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 5 and 6 Achievement Standard

By the end of Year 6, students use formulaic and modelled language in classroom interactions to carry out transactions and to share or convey information about daily routines, activities and events, using time expressions such as まい日、ときどき. They ask and respond to questions in familiar contexts using complete sentences and appropriate pronunciation, rhythm and intonation. They ask for clarification and assistance, negotiate turn-taking and follow instructions. They extend their answers by using conjunctions such as そして、それから. They show concern for and interest in others by making enquiries such as だいじょうぶ？, and apologise and express thanks using appropriate gestures. They read and write all hiragana, including voiced sounds, long vowel sounds, double consonants and blends, and high-frequency kanji, for example, 犬いぬ, 小さい、雨あめ. Students locate specific information and some supporting details in a range of spoken, written and multimodal texts on familiar topics. They express reactions to imaginative texts, such as by describing qualities of characters, for example, やさしい　人　です。. They create connected texts of a few sentences, such as descriptions, dialogues or skits. They structure sentences using particles, for example, へ、で、を、がand prepositions, for example, の上うえに, and apply the rules of punctuation when writing. They describe and recount events and experiences in time, for example, adjective です。noun です/でした。 and present/past/negative verb forms, for example, のみます、たべます、見みました、いきません. They use counter classifiers in response to questions such as いくら　です　か。なんびき？なんこ？. Students translate familiar texts, recognising formulaic expressions and culturally specific textual features and language use. They comment on similarities and differences in ways of expressing values such as politeness, consideration and respect in Japanese compared to other languages and cultures.

Students understand and use the hiragana chart to pronounce contracted and blended sounds and exceptions to phonetic rules, such as を、へ、は, and です. They understand and apply the rules and phonetic changes related to counter classifiers, such as さんぜんえん、いっこ、はっぴき. They apply their knowledge of stroke order to form characters. They give examples of ways in which languages both change over time and are influenced by other languages and cultures. They identify words from other languages used in Japanese, such as パソコン、メール、パスタ, and how the pronunciation, form and meaning of borrowed words can change when used in Japanese. Students identify behaviours and values associated with Japanese society and incorporate these into their own language use, such as ways of deflecting praise, for example, じょうず　です　ね。いいえ。.

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 5 and 6 Level Description

The nature of the learners

At this level, students are widening their social networks, experiences and communication repertoires in both their first language and Japanese. They continue to need guidance and participate in structured, collaborative tasks that both recycle and extend language. Students are gaining greater independence and becoming more conscious of their peers and social context. They are gaining a greater awareness of the world around them. Learners are noticing similarities and differences between Japanese language and culture and their own.

Japanese language learning and use

Learners use Japanese with peers and the teacher for a widening range of purposes: asking and responding to questions, exchanging information, expressing ideas and feelings, performing, responding to learning experiences, and interacting with Japanese language resources. They are developing greater fluency and accuracy in communication. As they draw on a growing range of vocabulary resources and grammatical structures, their pronunciation, intonation and phrasing improve. They begin to use Japanese more spontaneously when interacting with one another, and use an increasing range of body language and gestures. Shared tasks provide a context for purposeful language experience and experimentation. Focused attention on language structures, literacy skills development and exploration of cultural elements of communication are conducted at least in part in Japanese. Learners use digital media to support their learning in increasingly independent ways, such as exchanging resources and information with other Japanese speakers. In doing this, they may access music and media resources.

Contexts of interaction

Learners use Japanese with one another and with the teacher for a growing range of purposes. They may have some access to other Japanese speakers and cultural experiences in wider contexts and communities through the use of information and communications technology (ICT).

Texts and resources

Learners engage with a growing range of oral, written and multimodal texts, including published texts such as modified folk stories, songs and computer games, as well as teacher-generated resources such as language games, exercises and presentations. In addition, learners have some access to Japanese language and culture through texts created for young Japanese people, such as stories, music clips, anime/manga and video clips.

Features of Japanese language use

Learners notice the relationship between stress, pacing and meaning, and use appropriate intonation patterns to exclaim, make a statement or ask a question. They continue to acquire a wider range of vocabulary and to build grammatical and textual knowledge. They use verbs, nouns and adjectives, a variety of particles, prepositions, counters and conjunctions. They differentiate between animate and inanimate objects and apply their knowledge of こそあど in context. They develop metalanguage to describe patterns, rules and variations in language structures. As they use Japanese to interact in different situations, they develop understanding of how language and culture influence each other, and reflect on their own ways of communicating and using language. Learners begin to experience and reflect on the challenges and opportunities involved in moving between languages and different ways of making meaning.

Level of support

While learners work more independently at this level, ongoing support is incorporated into tasks and activities. Systematic feedback and review assist the interactive process of learning. Support includes provision of models, stimulus materials, scaffolded opportunities for reflection, and resources such as word and character charts, vocabulary lists, dictionaries and electronic reference materials. Learning tasks and activities take account of both learners' current level of Japanese capability and their more general cognitive and social levels of development.

The role of English

While the use of Japanese in the classroom increases at this level, the use of English for discussion, reflection and explanation ensures the continued development of learners' knowledge base and intercultural capability.

Year 5 and 6 Content Descriptions

Communicating

Understanding

Socialising

Interact with peers and the teacher to describe aspects of daily life such as routines and pastimes, or celebrations and special days; to express preferences; and to show interest in and respect for others.
[Key concepts: communication, correspondence, exchange, interests; Key processes: interacting, communicating, greeting, describing]

Collaborate with peers to plan and conduct shared events or activities such as teaching and working with a buddy class, organising a shared event, or rehearsing and presenting a school performance.
[Key concepts: collaboration, performance, transaction; Key processes: planning, organising, introducing, explaining, transacting, budgeting]

Participate in everyday classroom activities and routines such as asking how to say or write something, asking for help or repetition, praising or complimenting one another, thanking, apologising and expressing preferences.
[Key concepts: roles, interaction, communication; Key processes: reading, naming, describing, requesting]

Informing

Gather, classify and compare information from a range of sources related to concepts from other learning areas.
[Key concepts: interests, behaviours, social interactions, cultural expression; Key processes: researching, compiling, presenting, identifying]

Convey information on specific topics using formats such as oral or digital presentations, displays, diagrams, timelines and guided descriptions.
[Key concepts: content, profile, audience, format; Key processes: presenting, profiling, referencing]

Creating

Listen to, read and view different imaginative texts such as anime, folk stories and manga, describe and give opinions about characters and events, and identify cultural elements.
[Key concepts: character, plot, context, values, emotion; Key processes: analysing, discussing, responding, expressing, comparing]

Create and present or perform imaginative texts for a variety of purposes and audiences.
[Key concepts: performance, audience, rhythm, digital text; Key processes: creating, performing, designing]

Translating

Explain aspects of spoken, written and non-verbal communication in Japanese interactions that require interpretation and carry cultural meaning.
[Key concepts: meaning, culture, interpretation, equivalence; Key processes: explaining, interpreting, demonstrating, experimenting, reflecting]

Create bilingual texts and learning resources such as displays, websites, posters, picture books, games, word banks and menus.
[Key concepts: bilingualism, learning resources, translation; Key processes: classifying, glossing, annotating, composing]

Reflecting

Reflect on the experience of learning and using Japanese, and identify how language reflects cultural practices and norms.
[Key concepts: language, culture, similarity and difference, values; Key processes: identifying, analysing, comparing, reflecting]

Discuss the experience of speaking and interacting in a different language, what they understand by 'identity', and whether learning Japanese has any effect on their sense of self.
[Key concepts: identity, communication, stereotype, protocol; Key processes: reflecting, identifying, exploring]

Systems of Language

Engage with authentic spoken language, recognising how words blend and understanding the relationship between sounds, words and meaning.
[Key concepts: phonemic awareness, spelling, rhythm; Key processes: identifying, discriminating, pronouncing, spelling]

Recognise some single and whole word katakana and develop the ability to use hiragana and kanji in a single text.
[Key concepts: scripts, characters, stroke order, punctuation; Key processes: reading, writing, recognising]

Recognise the systematic nature of Japanese grammatical rules and apply these to generate new language for a range of purposes.
[Key concepts: metalanguage, grammar, counters; Key processes: identifying, explaining, discriminating, applying]

Recognise the use of formulaic expressions and textual features in familiar texts such as emails, letters, postcards or telephone conversations.
[Key concepts: textual features, context, variation; Key processes: recognising, identifying, explaining, reflecting]

Language variation and change

Understand that different ways of using Japanese language shape and reflect different relationships, such as deciding to be formal or informal.
[Key concepts: register, context, tenor; Key processes: observing, reflecting, comparing]

Recognise that the Japanese language is both influenced by in turn influences other languages and cultures.
[Key concepts: language contact, word borrowing, globalisation, technology, change; Key processes: identifying, classifying, reflecting]

Role of language and culture

Make connections between cultural practices and values and language use, such as formulaic expressions, and consider how these affect intercultural communication.
[Key concepts: language, culture, expression, values, perspectives; Key processes: noticing, identifying, comparing, reflecting]