

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM IN VICTORIA

Produced by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA)

The Victorian government released the new Victorian Curriculum F-10 in September 2015. Government and Catholic schools in Victoria are required to use the achievement standards in the Victorian Curriculum to report student achievement. Independent sector schools can use the Victorian Curriculum to meet their regulatory and funding requirements to implement the Australian Curriculum.

The Victorian Curriculum includes all the key content set out in the eight learning areas of the Australian Curriculum. There are, however, some important ways in which the Victorian Curriculum differs from the Australian Curriculum.

1. The Victorian Curriculum includes eight learning areas and four capabilities. Teachers and schools are required to report student learning progress in each of the eight learning areas and four capabilities

LEARNING AREAS	CAPABILITIES
English	Critical and creative thinking
Mathematics	Personal and social
Science	Intercultural
Health and physical education	Ethical
Languages	
Humanities and social sciences (History, Geography, Civics and citizenship, Economics and business)	
The Arts	
Technologies (Design and Digital Technologies)	

2. The Victorian Curriculum is not structured according to nominal year levels that equate to particular school grades. Rather, the curriculum is structured as a learning continuum, that is, developmental levels that enable teachers to identify current levels of achievement and then plan to enable students to achieve expected levels. In this, the Victorian Curriculum design strongly supports the increased focus in Victorian schools on the concept of the development of personalised learning programs for all students, where the curriculum is planned in relation to the actual learning level of each student rather than their assumed level. The importance of this approach was recently highlighted in the Grattan Institute report, *Targeted Teaching*.¹
3. Four rather than seven capabilities are specified. The additional three general capabilities in the Australian Curriculum are Literacy, Numeracy and ICT. The Victorian Curriculum reflects a view that the core elements of these areas of learning are specified in the English, Mathematics and Digital Technologies curricula and teachers should be supported to assist students learning of literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum through appropriate teaching and learning resources, not additional or duplicated areas in the curriculum.

¹ <http://grattan.edu.au/report/targeted-teaching-how-better-use-of-data-can-improve-student-learning/>

4. Content in the four capabilities is more clearly specified in the Victorian Curriculum than in the Australian Curriculum, and achievement standards have been written to enable schools to report student learning in these areas. Such achievement standards are not included in the Australian Curriculum which means student learning in these areas of the curriculum cannot be assessed or reported.
5. The three cross-curriculum priorities defined in the Australian Curriculum (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures, Asia and Australia's place in Asia and Sustainability) are not represented in the Victorian Curriculum as separate, additional and distinct areas of learning. The curriculum design position that informs the Victorian Curriculum is that the content that every student should learn about these important issues is included in the core curriculum.
6. Learning for students with a learning disability, that is, the learning that occurs and is necessary to enable students to demonstrate learning at the first level of the school curriculum (characterised in the Victorian Curriculum as Levels A-D that are prior to the achievement standards F-10), is included as part of the curriculum rather than an option or additional resource. Such levels are not included for the eight learning areas in the Australian Curriculum.
7. The Victorian Curriculum includes Learning about World Views and Religions. While the Australian Curriculum makes references to religion (for example, "Australia as a secular and multi-faith society", or the role religion played in colonial expansion, or the role of religion in global conflicts), what students should learn about world views and religions is not specified in the Australian Curriculum. This content was developed for the Victorian Curriculum in consultation with key religious and secular stakeholders.
8. English and Mathematics in the Victorian Curriculum are, as is the case in the Australian Curriculum, structured by eleven levels F-10. All other learning areas in the Victorian Curriculum are structured by bands (either six or five), whereas in the Australian Curriculum Science and History are also structured by eleven levels. This is in order to provide schools with greater flexibility, especially in the primary years, in how they construct teaching and learning programs.
9. The digital codes used to list each content description are different in the Victorian Curriculum from the equivalent codes used to list each content description in the Australian Curriculum. This is because recoding was necessary when content descriptions were, for example, rewritten from levels to bands in History. Victorian schools and teachers will still have full access to the resources in Scootle to support implementation of the curriculum through a simple search function.