

RESPONSE TO AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM – K- 10 HISTORY DRAFT

FROM

HISTORY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

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The following response to the Australian Curriculum – K- 10 History Draft represents the views of the Board and the members of the HTAV.

Since the Draft's publication, the HTAV has consulted with its members through a range of means:

- A Survey
- Face to face consultations
- Phone and email queries and comments

The HTAV has also worked in conjunction with the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority to seek a range of views of teachers from across the state, teachers who may or may not be members of the Association.

The HTAV has been appreciative of the opportunities that ACARA has afforded it to be part of the consultation process and looks forward to continue strengthening this relationship further. The HTAV would also like to acknowledge the work and support that Mr Darren Tayler, Senior Project Officer (ACARA) has given to the HTAV over the past few months.

This feedback is provided in tabular form and comments upon:

- The aims and rationale.
- The appropriateness of content for each year level.
- The skills to be taught and learned.
- General concerns that have been raised by teachers in regards to various issues regarding the Australian Curriculum.

Appendices included in this response are:

Appendix A: suggested Year 9 Course amendments

Appendix B: HTAV Survey responses

I would be happy to discuss this submission with you should any comment here need further elaboration.



Annabel Astbury
Executive Director

Rationale / Aims	Comments
Rationale	The rationale provides clarity about the position and importance of the learning area in the whole curriculum. The HTAV applauds the “world history” approach and sees this as an important characteristic of this Australian Curriculum.
Suggestions:	▪ The final sentence of the curriculum could be incorporated into the body of the previous paragraph: The curriculum set out here takes a world history approach. It does so to equip students for the world in which they will live. An understanding of world history will enhance students' appreciation of Australian history <i>which will include an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identity and the role that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians continue to play in national life.</i> It will enable them to appreciate Australia's distinctive path of social, economic and political development, its position in the Asia-Pacific region, and global interrelationships that are essential to an informed and active participation in Australia's diverse society. ▪ The reasoning for this is to show how the history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is integral to, not separate from, the history of this country.

Rationale / Aims	Comments
Aims	▪ The aims are very clear and understandable and relate well to the content. ▪ The aims are appropriate for K – 10.
Suggestions:	▪ The third aim listed could read as: Understanding and use of historical concepts, including, <i>but not limited to</i>, continuity and change, cause and effect, significance, empathy and contestability <i>of evidence</i>. ▪ The reasoning for this is that ‘evidence’ on its own is not necessarily a ‘concept’, nor is ‘perspectives’. Students recognising that the past is presented from multiple perspectives and that each of those can be contested is a crucial concept for them to understand.

Structure of the curriculum	Comments
Content Strand descriptors	▪ The HTAV feels that the organisation of the content area in the content strands of 'Historical knowledge and understanding' and 'Historical Skills' is appropriate. ▪ The organisation of the content area provides a coherent view of the key elements and features of the curriculum ▪ Whilst the content strand descriptors are clearly reflected in the achievement standards, the achievement standards do not provide clarity regarding the depth of teaching and learning required.
Suggestions:	▪ In Historical knowledge and understanding the last sentence could read: Historical understanding is developed through a range of disciplinary concepts inherent to the discipline of history including but not limited to continuity and change, cause and effect, significance, empathy and contestability of evidence. The reasoning for this is that 'evidence' on its own is not necessarily a 'concept', nor is 'perspectives'. Students recognising that the past is presented from multiple perspectives and that each of those can be contested is a crucial concept for them to understand. ▪ Assessment support materials should provide indicators to teachers regarding the degrees to which students have been able to demonstrate the knowledge and skills which are highlighted in the achievement standard at each level.
Implications for teaching and learning	▪ The HTAV strongly supports the statements made in relation to the implications for teaching and learning. In particular the emphasis that an inquiry based model of teaching be used, that the skills of historical inquiry will be developed through teacher centred and student centred learning and that there should not be an artificial separation of content and process nor a focus on historical method at the expense of historical knowledge. ▪ The HTAV wholeheartedly agrees that students' interest in and enjoyment of history should be enhanced through arrangement of approaches such as the use of artefacts, museums, historical sites and hands-on activities.
General Capabilities	The HTAV supports the statements that have been made in connection with the General capabilities.

Structure of the curriculum	Comments
Cross Curriculum Dimensions	▪ The HTAV agrees that the cross-curriculum connections have been made in the draft. ▪ The HTAV strongly believes that students should learn about Asian history and that Asian contexts should be taught <i>where appropriate</i>. ▪ The HTAV argues that the cross curriculum dimensions should be fully integrated into the History curriculum, where appropriate, in a meaningful and purposeful manner. ▪ The HTAV believes that there are parts where the inclusion of the cross-curriculum dimensions detract from the overall rationale and aims of the course.

General Observations	Comments
Online Presentation	The HTAV believes that the entire online presentation and hard-copy presentation of the curriculum is confusing for teachers at all levels of experience to interpret.
Suggestion	That the online presentation be re-designed so that readers can: ▪ View the skills and content together rather than in separate columns. Some teachers have expressed concerns to us that the current layout suggests that the skills be taught separately from the content. ▪ That it be made clear that the content elaborations are to be used as a guide to assist those teachers who need help in fleshing out the document. ▪ The development of skills should be clear: teachers should be able to see the progression of the development of skills at each stage of learning, where applicable.
Definitions of Depth Studies / Overviews	▪ Even though the definition of a Depth Study is clarified in the glossary on www.australiancurriculum.edu.au , it is not in a prominent position. ▪ The HTAV agrees with the definition given. ▪ It is unclear , however, what an ‘overview’ is. It would be helpful to teachers if this was more clearly defined, if the term was to remain.
Suggestion	○ ‘Depth Studies’ need to be manageable to teach. Given the uncertainty of time allocation for teaching the curriculum, it is unlikely teachers and students could achieve what is set out in the definition of a ‘depth study’. The HTAV would suggest that enough time be allocated to the curriculum to enable the ‘Depth studies’ to be executed as they are intended. ○ To provide clarification and to reflect good teaching practice, the HTAV would suggest that much of the content in the ‘Overviews’ should be integrated into the Depth Studies. This would allow for the curriculum to be taught with more fluidity. It would also eradicate the confusion regarding the difference between what an overview and a depth study is. Many of the overviews contain VERY detailed information.

General Observations	Comments
Time allocation	▪ The HTAV appreciates the complexities surrounding the issues of implementation. It has become clear though that it is unlikely that 80 hours will be allocated for each year level at 7 – 10 (as was initially suggested). ▪ Schools need to be given a precise number of hours allocated to curriculum delivery. Without such a guide, which would apply to all parts of the country, implementing a ‘National’ curriculum is meaningless. ▪ As the draft content currently stands, the curriculum could NOT be taught in 80 hours (especially at Years 9 and 10, where at least 100 hours would be required).
Suggestion	○ The HTAV supports the allocation of a precise number of hours for History in the Australian Curriculum. We suggest that this figure be published before the end of 2010. ○ If hours are not going to be increased, then content will have to be cut from the current draft, especially at Years 9 and 10. ○ The HTAV believes that 60 hours per year at each level in Years 7 – 10 is the minimum time allocation required for teachers to teach and students to learn the content and skills associated with History.
Students with differing needs	▪ The HTAV does not believe that the draft as it currently stands allows teachers to cater for students of differing needs, including those students with learning difficulties, students from non-English speaking backgrounds and high-achieving students.
Suggestion	▪ The curriculum document should clearly stipulate how it could be adapted for students with differing needs and abilities.
Overcrowdedness	▪ As it currently stands, the HTAV believes that the curriculum is VERY overcrowded, particularly at Years 5, 6, 9 and 10.
Suggestion	▪ One of two options: either more time should be allocated to the course as it currently stands or material should be cut out so that the curriculum is teachable.

Coherence and Continuity across the Curriculum	▪ The HTAV believes that the curriculum is mostly coherent and provides reasonable continuity across the years of schooling, one exception being the potential cross over between Year 5 and Year 10.
Suggestion	▪ That the curriculum draft be thoroughly examined to avoid considerable overlap or repetition of topics. ▪ The HTAV recognises that some topics can be repeated as long as they are adapted for the stage of learning. (The idea that comprehension of concepts and ideas is more sophisticated at Year 9 level compared to Year 5 level.)
'World Class Curriculum'	▪ The HTAV recognises the potential that the draft curriculum document has to be 'a world-class curriculum'; however, for this to be realised it is essential that any reshaping of the document be completed with a consistent voice and purpose.
Skills	▪ In consultations, teachers have been pleased with the range of skills that the draft document presents.
Suggestion:	▪ That the development of the skills presented be clearly explained at the beginning of the document. That is that the skills progress in two-year bands. ▪ That the skill entitled 'Comprehension and Communication' be renamed 'Historical understanding and communication'. This places emphasis on the disciplinary skills as opposed to 'generic' comprehension and communication skills.

Some General Comments K- 6 Draft	▪ Only a small group of primary practitioners attended feedback sessions held by the HTAV. ▪ Concerns and questions raised by them included: ○ How this curriculum would operate within an integrated approach to curriculum delivery. ○ What sort of support to develop expertise was going to be provided for practitioners. ○ That the language in some cases was too open to interpretation and that some specific explanations were needed for primary practitioners. In this case the HTAV believes that clarification of the purpose of content elaborations would assist primary teachers greatly. ○ Primary teachers saw themselves as crucial to talking about the past in relation to the future and for this reason felt that some content (especially at Years 5 and 6) was more suited, conceptually, to secondary school. ○ In Victoria, teachers felt that the current approach which enables the student to focus on Asia is appropriate for the Year 5 and 6 stages of learning.
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Content Descriptions	Comments
Kindergarten	The HTAV sees that the content at this level is: <i>Very clear</i> and unambiguous. <i>Very well</i>-sequenced and pitched appropriately.

Content Descriptions	Comments
Year 1	The HTAV sees that the content at this level is: • Very clear and unambiguous. • Well sequenced and pitched appropriately.
Comments / Suggestions	○ In the elaborations there is more than one reference to birthdays and celebrations. It is suggested that this reference be deleted because the concept has already been introduced in Kindergarten. ○ A reference to the 'calendar' or 'different calendars' to indicate periods of the year is needed. ○ There is a very good basis for historical understanding and opportunities for students to comprehend the ways in which historical investigation works.

Content Descriptions	Comments
Year 2	The HTAV sees that the content at this level is: • Very clear and unambiguous. • Well sequenced and pitched appropriately.
Comments / Suggestions	• The 'Broad inquiry question' might be better suited to be phrased as: <i>"Where do we see the past around us?" as this links more specifically to the content and more naturally to the question: 'Why do you think that the past is important?'</i> • The Theme, instead of 'Heritage' could be called 'Community and heritage' and Year 3 then called 'Community and remembrance'. The idea of starting 'local' is dominant at both levels. • The sequence of 'heritage – how and where we preserve the past' and then 'Remembrance – how we remember and commemorate the past' is taxonomically appropriate.

Content Descriptions	Comments
Year 3	The HTAV sees that the content at this level is: • Very clear and unambiguous. • Reasonably well sequenced and pitched appropriately.
Comments / Suggestions	• Point 2: ‘Our Community’ might be more useful if it stated: <i>Key changes and continuities in the local community, region or state: who lived there in the past and how their lifestyles changed including how they made their livings, how they explored and settled, how transport, school life and entertainment changed over time.</i> The reason for this is that it assists in addressing the broad inquiry questions. And that the deeper concepts associated with teaching why religion and beliefs evolved and explanations involving how communities were developed are only going to be meaningful if a comparison can be drawn which, in many cases, it will not be able to be made in the local area. • The elimination of Point 4. ‘We Remember’ would be purposeful in two ways: It would help cut down on some content at this level: there is plenty for at least 20 hours over the course of the year; and Points 5 and 6 merely reiterate more clearly what Point 4 is attempting to achieve.

Content Descriptions	Comments
Year 4	The HTAV sees that the content at this level is: • <i>Clear</i> and unambiguous. • <i>Well</i> sequenced but <i>not pitched appropriately in its entirety.</i>
Comments / Suggestions	• Some teachers with whom the HTAV consulted believed that the content which leads students to evaluate the impact of colonization upon ATSI communities was not appropriate for Year 4 level. • This did not mean that the teachers wanted it eliminated from the course; they saw it as crucial to the curriculum. • Teachers felt that this material was best dealt with in secondary school where students would have more cognitive abilities to empathise and evaluate the events more meaningfully. • Teachers felt that Point 4: 'Early contacts' was not appropriate for the stage of learning.

Content Descriptions	Comments
Year 5	The HTAV sees that the content at this level is: • Clear and unambiguous. • Not pitched appropriately for Year 5 in some parts. • Too voluminous.
Comments / Suggestions	• The study 'Stories of Nationhood' is very civics oriented and does not necessarily fit with historical interpretation. • The comparative analysis for 'Stories of Nationhood' under point 7 is too complex to be handled by students at this stage of learning. • A suggestion is to change the content description at point 7 to: <i>"An overview of Australia's form of government."</i> This would allow students to still obtain knowledge of Australia's form of government.

Content Descriptions	Comments
Year 6	The HTAV sees that the content at this level is: • Not always clear and unambiguous. • Too voluminous. • Not pitched appropriately for Year 6 in some parts.
Comments / Suggestions	• The first three points attempt to place the topic 'Australia and the world' into some context but the content descriptions do not match the outcomes of the first inquiry question. • In this respect, the second two inquiry questions are more appropriate and lead to more meaningful learning for students at this stage of learning. • Point 3: 'Australia, the British Empire and Asia' is too vague and ambiguous. Presumably it is asking students to discuss elements of the Immigration Restriction Act (1901) but this is touched on in Point 4. • The topic entitled 'New Australians' must be renamed – although some might see it as encapsulating hopes of migration, the phrase does carry with it significant cultural connotations. The idea of 'journeying' is probably more appropriate. • Teachers consulted felt very strongly that there was too much content at this year level.

Content Descriptions	Comments
Year 7	The HTAV sees that content at this level is: • Very clear and unambiguous. • Well sequenced. • Pitched appropriately for this stage of learning. • May be too voluminous depending upon hours suggested for teaching and learning.
Comments / Suggestions	• Depth Study 1: ‘What is History?’ has been questioned by those with whom we consulted. • Teachers felt that whilst an introduction to a ‘What is History?’ topic was valid, taking into account that in primary school students will have approached the discipline in an integrated manner, having a whole term on the topic was not feasible. • The skills, issues and content raised in this Depth Study are ones that the HTAV believes should be omnipresent throughout the whole course from 7 – 10. • If overviews were integrated into the Depth Studies (material that the HTAV believes is integral to the study of the content) and to emphasise the ‘world history’ context, then the Year 7 course could start with: ▪ What is history? (a small, contained topic) ▪ Depth Study The Ancient World (Egypt Greece or Rome) ▪ Depth Study The Ancient World (Egypt Greece or Rome) ▪ Depth Study The Ancient World (China, India or Australasia) ▪ Depth Study The Ancient World (School Developed Study)

Content Descriptions	Comments
Year 8	The HTAV sees that the content at this level is: ▪ Clear and unambiguous. ▪ Not sequenced as well as it could be. ▪ Pitched appropriately for this stage of learning.
Comments / Suggestions	○ For continuity, the first overview should be integrated into the various depth studies at this stage. ○ A connection point which links the students' learning between years is needed at the beginning of this year as well. ○ 'Medieval Europe', whilst broad, does allow for some misinterpretation – it might be more useful to teachers to have suggested topics. Point 8: Depth Study 1: 'Medieval Europe' might read: The main characteristics of everyday life in ONE medieval European society (<i>for example, England or France</i>) ... ○ Depth Study 2: 'Asian Societies' could be studied in a similar way to allow for points of comparison. The same language for the investigation of the area would be helpful, for example 'Social and political organisation' / 'rise and demise' ○ 'Expanding Horizons' is a sound topic which acts as a very good introduction to the Year 9 course. ○ Points 21 and 22 could be combined. ○ Some more purposeful 'driving' questions would help shape the content at this year level. The link between the current inquiry questions and the content is not immediately apparent.

Content Descriptions	Comments
Year 9	The HTAV sees that the content at this level is: ▪ Too voluminous. ▪ Not sequenced as well as it could be. ▪ Pitched <i>fairly appropriately</i> for this stage of learning.
Comments / Suggestions	▪ The material presented at Years 9 and 10 is too much to cover in any reasonable time allocation that might be given at these year levels. ▪ In order to make this a more workable document and to reflect crucial aspects of studying History, the HTAV believes that the periods for study could be adjusted to allow for a more well rounded course of study. ▪ To this end, it might be useful to consider: Year 9: ‘The making of the modern world and Australia: 1750 – 1918’. Year 10 ‘Australia and the Modern World: 1918 – present’. Year 9 could include, therefore: Depth Study 1: Technology, progress and social change This would include points 7 – 11 on the draft. Depth Study 2: Changing societies This topic could take some elements of the ‘Asia and the Pacific’ topic to get students to evaluate the impact of the technology, progress and change (studied in the first topic) upon the first peoples of various countries. It could include points 12, 13 and 14. Depth Study 2: The making of an Australian Nation This topic could include points 19 and 20 and include Year 10 point 3 ‘Overview of Australia in the modern world’ and 6, 7 and 8 ‘The Great War and its aftermath’ until 1918. Point 20 as it currently stands goes beyond the suggested time period of 1901. For a detailed proposal, please see Appendix A.

Content Descriptions	Comments
Year 10	The HTAV sees that the content at this level is: ▪ Too voluminous. ▪ Not sequenced as well as it could be. ▪ Pitched fairly appropriately for this stage of learning.
Comments / Suggestions	Feedback collected by the HTAV from its members suggests that of the material presented in the draft, the topics that are most indispensable at this stage of learning are: ▪ The rise of certain ideologies, Nazism, Fascism, Communism ▪ The Depression ▪ The effects of WW2 upon Australia ▪ Australia's participation in WW2 esp. in the Asia Pacific Region ▪ Post war migration to Australia ▪ The Cold War ▪ War in Afghanistan. Other feedback on the Year 10 course included: ▪ That it was more appropriate to focus on post WW2 in Year 10. ▪ That human rights and developments in the struggles for certain freedoms are important for students to know about. ▪ The HTAV is aware that 'too much war' is a concern of some teachers and therefore recognizes what the 'decade study' gives students the opportunity to do – to examine the social and cultural history of the nation through a comparative discussion of two decades. It is very difficult to offer suggestions as to how the Year 10 course could be improved without knowing exactly what the senior history courses will involve and to what extent they will change as a result of the consultation process. Certainly as the senior Modern History draft stands currently, there appears to be a great deal of repetition between the Year 10 course and in the first units of Modern History.

Year 9 The Making of the Modern World and Australia: Suggested approach

The Making of the Modern World and Australia 1750 - 1918

The Year 9 curriculum covers the Making of the Modern World and Australia from 1750 to 1918. This period involved the transformation of an 'Old World' and the creation of 'New World' settler societies.

Students will consider broad inquiry questions, including:

What is progress?

How do societies understand their indigenous past?

How are societies influenced by global changes?

Depth Study 1: Technology, progress and social change

A chronological overview of the modern world and Australia from 1750 to 1901

(H9KU1)

Depth Study 1: Technology, progress and social change

The rise of European industrialism, imperialism and nationalism and its effects on Australia

(H9KU2)

Depth Study 1. Technology, progress and social change

The causes and consequences of the Industrial Revolution, including an examination of the impact of major scientific and technological innovations

(H9KU7)

Depth Study 1. Technology, progress and social change

The experiences of men, women and children during the Industrial Revolution

(H9KU8)

9. Depth Study 1. Technology, progress and social change

Appendix A cont.

The main features of the factory system and its effects on productivity, consumption, social structure, labour conditions and the division of labour

(H9KU9)

10. Depth Study 1. Technology, progress and social change

The nineteenth century concept of progress as defined by the standards and expectations of society in this period

(H9KU10)

11. Depth Study 1. Technology, progress and social change

The impact of the Industrial Revolution on the mass movement of peoples, including the slave trade, convict transportation and migration of settlers

(H9KU11)

Depth Study 2: Changing Societies – The changing world

Exploration, contact and conflict in the establishment of New World settler societies

(H9KU3)

Depth Study 2: Changing Societies – The changing world

Global population movements

(H9KU5)

Depth Study 2: Changing Societies – The changing world

The societies that made up the Asia-Pacific region c.1800

(H9KU12)

Depth Study 2: Changing Societies – The changing world

The impact of European influence in the Asia-Pacific region, with a particular emphasis on ONE of the following: Japan, China, Indochina OR the Dutch East Indies and Fiji

(H9KU13)

Depth Study 2: Changing Societies – The changing world

The consequences of contact, intended and unintended, between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and Europeans in Australia, and in ONE other part of the Asia-Pacific

(H9KU14)

Depth Study 3. The making of an Australian nation

The development of self-governing colonies and the tensions and ambitions that led to the creation of an Australian nation

(H9KU17)

Depth Study 3. The making of an Australian nation

The motivation, behaviour and legacy of individuals and groups who rebelled against social conditions and authority

(H9KU19)

Depth Study 3: The Making of an Australian Nation (from year 10 Overview)

Significant Australian economic and political debates during the twentieth century, including constitutional issues and workplace and workforce reforms

(H10KU3)

Depth Study 3. The making of an Australian nation

The early years of the Australian nation, including the introduction of the White Australia policy, exclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, voting rights of women and the introduction of the basic wage

(H9KU20)

Depth Study 3. The making of an Australian nation

The significance of the Gallipoli and Western front campaigns during World War I

(H10KU6)

Depth Study 3: The Making of an Australian Nation

The development of the Anzac legend and its relationship with developing a national identity

Appendix A

Depth Study 3. The Making of an Australian Nation

Life on the 'Home Front' during the war

(H10KU8)

Depth Study 3: The Making of an Australian Nation

The end of WWI and the transformation of the modern world as a consequence of radical political actions and ideas, global conflict and attempts to deal with these events through international cooperation and Australia's part in this.