Rationale

Through learning languages, students acquire:

- communication skills in the language being learnt
- an intercultural capability, and an understanding of the role of language and culture in communication
- a capability for reflection on language use and language learning.

Language learning provides the opportunity for students to engage with the linguistic and cultural diversity of the world and its peoples, to reflect on their understanding of experience in various aspects of social life, and on their own participation and ways of being in the world.

Learning languages broadens students' horizons in relation to the personal, social, cultural and employment opportunities that an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world presents. The interdependence of countries and communities means people in all spheres of life are required to negotiate experiences and meanings across languages and cultures. Despite its status as a world language, a capability in English only is no longer sufficient. A bilingual or plurilingual capability is the norm in most parts of the world.

Learning languages:

- extends the capability to communicate and extends literacy repertoires
- strengthens understanding of the nature of language, of culture, and of the processes of communication
- develops intercultural capability
- develops understanding of and respect for diversity and difference, and an openness to different experiences and perspectives
- develops understanding of how culture shapes worldviews and extends learners' understanding of themselves, their own heritage, values, culture and identity
- strengthens intellectual, analytical and reflective capabilities, and enhances creative and critical thinking.

Learning languages also contributes to strengthening the community's social, economic and international development capabilities. Language capabilities represent linguistic and cultural resources through which the community can engage socially, culturally and economically, in domains which include business, trade, science, law, education, tourism, diplomacy, international relations, health and communications.

Learning Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages meets the needs and rights of young people to learn their own languages and recognises their significance in the language ecology of Australia. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, learning their own languages is crucial to overall learning and achievements, to developing a sense of identity and recognition and understanding of language, culture, Country and Place. For all students, learning Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages provides a distinctive means of understanding the country in which they live, including the relationship between land, the environment and people. The ongoing and necessary reclamation and revitalisation of these languages also contribute to reconciliation.

Year 7 and 8 Achievement Standard

By the end of Year 8, students use spoken and written Chinese to sustain interactions in a range of social and personal contexts. They exchange ideas and opinions, for example, 你要去看电影吗？；我们可以六月份一起去. They summarise the main points of information about known content from a range of spoken and print sources (for example, 电视节目，podcast, 电话留言，广告，老师推荐的网站，书籍，图书馆目录，游记), and convey the relevant information in a range of texts. Students respond to and create simple imaginative and informative texts. Sentences generally contain two or more ideas connected by cohesive devices (for example, 不但…而且…；因为…所以…), as well as time expressions (for example, 先…再…), and tense markers such as 了、完 to sequence events and ideas. Students make comparisons (for example, 比；跟…一样), and provide explanations or reasons for opinions or decisions, using phrases that order and link their ideas. They use reported speech to refer to the ideas of others, for example, 他们认为. They speak with attention to pronunciation, tone and phrasing, using intonation and pitch to add emotion or emphasis to their message. They demonstrate intercultural understanding by varying their language use for different audiences and purposes.

Students describe the distinctive spoken and written language systems of Chinese using metalanguage. They know that character components can contribute to both sound and meaning of words and they understand how they can be combined to make different words, for example, 中国，城，中国城. They identify features of text types such as letters, emails, descriptions and narratives. Students identify how information is structured in Chinese texts, and understand the importance of cultural and contextual cues to correct interpretation of meaning. They explain how features of Chinese culture impact on communication practices, and reflect on their own interactions with Chinese-speaking people.

Aims

The Australian Curriculum: Languages aims to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills to ensure students:

- communicate in the target language
- understand language, culture, and learning and their relationship, and thereby develop an intercultural capability in communication
- understand themselves as communicators.

These three aims are interrelated and provide the basis for the two organising strands: Communicating and Understanding. The three aims are common to all languages

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 7 and 8 Level Description

The nature of the learners
These years represent a transition to secondary school and students in this pathway are continuing to study Chinese bringing with them a capability to communicate, with some assistance, about their immediate world and China.

Chinese language learning and use
The systems of writing and speaking in Chinese are distinct. Because of the role of character learning and its impact on reading and writing, learners can accomplish a higher active use of spoken language than written language. As a result, engagement with Chinese language is primarily through speaking and listening. Students use Chinese for self-expression, to access new information and to share their knowledge and experiences with others. Pinyin remains an important tool for learning the sound of new words, associating sounds with characters, and creating digital texts in characters.

Contexts of interaction
Students actively use Chinese in a range of everyday contexts for purposes such as socialising with peers, transacting and getting things done, sharing information and engaging in performance with a range of known participants, including native speakers and peers.

Texts and resources
Students explore a range of written texts, developing strategies to interpret meaning where not all characters are known. They read, respond to and create digital texts, including blogs, biographies and opinion pieces, using a variety of technologies and software.

Features of Chinese language use
Chinese is the language of instruction and interaction, and is used in more elaborate ways as students extend their knowledge of the grammatical system and its use through spoken and written communication. Students experiment with language, exploring how cultural meanings are expressed. They analyse how messages are conveyed across languages, and apply their skills in mediating between Chinese and English in different contexts and situations. Classroom discussions focus on exploring and extending their range of contexts and audiences as they develop their personal communication skills.

Level of support
Students are supported to develop increasing autonomy as language learners and users, to self-monitor, and to adjust language in response to their experience in diverse contexts.

The role of English
English is used as appropriate to allow for explanation and discussion on issues associated with analysis of language, reflection on experiences, and comparisons across languages and cultures.

Year 7 and 8 Content Descriptions

Communicating | | **Understanding**

Socialising
Initiate and sustain interactions with peers and familiar adults to plan and arrange activities or social events in the context of the school or local community, and vary spoken language in response to the needs and demands of other participants.
[Key concepts: event, celebration, experience; Key processes: transacting, negotiating, suggesting, requesting, explaining]

Correspond with peers and other familiar participants to plan activities, and compare opinions on and attitudes towards different cultures.
[Key concepts: relationship, experience, community; Key processes: sharing perspectives, exchanging, corresponding]

Informing
Analyse and summarise relevant information obtained from a range of spoken sources and convey this information to known audiences through a range of texts.
[Key concepts: fact/fiction, representation, perspective, choice; Key processes: summarising, identifying, comparing, sequencing]

Locate, classify and organise relevant information, including analysing data in simple diagrams, tables and graphs, and re-present this information for known audiences.
[Key concepts: lifestyle, change, trends, place; Key processes: summarising, comparing, contrasting]

Creating
Engage with imaginative texts, observing how characters, emotions and attitudes are portrayed, express opinions about these aspects of an imagined experience and apply this knowledge in their own performances and texts.
[Key concept: emotion; Key processes: expressing, responding, performing]

Create written imaginative texts to describe experiences involving imagined people and places.
[Key concepts: imagination, creativity, emotion, love, hate; Key processes: expressing, responding]

Translating
Translate texts for different audiences varying the language to explain key points for these different audiences.
[Key concepts: equivalence, meaning; Key processes: translating, experimenting, comparing]

Create short bilingual texts on topics of personal interest and on key content from other learning areas and provide subtitles or commentary to assist meaning.
[Key concepts: bilingualism, identity; Key processes: translating, interpreting]

Reflecting
Reflect on the cultural significance of how different groups and members of groups name themselves and are represented by others.
[Key concepts: identity, group, name; Key processes: describing, considering, reflecting, developing]

Systems of Language
Examine differences in sounds and tones, and patterns of sound flow in speech.

Interpret texts by inferring meaning from common character components or position of components, and analyse how reliable this method is in translating.

Identify and apply features of Chinese grammar and sentence structure to organise and sequence ideas in oral and written texts.

Analyse how authors adjust features of different text types for different purposes and audiences.

Language variation and change
Investigate the extent and dynamic nature of Chinese language use locally and globally.

Explain how the Chinese language adapts to social and technological changes.

Role of language and culture
Compare and reflect on how cultural contexts influence the way language is used within and across communities.