

# Reporting on Australian Curriculum

## Guidelines for DECD schools R – 10

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## **Background**

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The transition to Australian Curriculum in Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) schools provides further opportunity to ensure that assessment and reporting practices are explicitly centred on the improvement of learning.

The Teaching for Effective Learning Framework supports teachers to design learning to maximise student engagement and achievement. This focus on learning design includes effective assessment practices, which help teachers customise learning to the needs of their students and provide evidence about the quality of student learning.

Over the next few years, the *Australian Curriculum achievement standards* will become the reference point for assessment and reporting on learning areas. This means that, instead of assessing students' learning, and reporting on their progress using the SACSA standards and outcomes, teachers will use the *Australian Curriculum achievement standards* for assessment and reporting.

The phased development of the Australian Curriculum over several years will result in gradual changes to curriculum, assessment and reporting. Guidelines and policies will be updated as new learning areas are implemented and assessment and reporting practices using the achievement standards are reviewed and refined.

During this transition period, teachers will continue to assess and report using SACSA in some learning areas. Guidelines for reporting against SACSA can still be accessed at [http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/assessment/files/links/AROG\\_A4\\_poster\\_fina\\_1.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/assessment/files/links/AROG_A4_poster_fina_1.pdf)

### ***Australian Curriculum achievement standards***

The Australian Curriculum achievement standards describe what students should typically be able to do, know and understand by the end of the year at each year level. The achievement standards, along with the content descriptions, general capabilities and cross curriculum priorities, provide the broad curriculum from which teachers design learning and assessment.

- Each achievement standard describes the expected achievement for students as a result of being taught the curriculum for that year of schooling.
- Content descriptions and achievement standards are an interrelated set. Together they inform the design of learning and assessment.
- Each achievement standard should be treated holistically, *ie.* as representing broad development of understandings and skills, rather than as discrete elements to be achieved.
- Each achievement standard provides the key reference point for reporting on student achievement, including A – E grades or word equivalents.

## **Reporting Requirements**

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In the transition from SACSA to Australian Curriculum the timeline for reporting is as follows:

- 2012 By the end of the year, for students in years 1 – 7, schools report against Australian Curriculum achievement standards in mathematics and science and against the SACSA standards and outcomes in all other learning areas. Schools also have *the option* to commence reporting in Australian Curriculum: English and history.
- 2013 By the end of the year, for students in years 1 – 8, schools report against Australian Curriculum achievement standards in mathematics, science, English and history and against the SACSA standards and outcomes in all other learning areas.

DECD timelines for schools to begin reporting against other Australian Curriculum learning areas, and at years 9 and 10, will be progressively developed as the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) curriculum development process continues.

### **Reporting using A – E grades or word equivalents**

Through the National Education Agreement with the Australian Government, DECD schools, in common with all schools around Australia, are required to:

- provide two written reports per year to learners and parents/carers, reporting on all learning areas (once in the first half of the year and again at the end of the year)
- write reports using plain language that is clear and easy to understand
- provide reports that are based on 5 achievement levels (A – E grades or the word equivalents).

The mid-year report should reflect student achievement demonstrated against the standard, taking into account what has been taught to that point in the year (see page 7). The end-of-year report should reflect student achievement across the whole year.

Schools with more than 10 students in a particular year level prepare information that shows the number of students in each of the 5 achievement levels (A – E) for each learning area. If parents request it, schools are to provide this comparative information about their child's progress. The exact wording to be used on the report is: *'You can ask the school to provide you with written information that clearly shows your child's achievements in the subjects studied in comparison to that of other children in the child's peer group at school. This information will show you the number of students in each of the five achievement levels'*.

This applies to reporting against both the Australian Curriculum and SACSA.

Reporting on Australian Curriculum requires teachers to allocate an A – E grade against an achievement standard, supported by accompanying descriptive information. See **Appendix 1(a – d)** for a resource to support teachers allocate an A – E grade or word equivalents against an achievement standard.

## ***Guidelines for Reporting***

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### ***Reporting against the achievement standards in the Reception year***

- As is currently the case, there will be no requirement for schools to assign A - E grades or word equivalents in reporting on students in the Reception year.
- Reception teachers should use the **Foundation (F)** Year *Australian Curriculum achievement standards* as reference points for descriptive reporting.

### ***Reporting against the achievement standards in Years 1-10***

- The Australian Curriculum achievement standards describe expected achievement at each year level. Therefore student achievement should be reported against the achievement standards of the year level in which the student is placed, *ie.* the achievement of Year 7 students will be reported against the Year 7 achievement standards.
- There will be situations in which it is necessary for teachers to adjust curriculum, including for students with Learning Plans\*. In such cases schools should negotiate and document both the student's learning program and appropriate reporting arrangements with the student and their parents/carers. This could include using A – E grades or word equivalents to report the student's achievement against an achievement standard from a year level other than that in which the student is placed. The relevant achievement standard should be noted in the report.

\* Learning Plans: the term *Learning Plans* refers to a range of plans developed to document the needs of particular students. This includes Individual Education Plans for students who are under Guardianship of the Minister, Individual Learning Plans for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and Learning Plans designed for students with differing needs, including gifted students. This also includes Negotiated Education Plans (NEP) for students with disability.

### ***Reporting against the achievement standards for students with disability\*\****

- In the case of students with disability, schools should negotiate both the student's learning program and appropriate reporting arrangements with the student and their parents/carers. These will be documented in the student's learning plan, *eg.* NEP.
- Reporting options will include the following:
  - Some students with disability require accommodations to support them to access the curriculum and demonstrate achievement. These students will be allocated A – E grades or word equivalents against the achievement standards of the year level of in which they are placed.
  - For some students with disability, in identified learning areas, teachers will design, assess and report on learning using curriculum from a year level other than that in which the student is placed. A–E grades or word equivalents would then be allocated against the relevant year level achievement standard. The relevant achievement standard should be noted in the report. This is a change from the NEP assessment and reporting arrangements used in relation to SACSA two-yearly standards.

- For students with significant intellectual disability and for those with significant coexisting conditions, achievement should be reported against the curriculum and learning goals described in the student's learning plan, eg. NEP.

\*\* Students with disability: the concept of disability has been widely defined by legislation to include all children and students with a disability. This is regardless of eligibility under specific systemic targeted programs such as the DECD Disability Support Program. The Australian Government Disability Discrimination Act (1992) and the Disability Standards for Education (2005) require schools to make reasonable adjustments for the broad range of students.

### ***Reporting against the achievement standards in composite and multi-age classes***

- Students in composite or multi-age classes will in most cases be taught, assessed and reported on according to the year level in which they are placed.
- There may be some cases in which it is appropriate for teachers to vary some aspects of the curriculum to cater for more than one year level. In varying the curriculum, teachers should ensure that students still have access to the curriculum described for their year level and that they are reported on against the year level achievement standards.
- Where variations are made to cater for composite or multi-age class structures, parents/carers should be informed of any variations.

## Arrangements for the use of A-E grades or word equivalents for Years 1-10

- A – E grades or word equivalents will enable the reporting of achievement against each Australian Curriculum achievement standard at a range of achievement from minimal to excellent (as per word equivalents).
- National Education Agreement word equivalents negotiated by South Australia

A	Your child is demonstrating <b>excellent</b> achievement of what is expected at this year level *
B	Your child is demonstrating <b>good</b> achievement of what is expected at this year level
C	Your child is demonstrating <b>satisfactory</b> achievement of what is expected at this year level
D	Your child is demonstrating <b>partial</b> achievement of what is expected at this year level
E	Your child is demonstrating <b>minimal</b> achievement of what is expected at this year level

\* Please note a change in the word equivalent for 'A' from the previous version, which read 'Your child is demonstrating excellent achievement **beyond** what is expected at this year level'. This change enables the reporting of excellent achievement at the year level and is more consistent with the word equivalents used in other states and territories. **This word equivalent for 'A' should now also be used when reporting on SACSA.**

- All five levels (A – E) demonstrate some degree of achievement against the achievement standard (See Appendix 1a-d). The portfolios of annotated work samples on the Australian Curriculum website are intended to demonstrate satisfactory achievement in the relevant aspects of the achievement standard.

### Reporting in the first half of the year

- Australian Curriculum achievement standards describe the expected achievement for students as a result of being taught the curriculum for the entire year of schooling. Therefore, when student achievement is reported in mid-year, students will be making progress **towards** the expected achievement standard.
- In the middle of the year, teachers should make an on-balance judgement as to what level of achievement the student is demonstrating in relation to the achievement standard, taking into account the curriculum taught and assessed to that point in the year. Thus, students demonstrating **excellent** achievement at that point in time would be allocated an A grade, students demonstrating **satisfactory** achievement would be allocated a C grade.

## ***Reporting on general capabilities and cross curriculum priorities***

- The Australian Curriculum is composed of learning areas, general capabilities and cross curriculum priorities.
- There is currently no requirement for schools to report separately on general capabilities and cross curriculum priorities descriptively or using A – E grades.
- When reporting on Australian Curriculum learning areas, schools could include reference to the general capabilities and cross curriculum priorities within their learning area reporting.
- Alternatively, schools that currently provide descriptive reporting on a range of cross curriculum capabilities, including essential learnings, may choose to continue such reporting and to gradually align it with the general capabilities and cross curriculum priorities.
- Continuing work is being done by Teaching and Learning Services regarding how best to assess and report on students' development of the general capabilities and cross curriculum priorities.

## ***Descriptive reporting***

- Teachers use descriptive reporting to provide detailed information about students' engagement and achievement, about what they have learnt, what they need to learn next, and how the teacher, student and parent/carer can support these next steps to happen. This is done through descriptive information accompanying the A – E grades and also through the range of oral reporting which occurs between schools and parents/carers, including three-way conferences, phone contact and other meetings with parents/carers and students.

## Reporting Formats

### Recommended reporting formats

It has not been within the remit of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) to develop a national reporting system or recommended reporting formats. Teaching and Learning Services has worked collaboratively with the South Australian Primary Principals Association to develop a small number of reporting formats which DECD schools with R – 7 enrolments may choose to use or adapt. These will be available at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/teachingandlearning/pages/Teaching/](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/teachingandlearning/pages/Teaching/) before the end of term 1, 2012.

Similar consultation and collaboration will be undertaken with the South Australian Secondary Principals Association and with Area School leaders to determine recommended reporting formats for secondary years.

The development of a DECD electronic reporting system is under consideration.

### Reporting against Australian Curriculum and SACSA in the same reporting period

School reports should clearly indicate which learning areas are being assessed and reported on against the Australian Curriculum in 2012 (mathematics and science or mathematics, science, English and/or history), and that the other learning areas continue to be assessed and reported on against SACSA.

This could be done with a statement such as:

*Avon Park School has commenced using the Australian Curriculum in mathematics and science in 2012. Accordingly, your child's achievement in those learning areas is now being assessed and reported on against Australian Curriculum mathematics and science achievement standards. For the other learning areas, the SACSA Framework remains the reference point for your child's learning and achievement. Your child will begin learning Australian Curriculum English and history from ... and these achievement standards will be used for reporting on your child's performance from ...*

Learning Area	Curriculum/Standard	Comment	Grade
mathematics	Australian Curriculum Year 4 achievement standard		
science	Australian Curriculum Year 4 achievement standard		
English	SACSA Standard 2		

### Further information

Further information on Standards, assessment and reporting on Australian Curriculum is available from Ken Lountain, Program Manager, Standards, Assessment and Reporting, Phone: 8226 2825 and email: [ken.lountain@sa.gov.au](mailto:ken.lountain@sa.gov.au)  
Specific information in relation to reporting on students with disability is available from Jeanette McMullen, Project Manager, National Partnerships, Students with disability, Phone: 8226 9852 and email: [jeanette.mcmullan@sa.gov.au](mailto:jeanette.mcmullan@sa.gov.au)

## Appendix 1a: Resource for reporting against AC achievement standards using A-E grades or word equivalent

### (Example primary science)

For TEACHER use only – this is NOT intended for distribution to parents

Achievement standard Year 5 Science	In relation to the achievement standard, the student has demonstrated ...	Word Description	Grade
<p>By the end of Year 5, students classify substances according to their observable properties and behaviours. They explain everyday phenomena associated with the transfer of light. They describe the key features of our solar system. They analyse how the form of living things enables them to function in their environments. Students discuss how scientific developments have affected people's lives and how science knowledge develops from many people's contributions.</p> <p>Students follow instructions to pose questions for investigation, predict what might happen when variables are changed, and plan investigation methods. They use equipment in ways that are safe and improve the accuracy of their observations. Students construct tables and graphs to organise data and identify patterns. They use patterns in their data to suggest explanations and refer to data when they report findings. They describe ways to improve the fairness of their methods and communicate their ideas, methods and findings using a range of text types.</p>	<p>high level capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in new contexts</p> <p>deep understanding of concepts and key ideas and connections between them</p> <p>outstanding development of skills</p> <p>comprehensive knowledge of content</p>	Your child is demonstrating excellent achievement of what is expected at this year level	<b>A</b>
	<p>strong capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in new contexts</p> <p>some depth of understanding of concepts and key ideas</p> <p>high level development of skills</p> <p>thorough knowledge of content</p>	Your child is demonstrating good achievement of what is expected at this year level	<b>B</b>
	<p>capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in new contexts</p> <p>sound understanding of concepts and key ideas</p> <p>sound development of skills</p> <p>adequate knowledge of content</p>	Your child is demonstrating satisfactory achievement of what is expected at this year level	<b>C</b>
	<p>capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in familiar contexts</p> <p>some understanding of concepts and key ideas</p> <p>some development of skills</p> <p>basic knowledge of content</p>	Your child is demonstrating partial achievement of what is expected at this year level	<b>D</b>
	<p>beginning capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in a familiar context</p> <p>beginning understanding of concepts and key ideas</p> <p>initial development of skills</p> <p>limited knowledge of content</p>	Your child is demonstrating minimal achievement of what is expected at this year level	<b>E</b>

## Appendix 1b: Resource for reporting against AC achievement standards using A-E grades or word equivalent

### (Example primary mathematics)

For TEACHER use only – this is NOT intended for distribution to parents

Achievement standard Year 5 Mathematics	In relation to the achievement standard, the student has demonstrated	Word Description	Grade
<p>By the end of Year 5, students solve simple problems involving the four operations using a range of strategies. They check the reasonableness of answers using estimation and rounding. Students identify and describe factors and multiples. They explain plans for simple budgets. Students connect three-dimensional objects with their two-dimensional representations. They describe transformations of two-dimensional shapes and identify line and rotational symmetry. Students compare and interpret different data sets.</p> <p>Students order decimals and unit fractions and locate them on number lines. They add and subtract fractions with the same denominator. Students continue patterns by adding and subtracting fractions and decimals. They find unknown quantities in number sentences. They use appropriate units of measurement for length, area, volume, capacity and mass, and calculate perimeter and area of rectangles. They convert between 12 and 24 hour time. Students use a grid reference system to locate landmarks. They measure and construct different angles. Students list outcomes of chance experiments with equally likely outcomes and assign probabilities between 0 and 1. Students pose questions to gather data, and construct data displays appropriate for the data.</p>	<p>high level capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in new contexts</p> <p>deep understanding of concepts and key ideas and connections between them</p> <p>outstanding development of skills</p> <p>comprehensive knowledge of content</p>	Your child is demonstrating excellent achievement of what is expected at this year level	A
	<p>strong capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in new contexts</p> <p>some depth of understanding of concepts and key ideas</p> <p>high level development of skills</p> <p>thorough knowledge of content</p>	Your child is demonstrating good achievement of what is expected at this year level	B
	<p>capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in new contexts</p> <p>sound understanding of concepts and key ideas</p> <p>sound development of skills</p> <p>adequate knowledge of content</p>	Your child is demonstrating satisfactory achievement of what is expected at this year level	C
	<p>capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in familiar contexts</p> <p>some understanding of concepts and key ideas</p> <p>some development of skills</p> <p>basic knowledge of content</p>	Your child is demonstrating partial achievement of what is expected at this year level	D
	<p>beginning capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in a familiar context</p> <p>beginning understanding of concepts and key ideas</p> <p>initial development of skills</p> <p>limited knowledge of content</p>	Your child is demonstrating minimal achievement of what is expected at this year level	E

## Appendix 1c: Resource for reporting against AC achievement standards using A-E grades or word equivalent

### (Example secondary history)

For TEACHER use only – this is NOT intended for distribution to parents

Achievement Standard Year 8 History	In relation to the achievement standard, the student has demonstrated ...	Word Description	Grade
<p>By the end of Year 8, students recognise and explain patterns of change and continuity over time. They explain the causes and effects of events and developments. They identify the motives and actions of people at the time. Students explain the significance of individuals and groups and how they were influenced by the beliefs and values of their society. They describe different interpretations of the past.</p> <p>Students sequence events and developments within a chronological framework with reference to periods of time. When researching, students develop questions to frame an historical inquiry. They analyse, select and organise information from primary and secondary sources and use it as evidence to answer inquiry questions. Students identify and explain different points of view in sources. When interpreting sources, they identify their origin and purpose, and distinguish between fact and opinion. Students develop texts, particularly descriptions and explanations, incorporating analysis. In developing these texts, and organising and presenting their findings, they use historical terms and concepts, evidence identified in sources, and acknowledge their sources of information.</p>	<p>high level capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in new contexts</p> <p>deep understanding of concepts and key ideas and connections between them</p> <p>outstanding development of skills</p> <p>comprehensive knowledge of content</p>	<p>Your child is demonstrating excellent achievement of what is expected at this year level</p>	<b>A</b>
	<p>strong capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in new contexts</p> <p>some depth of understanding of concepts and key ideas</p> <p>high level development of skills</p> <p>thorough knowledge of content</p>	<p>Your child is demonstrating good achievement of what is expected at this year level</p>	<b>B</b>
	<p>capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in new contexts</p> <p>sound understanding of concepts and key ideas</p> <p>sound development of skills</p> <p>adequate knowledge of content</p>	<p>Your child is demonstrating satisfactory achievement of what is expected at this year level</p>	<b>C</b>
	<p>capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in familiar contexts</p> <p>some understanding of concepts and key ideas</p> <p>some development of skills</p> <p>basic knowledge of content</p>	<p>Your child is demonstrating partial achievement of what is expected at this year level</p>	<b>D</b>
	<p>beginning capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in a familiar context</p> <p>beginning understanding of concepts and key ideas</p> <p>initial development of skills</p> <p>limited knowledge of content</p>	<p>Your child is demonstrating minimal achievement of what is expected at this year level</p>	<b>E</b>

## Appendix 1d: Resource for reporting against AC achievement standards using A-E grades or word equivalent

### (Example secondary English)

For TEACHER use only – this is NOT intended for distribution to parents

Achievement Standard Year 8 English	In relation to the achievement standard, the student has demonstrated ...	Word Description	Grade
<p><b>Receptive modes (listening, reading and viewing)</b></p> <p>By the end of Year 8, students understand how the selection of text structures is influenced by the selection of language mode and how this varies for different purposes and audiences. Students explain how language features, images and vocabulary are used to represent different ideas and issues in texts. Students interpret texts, questioning the reliability of sources of ideas and information. They select evidence from the text to show how events, situations and people can be represented from different viewpoints. They listen for and identify different emphases in texts, using that understanding to elaborate upon discussions.</p> <p><b>Productive modes (speaking, writing and creating)</b></p> <p>Students understand how the selection of language features can be used for particular purposes and effects. They explain the effectiveness of language choices they use to influence the audience. Through combining ideas, images and language features from other texts, students show how ideas can be expressed in new ways. Students createtexts for different purposes, selecting language to influence audience response. They make presentations and contribute actively to class and group discussions, using language patterns for effect. When creating and editing texts to create specific effects, they take into account intended purposes and the needs and interests of audiences. They demonstrate understanding of grammar, select vocabulary for effect and use accurate spelling and punctuation.</p>	<p>high level capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in new contexts</p> <p>deep understanding of concepts and key ideas and connections between them</p> <p>outstanding development of skills</p> <p>comprehensive knowledge of content</p>	Your child is demonstrating excellent achievement of what is expected at this year level	<b>A</b>
	<p>strong capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in new contexts</p> <p>some depth of understanding of concepts and key ideas</p> <p>high level development of skills</p> <p>thorough knowledge of content</p>	Your child is demonstrating good achievement of what is expected at this year level	<b>B</b>
	<p>capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in new contexts</p> <p>sound understanding of concepts and key ideas</p> <p>sound development of skills</p> <p>adequate knowledge of content</p>	Your child is demonstrating satisfactory achievement of what is expected at this year level	<b>C</b>
	<p>capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in familiar contexts</p> <p>some understanding of concepts and key ideas</p> <p>some development of skills</p> <p>basic knowledge of content</p>	Your child is demonstrating partial achievement of what is expected at this year level	<b>D</b>
	<p>beginning capacity to apply knowledge, skills and understandings in a familiar context</p> <p>beginning understanding of concepts and key ideas</p> <p>initial development of skills</p> <p>limited knowledge of content</p>	Your child is demonstrating minimal achievement of what is expected at this year level	<b>E</b>