

Senior secondary

English



Which subjects are available in the senior secondary Australian Curriculum: English?

The Australian Curriculum: English offers four senior secondary subjects:

English is a study of literature, media and language in which students critically and creatively engage with a variety of texts in all language modes. *English* extends students' language, literature and literacy skills for a range of purposes and audiences. They learn how to analyse different interpretations of texts and how to use language modes to achieve specific effects.

Essential English is designed to develop students' literacy skills in practical ways. Students examine the purpose and language of a range of texts, expanding their ability to understand, evaluate and communicate effectively in and for a range of contexts. *Essential English* develops and refines students' language, literature and literacy skills to enable them to interact confidently and effectively with others in everyday, community, social and applied learning contexts.

Literature engages students in intensive, detailed study of literary texts. *Literature* deepens students' understanding of conventions common to different types of composition and refines their understanding of the effects of language through shared experience of texts and the creative process. Learning to appreciate literary texts, and to create their own, enriches students' understanding of human experiences and the capacity for language to communicate those experiences.

English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) is designed to develop students' knowledge, understanding and skills in Standard Australian English (SAE). Explicit teaching of the structure, linguistic features and socio-linguistic and socio-cultural aspects of SAE will benefit students in all curriculum areas. It provides a variety of language, literature and literacy experiences to accommodate the diverse range of starting points. *EAL/D* focuses on developing oral language skills and understanding and encourages a deep appreciation of how language and texts can vary in structure and usage depending on cultural and social context, audience and purpose.

How are the senior secondary Australian Curriculum English subjects structured?

The senior secondary Australian Curriculum for each English subject specifies content and achievement standards:

- The content describes the knowledge, understanding and skills that are to be taught and learned within each subject.
- The achievement standards describe the quality of learning (the depth of understanding, extent of knowledge and sophistication of skill) expected of students who have studied the content for the subject.

The curriculum is designed to be taught over a two-year period. Each senior secondary subject is organised into four units with the final two units designed to be cognitively more challenging than the first two.

EAL/D has an additional four units called Bridging Units that are intended for students who have had limited exposure to Standard Australian English, are new to the Australian educational setting, or who have had little or no prior formal education.

Content has been specified for each unit, and achievement standards are described for each pair of units (Units 1 and 2; Units 3 and 4).

The curriculum also includes a rationale and a set of aims for the subject, a description of how the subject is organised, how general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities are represented, and a glossary of key terms.

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How do the senior secondary English subjects align with the F-10 Australian Curriculum?

The Australian Curriculum: English subjects draw upon, develop and expand the knowledge, understandings, skills and processes related to the strands of Language, Literature and Literacy in the Foundation to Year 10 curriculum. The emphasis differs according to the nature of each subject.

For example, while students engage with a range of literary texts in *EAL/D*, the prime focus is on language learning and the development of oral language and literacy skills in Standard Australian English (SAE). In *Essential English*, literature is important, but the primary focus is on the development and demonstration of literacy and language skills in everyday, social and community contexts. *English* retains a balance across the strands, whereas *Literature* predominantly focuses on analysis of literary texts.

The senior secondary subjects develop the general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities introduced across Foundation to Year 10. Each subject includes a description of the opportunities for students to continue to develop their general capabilities and understanding of cross-curriculum priorities in ways that are relevant to the subject.

How do the senior secondary English subjects relate to each other?

The Australian Curriculum: English subjects cater for diverse student interests and needs. They have been designed so students can move between subjects or undertake them concurrently.

Why are suggested texts included and who determines which texts are to be studied?

Examples of suitable texts for each subject are included to stimulate thinking about teaching resources in relation to the subject content. These examples are not intended to be prescriptive.

State and territory curriculum, assessment and certification authorities are responsible for determining any prescribed or recommended texts.

How do the senior secondary English subjects differ from those in states and territories?

ACARA continues to work with each of the state and territory curriculum, assessment and certification authorities to determine how senior secondary courses are aligned with their local courses in terms of content, achievement standards and the timeline for implementation.

For further information contact your local authority. Link to state and territory authorities here:

ACT	ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies
NSW	NSW Education Standards Authority
NT	Northern Territory Board of Studies
Qld	Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority
SA	SACE Board of South Australia
Tas.	Office of Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certification
Vic.	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
WA	School Curriculum and Standards Authority

Which national and international research was drawn upon to develop the senior secondary Australian Curriculum: English?

In developing the senior secondary Australian Curriculum: English, ACARA reviewed state and territory English curricula and took into account curriculum documents from Canada (Ontario), Finland, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Singapore and the United Kingdom.

As part of ACARA's curriculum development process and its focus on quality curriculum, the senior secondary Australian Curriculum subjects were reviewed by international experts and curriculum authorities from around Australia.

