

**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.

**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.

**Year 5 and 6 Achievement Standard**

By the end of Year 6, students use Auslan to interact with people for a range of different purposes. They use descriptive and expressive language to share and compare experiences, ideas and opinions, such as THEATRE GOOD, LONG -really, LONG-really. They participate in class discussions and show interest and respect for others, for example by using active watching behaviours, signing clearly, pausing for others to respond, asking pertinent questions, making constructive comments, rephrasing, repeating and linking their own contributions. Students use non-manual features (NMFs) such as eye gaze to gain, hold or finish a turn when communicating in pairs or groups. They provide context for a new participant joining a conversation, PRO1 TALK-OVER MATH TEACHER. They use action-oriented language to make shared arrangements, organise events and complete transactions, negotiating roles, responsibilities and priorities and taking into account the views of others. Students locate, summarise and compare information from a range of sources. They present information on selected issues to inform, alert or persuade people, for example, by creating announcements to inform about an emergency or about a clean-up the environment appeal, or instructions for a computer game. They use a range of connectives to create textual cohesion. They view and compare expressions of Deaf experience through different visual art forms, such as painting, photography or sculpture. They view and respond to different types of creative and imaginative texts, discussing ideas, characters and themes; and they identify how a signer has referred to the same referent in different ways, for example with a lexical noun then with a depicting sign (DS). They create and perform their own short imaginative texts based on a stimulus, concept or theme using space to track a character or location throughout a text. They translate a variety of familiar school and community texts from Auslan to English and vice versa, identifying which words/signs/phrases require interpretation or explanation. They create bilingual texts and resources for their own language learning and to support interactions with non-signing people. They describe their connections with the Deaf community and how these contribute to their sense of identity. They reflect on differences between how signed language and spoken language users may be perceived, for example in relation to different protocols when joining interactions, taking turns, using names, or passing between people who are communicating with each other.

Students describe a sign's form in terms of all the elements and how they are put together, including types of NMFs. They recognise when a signer has established a location in space in a text and describe how this was done, for example through the use of points, non-body-anchored signs or fingerspelled words. They distinguish between the three types of DSs and what they represent and how they are used in clauses. They identify and describe how constructed action (CA) can be shown in different ways, for example, through a change in eye gaze, body, or head orientation, and by matching facial expressions and reference to another character. They identify how signers use space to track a referent through a text, for example by pointing back to an established location to refer to a noun or by modifying indicating verbs. They understand different ways that English words are borrowed into Auslan and identify connections between Auslan and other signed languages, for example, BSL, ISL and ASL. They recognise the diversity of Auslan users in the community, including people who are deaf, hard of hearing and hearing people such as CODAs or interpreters. Students recognise how Auslan has been transmitted across generations and describe different ways it has been documented and recorded. Students reflect on the ways culture is differently interpreted by others, for example by identifying how stereotypes about deaf and hearing people influence perceptions.

**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).

**Year 5 and 6 Level Description**

**The nature of the learners**

This is a key transitional phase of learning. Learners communicate more confidently, are more self-directed, and self-reference in relation to wider contexts. Response to experience is more analytical and critical, allowing for a reflective dimension to language learning and to referencing cultural frameworks. The curriculum ensures that learning experiences and activities are flexible enough to cater for learner variables, while being appropriate for learners' general cognitive and social levels.

**Auslan learning and use**

At upper primary level, learners use Auslan for a widening range of purposes, such as paraphrasing or summarising key ideas; conversing with visitors in formal and informal contexts, contributing their own ideas, questions and opinions; discussing cause and effect; providing instructions for a group activity; planning and conducting an interview; and contributing to discussions by clarifying and critiquing ideas and developing supporting arguments.

At this level, there is focused attention on language structures and systems, and comparisons are made between Auslan and English. Learners' communicative capabilities are stronger and more elaborate. They draw on a wider range of grammatical and lexical resources to compose and comprehend more complex language. With support, they build increasing cohesion and complexity into their signing in both content and expression. They watch a range of varied input from different sources and build more elaborate conversational and interactional skills. This includes initiating and sustaining conversations, using turn-taking protocols, 'reading' language for cultural and contextual meaning, reflecting on and responding to others' contributions, making appropriate responses and adjustments, and engaging in debate and discussion.

Shared learning activities develop social, cognitive and language skills and provide a context for purposeful language experience and experimentation. Individual and group oral presentation and performance skills are developed through researching and organising information, structuring and resourcing presentation of content, and selecting appropriate language to engage a particular audience. Learners use ICT to support their learning in increasingly independent and intentional ways, exchanging resources and information with each other and with young people of the same age in other signing communities, accessing media resources, maintaining vlogs and other web pages, and participating in social networks.

**Contexts of interaction**

Learners interact in Auslan with each other and the teaching team and with members of their families who can sign, and the Deaf community. They have access to Deaf visitors and cultural resources in wider contexts and communities through the use of ICT and through the media. Language development and use are incorporated into collaborative and interactive learning experiences, games and activities.

**Texts and resources**

Learners engage with a growing range of signers and digital signed texts. They also engage with resources prepared by their teacher, including games, performances, presentations and language exercises. They may have additional access to BANZSL resources created for the Australian, New Zealand or British Deaf communities, such as children's television programs, websites, music or video clips. They also make use of texts from other signed languages that make extensive use of the 'visual vernacular'.

**Features of Auslan use**

Learners draw on grammatical and lexical resources to produce and understand more complex language. With support, they build increasing cohesion and complexity into their language production in both content and expression. Learners expand their understanding of Auslan grammatical forms and features, including mastering the range of grammatical NMFs and gaining full control of depicting signs. They increase their pragmatic skills, such as using eye gaze to gain, hold or finish a turn; making constructive comments to keep a conversation flowing; and sharing information and providing context to new participants to a conversation.

They build metalanguage to talk about aspects of language such as grammar, for example, identifying types of verbs in Auslan in terms of how they use space to indicate referents, as well as recognising the types of depiction available in Auslan. They begin learning how signers put these forms of depiction and enacting together into composite utterances. Discussion, reflection and explanation ensure the continued development of learners' knowledge base and metalinguistic and intercultural capabilities.

Understanding of the relationship between language, culture and identity is developed through guided investigation of how language features and expressions carry specific cultural meaning; through critical analysis of cultural stereotypes, attitudes and perspectives; and through exploration of issues related to personal and community identities. Learners take account of the variability of language use and practice in relation to various factors. They reference themselves in relation to similar variables, reflecting on the relationship between language, culture, identity and intercultural experience through the lens of their own bicultural experiences.

**Level of support**

While learners are becoming more autonomous and independent at the upper primary years, ongoing support is still incorporated into task activity, including explicit instruction, structured modelling and scaffolding, and provision of appropriate stimulus materials. Additional systematic feedback and review support the interactive process of learning. Learning experiences incorporate implicit and explicit form-focused language learning activities and examples of texts and tasks. Learners are supported to use electronic and print reference resources, such as word banks, dictionaries and translating tools, and are encouraged to adopt a critical approach to resource selection.

**The role of English**

Auslan is the primary language for classroom routines, discussions, reflections, interactions and language learning tasks, and for explanation of content drawn from other learning areas. English is used for metalinguistic analyses and comparisons, and within the 'Translation' sub-strand. English may also be used for researching cultural issues where relevant sources or materials are not available in Auslan.

**Year 5 and 6 Content Descriptions**

Year 5 and 6 Content Descriptions		Understanding
<b>Communicating</b>		
<b>Socialising</b> Interact with people for different purposes, using descriptive and expressive language to give opinions, talk about themselves and show interest in others. [Key concepts: experience, opinion, values, ideas; Key processes: comparing, socialising, discussing, summarising, identifying]  Collaborate with peers to plan and conduct shared events or activities such as performances, presentations, demonstrations or transactions. [Key concepts: negotiation, perspective, design; Key processes: planning, suggesting, organising, presenting]  Contribute to discussions and shared learning activities by asking and responding to questions to clarify or indicate comprehension, managing interactions and monitoring and evaluating their learning. [Key concepts: discussion, conversation, participation; Key processes: supporting, managing, clarifying, reflecting]	<p><b>Systems of Language</b> Describe the elements of sign production, including non-manual features, and explore the processes of annotating Auslan with multimedia software and/or glossing or transcribing signed texts on paper. [Key concepts: types of iconicity, annotation, transcription; Key processes: identifying, recognising, annotating, describing, understanding]</p> <p>Identify different types of verbs based on their ability to integrate space into the sign, and recognise types of depiction available to a signer, namely, entity, handling and SASS depicting signs and constructed action. [Key concepts: establishing a spatial location, types of depicting signs, function of constructed action; Key processes: identifying, distinguishing]</p> <p>Understand that the starting point of a clause gives prominence to the message, that clauses can be linked equally or unequally with conjunctions and connectives, and that signers can show as well as tell about an event to provide more detail. [Key concepts: gestural overlays, clause conjunction, variable sign order; Key processes: recognising, distinguishing]</p> <p>Identify structures, language features and cohesive devices used in different types of texts, recognising that language choices reflect purpose, context and audience. [Key concepts: referent, cohesion, space; Key processes: identifying, noticing]</p> <p><b>Language variation and change</b> Explore variation in terms of the impact of other languages on Auslan across contexts and over time. [Key concepts: influence, language borrowing, style shifts; Key processes: noticing, recognising, explaining]</p> <p><b>Language awareness</b> Explore the current status and profile of Auslan and of the Deaf community in contemporary Australian society, considering issues such as language transmission, usage and documentation. [Key concepts: diversity, representation, language transmission, documentation; Key processes: describing, discussing, investigating, representing]</p> <p><b>Role of language and culture</b> Reflect on how communities' ways of using language are shaped by and reflect cultural values and beliefs, and how these may be differently interpreted by users of other languages. [Key concepts: cultural expression, transmission, values, beliefs; Key processes: observing, making connections, discussing, investigating]</p>	
<b>Informing</b> Identify, summarise and compare information obtained from different types of Auslan texts or from their own data collection. [Key concepts: informative text, topic, data, analysis; Key processes: interviewing, surveying, collating, analysing, summarising, presenting]  Present information to describe, explain, persuade or report on different experiences or activities in ways likely to engage the intended audience. [Key concepts: report, audience, intention, technique; Key processes: instructing, informing, persuading, reporting]		<p><b>Creating</b> Engage with different types of creative and imaginative texts by identifying important elements, discussing ideas, characters and themes and making connections with their own ideas and experience. [Key concepts: emotion, manner, visual expression, theatre conventions; Key processes: comparing, responding, expressing, creating]  Create live or filmed performances that engage specific audiences and present imagined experiences, people or places. [Key concepts: suspense, humour, dramatic structure, stimulus; Key processes: creating, performing, narrating, reinterpreting, improvising]</p> <p><b>Translating</b> Translate a variety of familiar school and community texts from Auslan to English and vice versa, identifying which words or phrases may not readily correspond across the two languages. [Key concepts: equivalence, meaning, culture-specific concepts; Key processes: identifying, interpreting, translating, determining, predicting, creating, comparing, explaining]  Create their own bilingual texts and learning resources to use themselves or to share with others, such as Auslan-English dictionaries, posts to websites, digital newsletters or school performances. [Key concepts: equivalence, bilingualism; Key processes: composing, creating]</p> <p><b>Identity</b> Consider the influence of the Deaf community on identity development, focusing on language, social systems and sense of space and place. [Key concepts: identity, relationship, community, place, space, story, social mores, history, Deafhood, Deaf gain; Key processes: identifying, describing, investigating, discussing, explaining]</p> <p><b>Reflecting</b> Reflect on how different language and cultural backgrounds and experiences influence perceptions of Auslan and of the Deaf community and also of the hearing community. [Key concepts: influence, perspective, self-reflection; Key processes: composing, comparing sharing, monitoring, identifying, analysing, explaining, reflecting]</p>