified learning areas. The first phase includes the development of curriculum for English, mathematics, science and history. The second phase includes geography, languages and the arts.³

LARCs for learning areas where Australian curriculum is under development will have within their scope interpretation and integration of the emerging Australian curriculum directions. These LARCS are:

- English
- Mathematics
- Sciences
- Humanities and Social Sciences
- The Arts
- Languages
- Early Years.

³ Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority 2009, *ACARA Fact Sheet*, viewed 08 Dec 2009, <www.acara.edu.au/verve/_resources/Towards_an_Australian_Curriculum_FACT_SHEET_Nov_09.pdf>

LARCS and their curriculum materials

The tables below shows the set of curriculum materials that will be developed and revised by the ten LARCs, current in December 2009.

LARCs with Australian curriculum currently under development	
<p>ENGLISH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential Learnings & Standards: English • P–9 Literacy Indicators • Year 10 Guidelines: English • Short course in Literacy • Senior syllabuses: English, English for ESL Learners (trial) • Study area specifications: English Communication, Functional English • Senior external syllabus: English 	<p>MATHEMATICS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential Learnings & Standards: Mathematics • P–9 Numeracy Indicators • Year 10 Guidelines: Mathematics • Short course in Numeracy • Senior syllabuses: Mathematics A, Mathematics B, Mathematics C • Study area specifications: Functional Mathematics, Prevocational Mathematics • Senior external syllabuses: Mathematics A, Mathematics B
<p>SCIENCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential Learnings & Standards: Science • Year 10 Guidelines: Science • Senior syllabuses: Agricultural Science, Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, Marine Studies, Multi-Strand Science, Physics, Science21 • Study area specifications: Agriculture & Horticulture, Marine & Aquatic Practices, Science • Senior external syllabuses: Biology, Chemistry, Physics 	<p>HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential Learnings & Standards: Studies of Society & Environment (SOSE) • Year 10 Guidelines: Geography, History • Senior syllabuses: Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies, Ancient History, Geography, Modern History, Philosophy & Reason, Study of Religion, Study of Society • Study area specifications: Religion & Ethics, Social & Community Studies • Short course in Career Development • Senior external syllabuses: Ancient History, Geography, Modern History, Philosophy & Reason
<p>THE ARTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential Learnings & Standards: The Arts • Year 10 Guidelines: The Arts • Senior syllabuses: Dance; Drama; Film, Television & New Media; Music; Music Extension; Visual Art • Study area specification: Creative Arts • Senior external syllabuses: Visual Art, Drama 	<p>LANGUAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential Learnings & Standards: Languages • Year 10 Guidelines: Languages • Senior syllabuses: Chinese, French, French Extension, German, German Extension, Indonesian, Indonesian Extension, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Latin, Modern Greek, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese • Senior external syllabuses: Chinese and languages offered through CCAFL (Collaborative Curriculum and Assessment Framework for Languages, a national model for teaching and assessment of senior language subjects with small candidatures)

LARCs without Australian curriculum currently under development	
<p>HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential Learnings & Standards: Health & Physical Education • Year 10 Guidelines: Health & Physical Education • Senior syllabuses: Physical Education, Health Education, Home Economics, Hospitality Studies • Study area specifications: Hospitality, Recreation, Early Childhood 	<p>INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES & DESIGN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential Learnings & Standards: Technology, Information & Communication Technologies (ICTs) • Year 10 Guidelines: Technology • Senior syllabuses: Aerospace Studies, Engineering Technology, Graphics, Information Processing & Technology, Information Technology Systems, Technology Studies • Study area specifications: Information & Communications Technology, Manufacturing
<p>BUSINESS & ECONOMICS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential Learnings & Standards: Technology • Year 10 Guidelines: Business • Senior syllabuses: Business Communication & Technologies, Accounting, Economics, Legal Studies, Business Organisation & Management, Tourism • Study area specifications: Business, Tourism • Senior external syllabuses: Accounting, Legal Studies 	<p>EARLY YEARS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kindergarten Guidelines • Early Years Curriculum Guidelines (Prep year) • Learning development framework (LDF) • Year 1 Learning Statements • Year 1 Assessment project

Advisory structures

LARCs and writing teams form part of the curriculum advisory structure used by the QSA (see Figure 1).

A LARC is a committee of the Office of QSA and discharges its functions through the P–12 Curriculum Committee. The Office of the QSA forms writing teams, who write to the requirements of a design brief prepared by the Office of the QSA and endorsed by P–12 Curriculum Committee. LARCs will provide writing teams with advice during the writing process.

Figure 1: QSA curriculum advisory structure

