

**Rationale**

The formal study of Auslan contributes to the overall intellectual and social enrichment of both first language (L1) and second language (L2) learners by providing:

- opportunities for engagement with the Deaf community and insight into its rich cultural heritage
- opportunities to develop intercultural capabilities, understanding and respect for others, appreciation of diversity and openness to different perspectives and experiences.

This curriculum provides direction for an integrated, inclusive and meaningful approach to language education in Auslan for both first and second language learners.

**Rationale for first language learners**

This curriculum meets the need of young deaf people to formally learn their own language, and it recognises the significance of Auslan in the linguistic landscape of Australia. It provides deaf children, and potentially hearing children of deaf parents, with access to education in and about their first language, playing an important part in the development of a strong sense of self-esteem and identity and contributing in crucial ways to overall learning and achievements. It enables learners to develop a wider recognition and understanding of their language, culture and identity, thus contributing to their psychological wellbeing as well as to their academic development.

**Rationale for second language learners**

Many deaf children today are educated in inclusive school settings, thus raising the profile of Auslan in the wider community. The presence of deaf students and interpreting practitioners in schools creates a need and offers opportunities for a wider range of peer-group communication partners, and not all interactions can or should be mediated by an interpreting practitioner. One of the key reasons for introducing Auslan in schools, therefore, is for humanistic purposes: to increase opportunities for interaction between deaf children and their hearing or hard of hearing peers, and to reduce barriers to communication. Through learning Auslan, L2 learners gain access to additional knowledge and understanding of the nature and purpose of human languages and of the use of a different language modality. In addition, from a vocational perspective, greater participation of deaf people in society in a diverse range of occupations and breadth of community spheres creates possibilities for future career options and personal fulfilment for L2 learners. In general educational terms, learning Auslan as a second language enables students to engage meaningfully with a different language and culture and to enhance understanding of their own language and culture. Such intercultural learning is essential in the increasingly diverse and changing contexts in which they live and will work.

**For all learners**

- broadens students' understanding that each language is an integrated, evolving system for the framing and communication of meaning; and encourages understanding of the role of language as an expression of cultural and personal identity and a shaper of perspectives
- contributes to the overall curriculum intent by providing distinctive real-life and intellectual opportunities for students to expand their engagement with the wider world and to reflect on the cultural and social assumptions that underpin their own world view and language use. Such awareness of different perspectives is an integral part of effective communication
- contributes to the development of critical thinking and the ability to adapt to change and equips students with learning strategies and study habits that are the foundation not only for lifelong learning but also for any subsequent language learning.

The opportunity to learn Auslan formally is becoming available in an increasing number of Australian schools, and the aim of this national curriculum is to make this learning opportunity accessible in a systematic manner to students around Australia. Language learning is life enhancing. This national curriculum offers all Australian students the opportunity to benefit from the social, cultural, intellectual and emotional development that will result from learning the unique and sophisticated visual-gestural language of the Australian Deaf community.

**Year 3 and 4 Achievement Standard**

By the end of Year 4, students communicate with each other, the teaching team and others about aspects of their personal worlds, daily routines, preferences and pastimes at school and in the Deaf community. They show aspectual marking on verbs to indicate frequency when communicating about daily routines, for example pro3 tap-shoulder-repeatedly, and use modifications to show manner when describing actions and activities. They initiate and maintain interaction by using discourse markers such as fillers, checking and clarifying their understanding. They contribute to class activities and shared learning tasks that involve transacting, planning and problem-solving, for example, by giving and following directions, LIBRARY IN DS: turn-right AUSLAN DICTIONARY DS: fat-book SHELF++ THAT. PLEASE BRING-me, expressing preferences, asking for clarification and using persuasive language PLEASE POPCORN GIVE-me++ BEG? They use appropriate cultural protocols in different situations, for example, to gain the attention of a group, such as flashing lights, waving, multiple tapping or foot stomping in some contexts, waiting for eye contact or pauses in signing and walking between signers without interrupting them. They paraphrase information from a variety of Auslan texts and sources used in school and in the Deaf community. They recall specific points of information and recount main points in correct sequence EVERY MONDAY POSS1 CLASS LIST-BUOY-1 READING LIST-BUOY-2 MATHS LIST-BUOY-3 SWIMMING. They plan, rehearse and deliver short presentations about topics such as cultural activities or events in the Deaf community, with the support of materials such as photos, props, timelines or maps. They take into account the purpose and intended audience of a text. They view imaginative texts such as stories, poems and theatre performances, identifying how signers represent their own or others' actions through constructed action (CA). They create simple imaginative texts of their own, using CA to represent their own or other people's actions, thoughts, feelings or attitudes. They create signed class translations, for example, of repeated lines in familiar children's stories, and simple bilingual texts for the classroom or school community, such as posters or bilingual picture dictionaries. Students identify places that are important to the Deaf community and describe how such places evoke a sense of belonging and pride. They recognise that the single most unifying factor of the community is the use of Auslan; and they describe ways in which Auslan and associated communicative and cultural behaviours are similar to or different from wider community spoken languages and forms of cultural expression.

Students demonstrate how the formational elements of handshapes and their orientation, movement, location and non-manual features can be arranged in signs, identifying, for example, whether a sign is body anchored or not, or is single, double or two-handed. They know the functions of different pointing signs, such as pronouns, determiners or locatives; and can identify examples of signers using a location to refer to a previous referent. They use metalanguage to talk about Auslan, using terms such as constructed action, depicting signs, indicating verbs, non-manual features, pointing signs and clauses. They recognise variation in how Auslan is used, for example by recognising regional dialects and differences in signing space. They identify different ways that Deaf community members communicate with each other and with members of the wider hearing community, for example, face to face, via technology, social media and interpreters. They know that culture is closely related to language and to identity and that it involves visible and invisible elements.

**Aims**

The Australian Curriculum: Languages – Auslan aims to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills to enable students to:

- communicate in Auslan
- understand language, culture and learning and their relationship, and thereby develop an intercultural capability in communication
- understand themselves as communicators
- develop a knowledge and an understanding of the diversity of Deaf experience and the nature of identity.

These aims are interrelated and provide the basis for two organising strands for learning Auslan: Communicating and Understanding.

**Key Ideas**

**Language and culture**

The interrelationship of language, culture and learning provides the foundation for the Australian Curriculum: Languages.

In the languages learning area the focus is on both language and culture, as students learn to communicate meaningfully across linguistic and cultural systems, and different contexts. This process involves reflection and analysis, as students move between the new language being learnt and their own existing language(s). It is a reciprocal and dynamic process which develops language use within intercultural dimensions of learning experiences. It is not a 'one plus one' relationship between two languages and cultures, where each language and culture stay separate and self-contained. Comparison and referencing between (at least) two languages and cultures build understanding of how languages 'work', how they relate to each other and how language and culture shape and reflect experience; that is, the experience of language using and language learning. The experience of being in two worlds at once involves noticing, questioning and developing awareness of how language and culture shape identity.

**Structure**

Learner background and time-on-task are two major variables that influence language learning and they provide the basis for the structure of the Australian Curriculum: Languages. These variables are addressed through the specification of content and the description of achievement standards according to pathways and learning sequences respectively.

**Pathways**

In the Australian Curriculum: Languages, pathways for second language learners, background language learners and first language learners have been developed as appropriate to cater for the dominant group(s) of students learning each specific language within the current Australian context. For the majority of languages, one curriculum pathway has been developed for Years F–10, catering for the dominant cohort of learners for that language in the current Australian context. For Chinese, pathways have been developed for three learner groups: first language learners, background language learners and second language learners.

The Framework for Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages includes three learner pathways:

- first language learner pathway
- revival language learner pathway
- second language learner pathway.

**Sequences of learning**

The design of the Australian Curriculum: Languages takes account of different entry points into language learning across Foundation – Year 10, which reflects current practice in languages.

For the second language learner pathway and the background language learner pathway, there are two learning sequences:

- Foundation–Year 10 sequence
- Years 7–10 (Year 7 Entry) sequence.

For the first language learner pathway, there is one learning sequence:

- Years 7–10 (Year 7 Entry) sequence.

Content and achievement standards are described initially in a three-year band for Foundation–Year 2 followed by two-year bands of learning: Years 3–4; Years 5–6, Years 7–8 and Years 9–10.

The Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages is written in the bands Foundation – Year 2, Years 3–6 and Years 7–10. In the absence of pedagogical evidence across the country for all these languages, the broader band distinctions provide maximum local flexibility in curriculum development.

**Content structure**

The content of the Australian Curriculum: Languages is organised through two interrelated strands which realise the three aims. The two strands are:

- Communicating: using language for communicative purposes in interpreting, creating and exchanging meaning
- Understanding: analysing language and culture as a resource for interpreting and creating meaning.

The strands reflect three important aspects of language learning:

- 1) communication
- 2) analysis of aspects of language and culture
- 3) reflection that involves
  - reflection on the experience of communicating
  - reflection on comparative dimensions of the languages available in students' repertoires (for example, the first language in relation to second language and self in relation to others).

**Strands and sub-strands**

A set of sub-strands has been identified within each strand, which reflects dimensions of language use and the related content to be taught and learned. The strands and sub-strands do not operate in isolation but are integrated in relation to language use for different purposes in different contexts. The relative contribution of each sub-strand differs for described languages, pathways and bands of learning. The sub-strands are further differentiated according to a set of 'threads' that support the internal organisation of content in each sub-strand. These 'threads' are designed to capture (1) range and variety in the scope of learning and (2) a means for expressing the progression of content across the learning sequences.

### Year 3 and 4 Level Description

#### The nature of the learners

Learners at this level are developing their cognitive and social capabilities and their communicative repertoire in the language, as well as becoming increasingly aware of their social worlds and their membership of various groups, including the Deaf community. They are more independent and less egocentric, enjoying both competitive and cooperative activities. Learners are able to conceptualise and reason, and have better memory and focus. They benefit from varied, activity-based learning that builds on their interests and capabilities and makes connections with other areas of learning.

#### Auslan learning and use

Learners in this band engage in a range of activities involving watching and responding to signed texts. They build proficiency through the provision of rich language input from a variety of sources where grammatical forms and language features are purposefully integrated. They develop more elaborate conversational and interactional skills, including initiating and sustaining conversations, reflecting on and responding to others' contributions, making appropriate responses and adjustments, and engaging in debate and discussion.

Learners at this stage express ideas and feelings related to their personal worlds, give and follow directions, negotiate with and persuade others, paraphrase content of texts, form factual questions to request information, check and clarify understanding and participate in play and shared tasks, including planning and rehearsing presentations or performances.

They watch and create short texts on topics relevant to their interests and enjoyment, such as family, pets, favourite activities or food. They continue to build vocabulary that relates to a wider range of domains, such as areas of the curriculum that involve some specialised language use. The language used in routine activities is re-used and reinforced from lesson to lesson in different situations, making connections between what has been learnt and what is to be learnt.

#### Contexts of interaction

Learning occurs largely through interaction with peers and the teaching team in the language classroom and the school environment, with some sharing of their learning at home. Additional enrichment and authentication of learning experience is provided through interactions with elders and other signers in the Deaf community. Access to wider communities of Auslan signers and resources also occurs through virtual and digital technology.

#### Texts and resources

Learners interact with a growing range of live and digital signed texts. They engage primarily with a variety of teacher-generated materials, stories and games, and with materials produced for young signers, such as storytelling apps. They have access to materials produced for signing children from the BANZSL family of languages as a means of broadening their cultural knowledge and awareness of the diversity of language experience.

#### Features of Auslan use

Learners recognise and apply elements of Auslan grammar, such as marking manner or aspect on verbs. They use increasingly sophisticated means of showing constructed action, and of using space to track a character or location through a text for purposes of cohesion. They develop metalanguage for talking about language, understanding and using terms such as fully- or partly-lexical signs, entity, handling or SASS depicting signs, constructed action, and adverbs and clauses.

Learners talk about differences and similarities they notice between Auslan and English, and also between cultural behaviours and ways of communicating. A balance between language knowledge and language use is established by integrating focused attention to grammar, vocabulary building, and non-verbal and cultural dimensions of language use with communicative and purposeful learning activity.

Learning Auslan in school contributes to the process of making sense of the learners' worlds, which characterises this stage of development. Students are increasingly aware that various signed languages are used in Deaf communities across the world. As they engage consciously with differences between languages and cultures, they make comparisons and consider differences and possibilities in ways of communicating in different languages. This leads them to explore concepts of identity and difference, to think about cultural and linguistic diversity, and about what it means to speak more than one language in the contemporary world.

#### Level of support

While learners work more independently at this level, ongoing support is incorporated into tasks, and the process of learning is supported by systematic feedback and review. Form-focused activities, particularly those increasing metalinguistic awareness, build grammatical knowledge and support the development of accuracy and control in Auslan. Opportunities to use this knowledge in meaningful activities build communicative skills, confidence and fluency. Tasks are carefully scaffolded: teachers provide models and examples; introduce language, concepts and resources needed to manage and complete learning activities; make time for experimentation and polishing rehearsed texts; and provide support for self-monitoring and reflection. The language students see is authentic with some modification. Discussion supports learning and develops learners' conceptual frame for talking about systems of language and culture.

#### The role of English

Auslan is the principal medium of instruction in L1 pathway classrooms. English plays a complementary role; for example, it is used when translating, creating bilingual/multilingual texts or comparing and contrasting languages. Discussion in Auslan supports learning, develops conceptual frames and builds metalanguage. The process of moving between languages consolidates the already established sense of what it means to be bilingual or multilingual and provides opportunities for reflection on the experience of living interculturally in intersecting language communities. Auslan is learnt in parallel with English literacy and, for some children, spoken English. The learning of Auslan supports and enriches deaf children's learning of English, and vice versa.

### Year 3 and 4 Content Descriptions

#### Communicating

##### Socialising

Communicate with each other and with teachers about aspects of their personal worlds, daily routines, preferences and pastimes.

[Key concepts: self, routines, preferences, pastimes; Key processes: expressing, describing, comparing, recounting, persuading]

Contribute to class activities and shared learning tasks that involve transacting, planning and problem-solving, using collaborative language.

[Key concepts: collaboration, roles, responsibilities, memory; Key processes: negotiating, collaborating, planning, transacting]

Adjusting and responding to language and behaviour for various purposes in the classroom and wider school community, for example by asking and responding to questions, and indicating understanding.

[Key concepts: respect, behaviour, protocol, group work; Key processes: clarifying, responding, asking and answering questions, encouraging]

##### Informing

Collect, classify and paraphrase information from a variety of Auslan texts and sources used in school and in the Deaf community.

[Key concepts: information, facts, vocabulary, findings; Key processes: recalling, paraphrasing, interviewing, surveying, recording, presenting]

Conveying information about aspects of school, culture and community, using knowledge of the intended audience to modify content.

[Key concepts: school, cultural events, games; Key processes: conveying information, explaining, planning, rehearsing]

##### Creating

Engage with imaginative texts such as stories, games, poems or cartoons, to demonstrate comprehension and express enjoyment.

[ Key concepts: story, emotion, expression, humour; Key processes: identifying, expressing emotion, re-enacting, experimenting, shadowing]

Create or adapt imaginative texts and expressive performances that feature favourite characters, amusing experiences or special effects.

[Key concepts: emotion, humour, performance, character; Key processes: creating, performing, adapting, dancing]

##### Translating

Translate high-frequency signs/words and expressions in simple texts such as repeated lines in a story or captions, noticing similarities, differences and instances of equivalence.

[Key concepts: literal, difference, meaning, equivalence; Key processes: comparing, matching, identifying, translating]

Create bilingual versions of different types of texts, such as captioned recordings of Auslan phrases or classroom resources such as posters and digital displays.

[Key concepts: bilingualism, meaning; Key processes: creating, identifying, categorising]

##### Identity

Consider how individual and community relationships combine to create family and social networks, influence social behaviours and contribute to a sense of belonging and identity.

[Key concepts: identity, relationship, belonging, place, behaviour, ways of interacting; Key processes: exploring, sharing, describing explaining]

##### Reflecting

Describe some ways in which Auslan and associated communicative behaviours are similar to or different from wider community spoken languages and forms of cultural expression.

[Key concepts: language, culture, values, similarity, difference, communication; Key processes: noticing, comparing, describing, explaining, questioning, reflecting]

#### Understanding

##### Systems of Language

Identify and demonstrate how the formational elements of handshape and its orientation, movement, location and non-manual features can be arranged in signs which may be iconic, and explore ways of recording Auslan.

[Key concepts: orientation, hand dominance, iconicity, non-manual features, recording language; Key processes: identifying, recognising, comparing, distinguishing, comparing, describing, decoding]

Observe that signers can include different information, including gestural overlays, within a single sign, and identify examples of signers using space grammatically through points, depicting signs and constructed action.

[Key concepts: space, function of points, indicating verbs, depicting signs, constructed action; Key processes: recognising, identifying, discussing, comparing]

Understand that clauses can be enriched through the use of adjectives and adverbs (when, where, how), often produced with non-manual features.

[Key concepts: verb types, adverbs, clause structure, questions; Key processes: recognising, exploring]

Understand how signers make different language choices in different types of texts depending on the purpose and intended audience, and explore how space is used in Auslan for purposes of textual cohesion.

[Key concepts: textual features, similarity, difference, cohesion; Key processes: identifying, examining, comparing]

##### Language variation and change

Recognise that there is variation in Auslan use, for example in different locations or physical environments.

[Key concepts: variation, adaptation; Key processes: identifying, recognising, exploring, considering]

##### Language Awareness

Develop awareness of the social and cultural nature and context of Auslan and other sign languages, of their different modes of expression and of the related issue of language vitality.

[Key concepts: communication, culture, language vitality; Key processes: identifying, describing, recognising, understanding]

##### Role of language and culture

Explore connections between identity and cultural values and beliefs and the expression of these connections in Auslan.

[Key concepts: language, culture, symbol; Key processes: exploring, understanding, noticing, recognising, questioning, making connections]