

# CURRICULUM COUNCIL

## STRATEGIC PLAN THROUGH TO 2004

### Initiatives 2003/2004

#### The context for planning

This strategic plan for the Curriculum Council takes account of government policy, and complements strategic directions of other organisations with close links to the Curriculum Council. Critical environmental factors are:

#### National and international trends

- Outcomes focused accountability and benchmarking are national and international trends that are impacting on such matters as curriculum provision, assessment, accreditation and certification.

#### State trends

- The implementation of the *Curriculum Framework*, which sets out what students need to know, understand, value and be able to do, represents a marked change from current practice in schools.
- There are changes in the higher education sector, which together with changes in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector, are likely to produce some more broadly based selection criteria.
- The implementation of the National Training Framework and the New Apprenticeships scheme will require significant policy and procedural change for recognition of VET in schools.
- A major review of post compulsory education is completed and a final report *Our Youth, Our Future* has been presented to Government and the recommendations will be implemented through to 2009.

#### Organisational issues

- The Curriculum Council Act 1997 sets out the functions and powers of the Curriculum Council. The Agency has been structured to take account of the kindergarten through to year 12 responsibilities.
- Public service agencies are required to comply with all relevant Acts, regulations, rules and instructions and relevant public sector standards, codes of ethics and codes of conduct as may from time to time affect the operations of the agency.
- The Curriculum Council will be amalgamating with the Department of Education and Training. This process started in 2003 and is continuing.

## MISSION

To set curriculum policy directions for Kindergarten to Year 12 schooling in Western Australia.

This is identified in the budget State Government's papers as two **outcomes**:

- **continuous development of student learning and curriculum for Western Australian schools; and**
- **an equitable student assessment system to ensure confidence is maintained in Western Australian education standards**

## PURPOSE

The purposes of the Curriculum Council as set out in the *Objects of the Curriculum Council Act 1997* are to:

- provide for the development and implementation of a Curriculum Framework for schooling which, taking account of the needs of students, sets out the knowledge, understandings, skills, values and attitudes that students are expected to acquire;
- provide for the development and accreditation of courses of study for post-compulsory schooling; and
- provide for the assessment and certification of student achievement.

In the State Government's budget papers these objects have been expressed as the following outputs in accordance with Treasury's output Based Management budget process:

### **Output 1: Curriculum Implementation and Maintenance**

*Output description: The development and support provided for implementation of the curriculum framework for schooling which takes into account the needs of students, sets out the knowledge, understandings, skills, values and attitudes that students are expected to acquire.*

### **Output 2: Course development and Approval**

*Output description: course development facilitates the adjustment of courses to ensure they are relevant to the continuously changing requirements of students learning needs.*

### **Output 3: Student Assessment and Certification**

*To ensure that valid and credible information on student achievement of schooling in their post compulsory courses of study is provided to facilitate their post school choices and to inform the community.*

## PRINCIPLES

Student learning is at the heart of everything we do. The Curriculum policy directions we set will be underpinned by our commitment to the following principles:

- **an encompassing view of the Curriculum (K-12);**  
All of the experiences provided in students' learning environments should work together in a seamless way from kindergarten to year 12 and should promote meaning, purpose and enjoyment to student's lives.
- **a recognition of the significance of learning outcomes;**  
Learning outcomes represent an important means of describing the knowledge, understandings, skills, values and attitudes that students are expected to acquire as a result of their schooling.
- **fair and explicit standards;**  
Students and teachers need to know the criteria and standards by which achievement is to be judged. Fairness means that students should have equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement and should not be disadvantaged on irrelevant grounds.
- **inclusivity;**  
Students should be provided with the widest and most empowering range of knowledge and skills. This means recognising and accommodating the different starting points and previous experiences of individual students and groups of students, and valuing and including the understandings, knowledge and ways of knowing and being of all groups.
- **an agreed set of values;**  
People's values influence their behaviour and give meaning and purpose to their lives. While there is a range of values positions in our pluralist society, there is also an agreed core of these values which will underpin the products and processes of the Curriculum Council.
- **consultative and transparent decision making processes; and**  
Policy directions are more likely to be readily endorsed when they are perceived to be fair and equitable. The decisions of the Curriculum Council and the information base and consultative processes by which these decisions are made will be open and publicly available.
- **collaboration with stakeholders.**  
A central function and obligation of the Curriculum Council is to have regard to the capacity of education providers to respond to Council decisions and to take account of the views of post-school education providers and the wider community. It will, therefore, put in place structures and processes to facilitate wide and continuous collaboration with stakeholders.

## VALUES

Our actions are guided by the core shared values which are promoted and endorsed through the *Curriculum Framework*. These are summarised as follows:

- **a commitment to the pursuit of knowledge and achievement of potential**, resulting in a disposition towards striving to understand the world and how best one can make a contribution to it, and the pursuit of excellence in all fields of experience and endeavour;
- **self acceptance and respect of self**, resulting in attitudes and actions which develop each person's unique potential - physical, emotional, aesthetic, spiritual, intellectual, moral and social;
- **respect and concern for others and their rights**, resulting in sensitivity to and concern for the well-being of others, respect for others and a search for constructive ways of managing conflict;
- **social and civic responsibility**, resulting in a commitment to exploring and promoting the common good, meeting individual needs in ways which do not infringe the rights of others, participating in democratic processes, social justice and cultural diversity; and
- **environmental responsibility**, resulting in a respect and concern for the natural and cultural environments and a commitment to regenerative and sustainable resource use.

For our organisation this means:

- **Pursuit of excellence**, by taking pride in our work, striving for excellence, and being receptive to new ideas for improving our everyday procedures and services.
- **Honesty and Integrity**, by behaving honestly and with loyalty to the Curriculum Council. Being accountable and responsible for our actions and behaviour, recognising the need for ethical discernment and truthfulness.
- **Respect**, by acting professionally, courteously and with sensitivity and concern for the well-being of our colleagues and clients. Consistently treating others fairly and impartially, respecting privacy and observing appropriate confidentiality and valuing the cultural diversity of others.
- **Teamwork**, by encouraging, motivating and supporting each other to meet our potential, and being mindful of the impact our decisions and our behaviour have on others. Recognising and appreciating the contribution of our colleagues in building a harmonious working environment.
- **Efficiency and Effectiveness**, by using Curriculum Council resources responsibly and delivering services in a professional and timely manner.

## OUTCOMES

The Curriculum Council has identified the following major outcomes as flowing from its legislative responsibilities and the trends and constraints identified in the context.

**1 The agreed kindergarten to year 12 *Curriculum Framework* is continually developed.**

Output 1

**2 The *Curriculum Framework* is implemented for students from kindergarten to year 12.**

Output 1 & 2

**3 Priorities are identified and relevant support documentation is developed in a timely manner to facilitate the implementation of the *Curriculum Framework*.**

Output 1 & 2

**4 Professional development plans and guidelines to support implementation of the *Curriculum Framework* are developed.**

Output 1

**5 Post-compulsory courses of study are developed and accredited to meet identified student needs.**

Output 2

**6 Assessments of student achievement are valid and credible in the post compulsory years.**

Output 3

**7 Accurate information on student achievement is provided to inform the community and to facilitate post school choice.**

Output 3

**8 The Council is recognised as a consultative and collaborative forum/organisation.**

All outputs

**9 The Secretariat is structured, resourced and managed so that the Council is able to fulfil its Kindergarten through to Year 12 statutory functions and responsibilities in an efficient and effective manner.**

All outputs

<b>1      The agreed kindergarten to year 12 <i>Curriculum Framework</i> is continually developed.</b>
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The success of the Curriculum Council in achieving this outcome will be demonstrated by the extent to which:

- students, teachers, schools and systems/sectors participate in the ongoing development and consultation on the *Curriculum Framework*;
- the *Curriculum Framework* is supported and endorsed by teachers, schools, systems, sectors and the community;
- schools and systems/sectors continue to agree that the *Curriculum Framework* meets the needs of all students;
- stakeholders participate in a cycle of review and reflection on the *Curriculum Framework*; and
- national and international trends in education are monitored and adopted, where appropriate, for use within Western Australia.

#### **2003/04 Initiatives**

- Ongoing publication and distribution of the *Curriculum Framework* to new and returning teachers.
- Continuing a cycle of review and reflection to inform future revision of the *Curriculum Framework*.
- Monitoring of the *Framework* is supported by knowledge of local, national and international research and trends in education.
- A business plan to provide for the ongoing availability of the *Curriculum Framework* and to protect intellectual property rights is established.

## **2 The Curriculum Framework is implemented for students from kindergarten to year 12.**

The success of the Curriculum Council in achieving this outcome will be demonstrated by the extent to which teachers and schools:

- plan and teach to provide opportunities for students achieve the outcomes in the *Curriculum Framework*;
- promote and endorse the core shared values in their planning, teaching and monitoring;
- are flexible and adapt curricula to meet the particular needs of all students while focusing on the students' achievement of outcomes;
- make judgments about students' progressive achievements in relation to the outcomes;
- provide learning opportunities which assist students to see the relationship between the knowledge, skills and values within the *Curriculum Framework*; and
- work collaboratively to ensure a cross-curriculum perspective and to achieve integration, breadth and balance in the curriculum.

### **2003/04 Initiatives**

- Ongoing implementation of a communication strategy (see also Outcome 8).
- Implementation arrangements and reporting requirements in relation to the implementation of the *Curriculum Framework* communicated to schools
- Identification and negotiation of.
- Guidelines and process for seeking exemption from the *Curriculum Framework* communicated to schools
- Publication of professional development plans and guidelines and support documentation for schools (see also Outcomes 3 and 4).
- Funding for professional development is secured for school sector/systems to facilitate implementation of the *Framework* (see also Outcome 4).
- Further refinement of the Curriculum Framework Progress Maps – Working Version in accordance with the negotiated timeline (see also Curriculum Guides Outcome 3).
- Facilitation of collaboration between sector/systems to develop agreed standards in relation to *Curriculum Framework* outcomes.

**3 Priorities are identified and relevant support documentation is developed in a timely manner to facilitate the implementation of the *Curriculum Framework*.**

The success of the Curriculum Council in achieving this outcome will be demonstrated by the extent to which:

- support documents are published and available to schools at the time when they are needed;
- within the agreed criteria, support documents meet the needs of teachers from Kindergarten to Year 12; and
- priorities for future development of support documents are identified through needs analyses.

**2003/04 Initiatives**

- Continuous review and analysis of support document needs to establish cross curriculum and learning area priorities and to underpin development of curriculum guides in each phase of development and ongoing development of K-12 Curriculum Framework Progress Maps.
- Maintain processes and timelines for producing agreed support documents (see also Progress maps Outcome 2).
- Collaborate with sector/systems and schools to develop in accordance with negotiated timeline Curriculum Guides, which assist teachers to create effective outcomes-focused teaching and learning programs.
- Publication of support documents in electronic form including Curriculum Framework Progress Maps – Working Version and continuing to upload information on to the *Curriculum Framework Support Materials* website, in particular further advice for outcomes in the *Understanding the Outcome* section.
- Working with school sector/systems to promote use of the *Making Progress* material in teacher professional development.

#### **4 Professional development plans and guidelines to support implementation of the *Curriculum Framework* are developed.**

The success of the Curriculum Council in achieving this outcome will be demonstrated by the extent to which:

- the professional development needs have been accurately identified;
- the professional development plan and guidelines inform the professional development provided by school systems and sectors;
- systems, sectors and schools are confident that teachers have the knowledge and skills to plan and teach in accordance with the *Curriculum Framework*; and
- professional development is planned and facilitated for teachers of post-compulsory subjects in cooperation with schools, school sector/systems and subject associations.

#### **2003/04 Initiatives**

- Publication of agreed professional development plans and guidelines to support implementation of the *Curriculum Framework*.
- Development of professional development guidelines for support documents, progress maps and curriculum guides.
- Ongoing review of the disbursement and accountability arrangements for any jointly acquired funds for professional development.
- Facilitation of collaborative processes between the systems and sectors to share ideas and devise common approaches to professional development where appropriate.
- Development (as required by systems and sectors) of professional development materials to assist in the delivery of professional development related to the *Curriculum Framework*.
- Consultation with and the provision of information sessions with other interested stakeholders such as pre-service educators.

<b>5 Post-compulsory courses of study are developed and accredited to meet identified student needs.</b>
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The success of the Curriculum Council in achieving this outcome will be demonstrated by the extent to which:

- existing subjects continue to serve the needs of students and schools; minor revisions of subjects are carried out in a timely and efficient manner;
- requirements for new courses of study are identified;
- new courses of study are developed, piloted, accredited and implemented and superceded subjects withdrawn;
- courses of study accredited by the Council articulate with post-school destinations of students; and
- national and international trends are monitored and adapted, where appropriate, for use within Western Australia.

#### **2003/04 Initiatives**

- Review published and distributed syllabus manuals in both print and electronic forms
- Continue implementing processes and timelines for producing courses of study that implement the directions of the *Our Youth, Our Future* Report that are underpinned by research and take account of national and international trends.
- Identify and develop priority courses of study Report (including manageable number of outcomes, scales of achievement, unit structure).
- Negotiate the integration of VET competencies in appropriate courses of study.
- Establish methodology for piloting and testing course of study to ensure that they meet the needs of students.
- Processes for accreditation of Courses of Study are developed.

<b>6 Assessments of student achievement are valid and credible in the post compulsory years.</b>
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The success of the Curriculum Council in achieving this outcome will be demonstrated by the extent to which:

- student grades are perceived to be in accordance with agreed assessment guidelines and have high credibility within educational sectors, employer groups and the community;
- consensus meetings are regarded as an appropriate and effective method of facilitating comparability across the State;
- school visits by Curriculum Council staff are regarded by principals and other staff as making a significant contribution to grade reliability;
- school and external assessment are complementary;
- the system of statistical moderation of numerical school assessments for the purposes of tertiary entrance is seen to be reliable and fair;
- student choice of subjects appropriate to their needs is facilitated by placing different subjects on a comparable scale; and
- competency-based assessment meets National Training Framework standards.

#### **2003/04 Initiatives**

- Review and refine current moderation procedures.
- Investigate alternative moderation strategies in the context of philosophies underpinning the *Curriculum Framework* and *Our Youth, Our Future*.
- Implement quality assurance procedures supporting VET in schools joint policy statement.
- Establish an assessment and measurement expert group and develop assessment tasks for Courses of Study.
- Undertake research and consultation on the identification of background speakers and determination of eligibility of second language speakers.
- Undertake research to validate levels 6,7 & 8 on progress maps and establish comparable scales of achievement (see also Progress Maps Outcome 2).
- Implement and communicate new standardised distribution in the marks adjustment process
- Review the 2002 TEE papers in terms of inclusivity.
- Continue to explore the feasibility of on-line marking for some subjects.

<b>7 Accurate information on student achievement is provided to inform the community and to facilitate post school choice.</b>
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The success of the Curriculum Council in achieving this outcome will be demonstrated by the extent to which:

- tertiary entrance examinations are conducted in a publicly credible manner which requires that:
  - high quality examinations are set according to published specifications using best practice in test construction;
  - examinations are set, printed, distributed and conducted with all necessary security;
  - examination conditions are provided which allow all students to fairly demonstrate their educational achievements; and
  - examination marking is carried out in a manner which is fair to all candidates;
- student results which are transmitted to TISC, TAFE and other appropriate organisations are accurate and delivered in accordance with agreed timelines;
- student results are valid and reliable indicators for post school destinations and are linked to standards related to *Curriculum Framework* outcomes;
- a fair mechanism for demonstrating achievement of English language competence is provided;
- students, schools, employers, universities and the Vocational Education and Training Sector are satisfied that awards for and certificates of student achievement issued by the Council are meaningful and credible;
- certificates (includes WACE and VET certificates) and statements of results including VET units of competency are correctly distributed to the students by the published dates; and
- stakeholders are provided with timely and accurate statistical information.

### **2003/04 Initiatives**

- Analysis of the relationship between external examination and school assessment and of the implications of changing technology for the conduct of external examinations.
- Develop agreed standards for English Language Competence.
- Improve the electronic collection of registrations, enrolments and results.
- Establish minimum requirements for WACE in the context of the philosophies underpinning the *Our Youth, Our Future* report and *Curriculum Framework* outcomes (progress maps).
- Review of certification arrangements for overseas students studying Curriculum Council subjects.
- Explore the feasibility of reporting school statistics and other data in electronic format rather than paper printouts.
- Work with TISC to re-design the [www.year12results.wa.edu.au](http://www.year12results.wa.edu.au) website so that a common password can be used to access Year 12 results.
- Commence the development of the student database to incorporate data collection for the new courses of study.
- Review aspects of the Awards and Exhibition policy relating to any inconsistency that may exist with the changed eligibility requirements for Subject Exhibitions with the General Exhibitions.

## **8 The Council is recognised as a consultative and collaborative forum/organisation.**

The success of the Curriculum Council in achieving this outcome will be demonstrated by the extent to which:

- there is consultation and collaboration with the education and training sectors and members of the community in relation to the performance of its functions as appropriate;
- it provides a forum for consultation and collaboration on matters relating to admission to university and vocational education and training;
- it advises and confers with employers, organisations of employees and employers, with respect to recognition of courses of study assessed by the Council or within secondary schools;
- it advises and confers with employers, organisations of employees and employers with respect to levels and methods of assessment and methods of certification; and
- structures for collaborative planning in relation to the *Curriculum Framework*, professional development and the development of support documentation are provided.

### **2003/04 Initiatives**

- Ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of Curriculum Council products and services.
- Establishment and ongoing review of committees, working groups and reference groups to consult on the development and implementation of all Curriculum Council products.
- Work collaboratively with stakeholders to implement the agreed directions in the *Our Youth, Our Future Report*.
- Work collaboratively with the Aboriginal Education and Training Council to ensure that the recommendations from the consultative process with Aboriginal people are incorporated into the implementation of the *Our Youth, Our Future Report*
- Ongoing consultation on the Council committee structure
- Ongoing communication about the role, development and consultative nature of Curriculum Council processes, projects and decisions, (ie quality newsletter).
- Work collaboratively with schools and other providers to develop the most efficient (sustainable) and effective means of communicating operational details for post-compulsory education training (including Circular and other dispatches).

**9 The Agency is structured, resourced and managed so that the Council is able to fulfil its kindergarten through to year 12 statutory functions and responsibilities in the most efficient and effective manner.**

The success of the Curriculum Council in achieving this outcome will be demonstrated by the extent to which:

- the Council is able to fulfil its statutory functions and responsibilities efficiently and effectively as a consequence of the assistance, expertise and operations of the Secretariat;
- the Secretariat provides assistance and support to enable effective meetings of the Council and its committees;
- the Secretariat implements Council's policies and priorities in accordance with agreed strategies and timelines;
- the principles of the Public Sector Management Act 1994 and the Public Sector Standards Commission's code of ethics and human resource guidelines are met;
- the State Government's policies and priorities for improving management of the public sector are implemented;
- the State Government's financial reform initiatives for public sector agencies are implemented in accordance with the agreed strategies and timelines; and
- the requirements of the Financial Administration and Audit Act 1985 and Treasurer's instructions are met and other relevant requirements reported on.

**2003/04 Initiatives:**

- Continuous review of the roles and training needs of each officer and section in relation to the functions of the Curriculum Council.
- Consultation with staff to identify effective and efficient ways of organising their work to achieve Curriculum Council outcomes.
- Implementation and review of a performance development system across the agency.
- Preparation of internal audit charter.
- Implementation of a Contact Management System.
- Refine the Curriculum Council web site with a view to making it more interactive.
- Development and implementation of a Records Management Plan in accordance with State Records Act.
- Implementation of the Machinery of Government recommendations.
- Expansion of data system to include VET in Schools and *Curriculum Framework* information.
- Upgrade Financial Management Information System.
- Review and development of the Curriculum Council plan that meets requirements of the Disabilities Act.

**FUNCTIONS OF THE CURRICULUM COUNCIL  
(CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK)**

Part 3 Section 9 of the Curriculum Council Act 1997 lists the following functions of the Curriculum Council in relation to the *Curriculum Framework*.

9. (1) It is a function of the Council to -
- (a) control, direct and coordinate the development of a *Curriculum Framework* for schooling;
  - (b) approve a *Curriculum Framework* for schooling;
  - (c) evaluate, review and revise as it thinks fit the *Curriculum Framework*;
  - (d) determine and coordinate arrangements to be used or followed for the implementation of the *Curriculum Framework*;
  - (e) identify priorities and develop, distribute and evaluate curriculum documentation and other materials which facilitate implementation of the *Curriculum Framework*;
  - (f) develop professional development plans necessary to support implementation of the *Curriculum Framework*;
  - (g) establish, in accordance with the approved *Curriculum Framework*, the minimum requirements for graduation from secondary school and for the issue of a certificate of student achievement; and
  - (h) establish, determine the criteria for, and administer, exhibitions and awards to be granted in recognition of student achievement.

## **FUNCTIONS OF THE CURRICULUM COUNCIL (POST-COMPULSORY SCHOOLING)**

Part 3 Section 12 of the Curriculum Council Act 1997 lists the following functions of the Curriculum Council in relation to post-compulsory schooling.

**12.** It is a function of the Council to -

- (a) establish guidelines for the development and accreditation of courses of study in which students undertaking post-compulsory schooling may be assessed for purposes of certification;
- (b) accredit and evaluate courses of study prepared by the Council, or prepared in accordance with guidelines approved by the Council;
- (c) accredit, for the purposes of certification of students undertaking post-compulsory schooling, partially completed secondary courses of study taken outside the State;
- (d) after consultation with such persons and bodies having functions relating to secondary education, vocational education and training, and university education as the Council thinks fit, establish and carry into effect procedures for -
  - (i) assessment of achievement of students undertaking post-compulsory schooling, and the proper conduct of that assessment, including school and external assessment for the purposes of certification; and
  - (ii) ensuring the comparability of assessments of student achievement;
- (e) after consultation with such persons and bodies having functions relating to secondary education, vocational education and training and university education as the Council thinks fit, determine the courses of study to be assessed within secondary schools providers or by the Council for the purpose of entrance to a university or as a prerequisite for vocational education and training;
- (f) consult with universities, and persons and bodies having functions relating to vocational education and training, with respect to requirements and procedures for admission to university and vocational education and training, and review from time to time the effects of those requirements and procedures; and
- (g) provide information to universities, and persons and bodies having functions relating to vocational education and training, on the achievement of students seeking admission to university or to vocational education and training.

## **FUNCTIONS OF THE CURRICULUM COUNCIL (OBLIGATIONS)**

Parts 3 Section 16 of the Curriculum Council Act 1997 lists the following procedures in the performance of its functions.

- 16.** (1) In performing its functions the Council is to have regard to the capacity, financial and otherwise, of education providers to respond to decisions of the Council and to the impact of the decisions on education providers.
- (2) In performing its functions the Council may act alone or in conjunction with any person, firm, department of the Public Service, government agency or instrumentality, or government of any other place.
- (3) The Council is to -
  - (a) consult and collaborate with such persons and bodies having functions relating to education and training and members of the community as the Council thinks fit in relation to the performance of its functions;
  - (b) provide a forum for consultation and collaboration between persons and bodies having functions relating to secondary education and vocational education and training and universities on matters relating to admission to university and vocational education and training;
  - (c) advise and confer with employers, organisations of employees and employers, and such other persons and bodies as the Council thinks fit, with respect to recognition by those persons and bodies of courses of study assessed by the Council or within secondary schools, and advise those persons and bodies with respect to levels and methods of assessment and methods of certification; and
  - (d) provide structures for cooperation and consultation in relation to professional development and the development of support documentation.

