

DECISIONS BY THE BOARD OF STUDIES MEETING DECEMBER 9, 2003

1. Submission from the NSW Board of Studies to the Review of Aboriginal Education. The Board of Studies endorsed the submission to the Review of Aboriginal Education. As part of the review, the Board agreed that the Office of the Board should undertake an analysis of current policies, practices and syllabuses as they relate to the learning needs of Aboriginal students. The Board agreed that it should explore the options and implications of VET courses being made available in Stage 5. The Board also agreed to undertake two specific curriculum projects, the first to support teachers in the development of programs that assist students who would be unlikely to achieve the outcomes of the English Years 7-10 syllabus, and the second to develop teaching approaches and further support materials to assist students in late primary and early high school who have performed poorly in numeracy learning.

2. Topics and issues in the proposed Draft Years 7-10 Cultures, Societies and Identities syllabus. The Board agreed that it should advise the Deputy Premier that many, but not all, of the topics and issues in the above draft syllabus are addressed, to some degree, in the mandatory curriculum. The Board noted that there are, however, significant gaps in the Years 7-10 curriculum with relation to Cultural Understandings, Studies of Asia and General Religious Education.

3. Primary Curriculum initiatives - schedule of projects. The Board noted the projects arising from the Primary Curriculum Project. The Board agreed that the first priority is to develop a process for reducing the number of outcomes in the Primary curriculum to a more manageable level and, with this in mind, the Office of the Board be requested to develop a work plan to come to the Board after previous consideration by the Board's Primary Curriculum Committee.

4. The process of systematic evaluation of syllabuses. The Board agreed that, subject to the document being amended to reflect the Board's comments, the key stakeholders should be invited to comment on the proposed approach. It was agreed that the revised document and consultation report should be listed for the Board's May 2004 meeting.

5. Update of the Employability Skills Framework Project. The Board agreed that it should advise the Deputy Premier that the separate assessment and reporting of employability skills is not consistent with the current integrity, credibility and quality of the Higher School Certificate credential. The Board noted that current school based references, portfolios or skills/logbook approaches are suited to reporting employability skills.

6. Education about Sexual Health in the PDHPE Curriculum. The Board noted the paper.

7. Proposal to reduce the number of texts (listening items) in the HSC German Beginners Listening Skills Examination. The Board endorsed the proposal to reduce the number of listening items in the examination specifications for the German Beginners syllabus from 20-25 to 10-15. The Board also endorsed the proposal to reduce the duration of the listening examination from "approximately 45-50 minutes" to "approximately 30 minutes".

8. Recognition of Community-Based Learning (ANTA/ACACA Project). The Board agreed that there are strong reasons why New South Wales would not wish to entertain the proposal and that it should advise the Deputy Premier in these terms.

9. Quality Assurance Process: ACACA Project. The Board noted progress in the development of a Quality Assurance Process for ACACA agencies.