



Release of the Creative Arts CD-ROM

A new CD-ROM for Creative Arts K–6 was distributed to schools in Term 1. This completes the package provided for Creative Arts K–6. The CD contains the Creative Arts K–6 Syllabus, Units of Work, Principal's Package, Introduction to Parents and Community Members, School Planning for Creative Arts and student work samples.

The work samples include a variety of examples of student performance in Visual Arts, Music, Dance and Drama. The use of audio and video work samples will provide support for teachers in gaining an understanding of different learning experiences that can be developed for the different artforms and assessment of student performance and achievement of outcomes.

The work samples link to the units of work to provide further support for planning and programming and assessment.

Two new integrated units with an Aboriginal perspective

The first of four integrated units of work with an Aboriginal perspective have recently been added to the linkages website. There will be one unit for each stage added by the end of Term 2.


Maths with the Mob – an integrated unit for Early Stage 1

This unit provides opportunities for students to investigate integrated mathematics and visual arts activities by exploring lifestyles and perspectives using currently available resources. It enables teachers to introduce mathematics concepts through a variety of aspects of contemporary and traditional Aboriginal culture.

The unit includes student work samples and worksheets. The unit and worksheets can be readily downloaded.

My Place – an integrated unit for Stage 1

This unit provides opportunities for students to explore concepts of belonging to groups of people and of belonging to places. It focuses on the students' local community and local area, and provides opportunities for learning experiences and Aboriginal people's relationships with family community, environment and place. The unit also looks at aspects of pre-invasion Aboriginal life as well as contemporary Aboriginal communities.

Additional units still to come include British Colonisation for Stage 2 and Aboriginal Technology for Stage 3. 

Years 7–10 Syllabus Development

The review of the Years 7–10 curriculum is well under way with the development of final syllabuses in English and Mathematics and draft writing briefs for a number of other syllabuses being prepared and consulted on. The following table provides a quick reference to the progress of projects in various key learning areas.

Syllabus	Current Situation	Next Step
English and Mathematics	English 7–10 and Mathematics K–6 and 7–10 syllabuses are being finalised following broad consultation. A number of schools are trialling sample assessment tasks.	Draft assessment tasks have been developed and are being used by schools to generate work samples. The work samples will be annotated and included as part of the support materials for schools.
Personal Development, Health and Physical Education Life Skills syllabuses in English, Mathematics, Science, and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education	Final writing briefs are currently being prepared following broad consultation.	Final writing briefs will go to the May Board meeting. Draft syllabus development will occur June–August.
Life Skills syllabuses in Languages, Creative Arts, Technological and Applied Studies, and Human Society and its Environment	Draft writing briefs are currently being prepared	Draft writing briefs will be available for consultation 13 May – 21 July
Languages	The Framework for Languages K–10 is being finalised.	Writing teams will commence development of draft syllabuses for Japanese, Chinese, Indonesian and Korean in April. The development of French, German, Spanish and Italian draft syllabuses will commence in May.
Technological and Applied Studies Creative Arts	Draft writing briefs currently distributed for consultation include Technology (mandatory), Textiles Technology, Industrial Technology, Music and Visual Arts. Consultation meetings are planned with systems, teachers, academics and industry.	Draft writing briefs are being developed for Food Technology, Graphics Technology, Design and Technology, Dance and Drama. They will be available for consultation 13 May – 21 June.
Human Society and its Environment	Draft writing brief development is under way for Aboriginal Studies, Commerce, Social and Cultural Studies and Work Education. The review of History and Geography (mandatory and elective) has commenced. It focuses on how these documents, developed in 1998, meet the Board’s newly developed criteria for K–10 syllabuses.	Draft writing briefs will be available for consultation for the period 13 May – 21 June. Draft syllabuses will be developed based on the findings of the review.
Science	An initial evaluation of the Science Years 7–10 syllabus has taken place. A preliminary draft evaluation report is being discussed through a series of meetings with the Science Years 7–10 BCC, teachers and school systems.	Consultation on the draft syllabus will occur later this year.

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Board Website Gets a Makeover

On 10 September 1995, the Board of Studies opened its website for the first time, and teachers began downloading digital copies of syllabuses, exam papers, support documents, Board Official Notices and early editions of this Board Bulletin. The site has continued to grow in size and the numbers of people using it have increased to such an extent that it is now the sixth most visited Government sector website in Australia. Currently, 13,000 pages are viewed every day. In the past 200 days, more than two million Acrobat PDF files have been downloaded from the site. The site is composed of more than 12,500 files.

Since 1995, not much has changed in the look and structure of the Board website — it just got bigger and bigger. Until now.

Your online filing cabinet

The Board web-team has been analysing comments received from users and watching the way in which visitors use the website, and has come up with a new design capitalising on the existing site's ease of use and simple navigation and structure, while attempting to make it even easier and faster to find what you are looking for. A guiding principle during development has been to make all the important Board documents quicker to find in our website filing cabinet than in yours.

The Board's website is developed and maintained by an in-house team — the same people who desktop-publish all Board publications. This enables documents to be prepared and posted on the website within an hour or so of authorisation for publication. Even using the most efficient contractors in the business, getting them printed, packaged and mailed to schools takes days by comparison.


Direct access for primary teachers

Along with this new site development, one of the most important requests by primary teachers has been fulfilled. They felt that wading through lots of Higher School Certificate and School Certificate documents before they got to what they were looking for could be avoided, by giving K–6 documents their own home page. This has been done at www.bosnsw-k6.nsw.edu.au.

Immediately the K–6 site was made public, primary teachers and parents took to it. Over the past six months, 30,000 people have downloaded copies of the Mathematics K–6 Syllabus and 25,000 people have downloaded the English K–6 Syllabus, among many other documents. It has been and continues to be very busy. The busiest hour on the K–6 website is between 9.00 pm and 10.00 pm. (For comparison, the busiest hour on the main Board website is between 3.00 pm and 4.00 pm.)

Assistance in finding key documents

The new Board website has a simple added feature that may appeal to many. At different times of the school year, a large number of teachers and students come looking for certain documents. The HSC timetable is an obvious example and it is easy to post it in a prominent place on the website to enable visitors to get to it without drilling down deep into the site. Others are not so easy to post prominently, such as the current list of Board-approved scientific calculators for exams. The site is using a series of advertisement-like 'stamps' at key locations throughout the site to provide one-click access to these documents at different times in the year, guided by their popularity in the website document-access statistics.

In their annual awards in December 2000, *PC User* magazine named the Board website the most useful educational website (along with the Encyclopedia Britannica website). We were flattered to be listed alongside such esteemed company, but it only encouraged us to continue to listen to the needs of teachers and students to provide even better access to digital educational resources. Please visit the site and let us know what you think. 

What's New on the BOS Website this Month?



The Years 7–10 Draft Writing Briefs and Surveys

Music, Visual Arts, Technology (mandatory), Industrial Technology and Textiles Technology among others are available at this location.

http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/writing_briefs/writing_brief_index.html

The K–10 Curriculum Framework Report

The K–10 Curriculum Framework Report establishes parameters for the Board of Studies NSW curriculum for the compulsory years of schooling.

http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/writing_briefs/writing_brief_index.html

Evaluation Report for Aboriginal Studies Years 7–10 Syllabus

http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/writing_briefs/writing_brief_index.html#a

Home Education in NSW – Information Package

This information package is intended to provide a description of the steps to be followed when applying for registration for Home Education and to assist parents/guardians in preparing to home educate their children.

http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/parents/parents_page1.html

Report on the development of a K–12 Technology Statement

<http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/docs/docs.html#techk12statement>