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Australian Human Rights Commission Submission to the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and RepoRting Authority

Strengthening Human Rights Education in the Civics and Citizenship Curriculum Year 3 to Year 10

**Table of Contents**

[1 Introduction 2](#_Toc362344052)

[2 General recommendations 3](#_Toc362344053)

[(a) Allocated time for teaching civics and citizenship 3](#_Toc362344054)

[(b) Definition of Civics and Citizenship 4](#_Toc362344055)

[(c) Relationship between democracy and human rights 5](#_Toc362344056)

[(d) Civics and Citizenship, children’s rights and participation 5](#_Toc362344057)

[(e) Gender and Civics and Citizenship 6](#_Toc362344058)

[(f) Digital Inclusion and Digital Citizenship 7](#_Toc362344059)

[(g) Recognition of the rights of different groups 7](#_Toc362344060)

[3 Rationale and aims 7](#_Toc362344061)

[*(a)* *Rationale* 7](#_Toc362344062)

[*(b)* *Aims* 8](#_Toc362344063)

[4 Content structure 8](#_Toc362344064)

[a) Civics and Citizenship Knowledge and Understanding Strand 8](#_Toc362344065)

[b) Civics and Citizenship Skills Strand 8](#_Toc362344066)

[5 Diversity of Learners 9](#_Toc362344067)

[(a) Students with a disability 9](#_Toc362344068)

[(b) Students with English as an additional language or dialect 9](#_Toc362344069)

[(c) Same sex attracted and gender diverse students 9](#_Toc362344070)

[6 General Capabilities 10](#_Toc362344071)

[(a) Ethical behaviour 10](#_Toc362344072)

[(b) Intercultural understanding 10](#_Toc362344073)

[7 Cross-Curriculum Priorities 11](#_Toc362344074)

[(a) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures 11](#_Toc362344075)

[8 Year 3 to Year 10: Content Descriptions and Content Elaborations 13](#_Toc362344076)

# [Introduction](http://consultation.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Survey/Welcome/36736fad-68ea-4016-a190-631412064fc7)

The Australian Human Rights Commission welcomes the development of the Australian Curriculum and is pleased to have the opportunity to comment on the draft *Australian Curriculum, Civics and Citizenship Curriculum: Year 3 to Year 10 (the curriculum)*.

The Commission has made a range of recommendations throughout this submission and has highlighted several areas of the curriculum where the human rights content could be strengthened.

As was stated in our feedback on the *Shape of the Civics and Citizenship Curriculum*, the Commission welcomes the references to human rights in a number of areas throughout the curriculum including in the rationale, achievement standards and year level descriptions.

The Commission congratulates ACARA on the integration of important human rights considerations such as equality, freedom and access to justice.

However, the Commission considers that there are several areas throughout the curriculum in which the human rights content can be strengthened.

Included in this submission are general recommendations to demonstrate how human rights are relevant to the study of civics and citizenship for school students. Specific recommendations are also made in relation to those areas where human rights can be included in the curriculum, especially in content descriptions and elaborations from page *13*.

Recommendations have been identified by a bullet point and specific changes and suggestions are in ***italics and bold****.* Any suggested words to be removed have been struck through, and the page and paragraph references have been included.

# [General recom](http://consultation.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Survey/Welcome/36736fad-68ea-4016-a190-631412064fc7)mendations

## Allocated time for teaching civics and citizenship

* The Commission recommends the allocation of at least one hour per week for civics and citizenship education.

The Commission is concerned that the recommended notional allocated time of 20 hours per year is inadequate. As the Commission’s submission[[1]](#endnote-1) to the Civics and Citizenship Draft Shape paper stated, we believe this timeframe is not enough for students to be able to engage meaningfully with subject content.

* The Commission recommends that where possible Civics and Citizenship content descriptions and elaborations are connected and mapped to general capabilities, key learning areas and cross curriculum priorities.

The curriculum needs to be comprehensively mapped to the general capabilities and cross curriculum priorities. Connections also need to be made with other key learning areas so that teachers can provide more in-depth learning experiences for students without further crowding the curriculum. For example, in the year 6 History Curriculum students learn about the experiences of Australian democracy and citizenship, including the status and rights of Aboriginal people and/or Torres Strait Islanders, migrants, women, and children.

* The Commission recommends that Civics and Citizenship content elaborations and examples are, where possible, drawn from the cross curriculum priorities and general capabilities.

Content descriptions and elaborations could be more strongly linked to the cross curriculum priorities and general capabilities. For example, rather than having road building decision making processes[[2]](#endnote-2) to describe decision-making at different levels of government, using examples relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures and Sustainability would integrate more succinctly into the overall curriculum structure.

## Definition of Civics and Citizenship

* The Commission recommends clear definitions of civics and citizenship are provided

The Commission believes that there needs to be a clear definition of civics and citizenship in the curriculum. The concept of citizenship is mixed between the legal status of being an Australian citizen and broader concepts of citizenship and civic engagement. This is confusing and means that much of the curriculum excludes people who are non-citizens rather than being inclusive of the many ways that people in Australia can be engaged in civic life without being citizens.

This is pertinent due to the significant number of people in Australia who are not citizens. The 2011 Census[[3]](#endnote-3) indicated that approximately 2 million people living in Australia are non-citizens. This includes at least 316 680 children and young people 19 years and under.

* The Commission recommends that human rights and civic engagement should be framed as applying to all people not just citizens of voting age

The Commission is concerned the curriculum has predominately framed human rights as something that a person accesses through being a citizen of voting age. Instead, all people are born with human rights regardless of age, citizenship or nationality. Therefore, it is not accurate to align human rights with citizenship or voting rights.

In addition, the study of civics and citizenship should not be limited to citizenship or voting rights because human rights law at both the international and domestic level specifically covers non-citizens and those of a non-voting age. For example, anti-discrimination protections[[4]](#endnote-4) on a range of grounds including race, sex, age and disability apply to all people in Australia not just to citizens.

International human rights law clearly articulates that all people have human rights.[[5]](#endnote-5) For example, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that:[[6]](#endnote-6)

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

## Relationship between democracy and human rights

* The Commission recommends a range of amendments in the rationale, aims, organisation and content that place human rights as a key building block of a functional democracy.

The Commission recognises that the protection, promotion and respect for human rights are more likely to be supported in a democracy.[[7]](#endnote-7) The Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights identify many of the civil liberties and rights such as universal suffrage and holding free and fair elections that are fundamental to a democracy.[[8]](#endnote-8) The Commission acknowledges that the Civics and Citizenship curriculum has incorporated these concepts.

However, the Commission holds concerns that the curriculum places human rights as a natural outcome of democracy. It is the Commission’s view that this simplifies the importance of human rights which ensures democracy functions effectively, especially in relation to protecting disadvantaged and minority groups.

## Civics and Citizenship, children’s rights and participation

* The Commission recommends the specific inclusion of children’s rights as a core concept in the rationale, aims, content descriptions and elaborations.

The Commission believes that the curriculum would benefit from using the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)[[9]](#endnote-9) as a foundation from which to engage children and young people about their rights.

The CRC places a responsibility on Australia to protect, respect and promote the rights of children and young people.[[10]](#endnote-10) The CRC recognizes that children have the same human rights as adults, while also needing special protection due to the vulnerability of them being children.[[11]](#endnote-11)

* The Commission recommends that the civics and citizenship skills’ strand problem solving and decision-making skills on page 5, paragraph 6 be amended to ***participation,*** problem solving and decision making. This amendment also needs to occur throughout the curriculum content.

There are four core principles of the CRC-non-discrimination; a commitment to the best interests of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and respect for the views of the child including participation.[[12]](#endnote-12)

In particular, the Commission believes the curriculum can focus more strongly on the rights of children and young people to participate in decisions that affect their lives.[[13]](#endnote-13)

Meaningful participation needs to be an exchange between adults and children in the development of policies, programs and measures that impact children’s lives.[[14]](#endnote-14) When children and young people are socially included it benefits the whole community as it has a positive impact on social cohesion and civic participation.

The Commission acknowledges that ACARA has included concepts and practices relating to children and young people’s active citizenship in the curriculum. However, much of the language explaining this participation focuses on aspects of citizenship that require people to hold citizenship and be of voting age in order to participate.

Having explicit reference to participation in several parts of the civics and citizenship curriculum will provide teachers with appropriate guidance to adequately integrate concepts and practices of participation and active citizenship into the curriculum.

* The Commission recommends children and young people have the opportunity to learn about the role of the National Children’s Commissioner.

The Commission also believes that there should be inclusion of the role of National Children’s Commissioner.[[15]](#endnote-15) The Commissioner is the dedicated advocate for the rights of children and young people Australia-wide. It is important for children and young people to know how they can interact with the Commissioner regarding the protection of their rights.

## Gender and Civics and Citizenship

The curriculum provides an important opportunity to encourage students to consider the obstacles and barriers that women face in participating in public and political life such as gender stereotypes, discrimination and sexual harassment.

The curriculum should fully integrate the needs and experiences of women and emphasise the importance of gender equality in the areas of civics and citizenship. This is particularly important due to the historical exclusion of women from political and public life in Australia, the current unequal representation and discriminatory treatment of women in political and public life, and the failure of key decision-making bodies such as parliament and the judicial system to take the distinctive needs and interests of women into account.[[16]](#endnote-16) It is also important to ensure that participation and decision-making in private spaces are valued.

The Commission is concerned that the curriculum fails to consider the different experiences of women and men with respect to civics and citizenship and, in so doing, adopts a male-dominated perspective. The Commission recommends the inclusion of specific reference to sex and gender within formal and public institutions and decision-making processes related to civics and citizenship.

The Commission also believes that that the curriculum prioritises consideration of formal and public decision-making processes, which have historically privileged men and that there needs to also be a focus on informal and private decision-making processes. Specific recommendations relating to the sex and gender in public and private spheres have been made in the content descriptions and elaborations.

* The Commission recommends issues of sex and gender are fully integrated across the curriculum including in content descriptions and elaborations.

Civics and citizenship provides a powerful opportunity to educate students about the importance of taking sex and gender into account when developing laws and public policies and the impact of unequal gender representation on decision-making and the development, implementation and enforcement of laws and policies. Finally, the curriculum provides an important opportunity to consider the social and cultural construction of the public and private spheres and how this disadvantages women in Australia.

## Digital Inclusion and Digital Citizenship

Children and young people’s use of technology is integrated into all aspects of their lives and using technology is how many will engage in civic activity. The Commission believes the curriculum needs to include greater reference to digital inclusion and digital citizenship to reflect the lived experience of children and young people’s online civic engagement. Positive practices relating to digital citizenship and inclusion can contribute to protecting and promoting human rights.

Digital inclusion is an important element of social inclusion. The Commission is concerned about the impact that digital exclusion can have on people’s ability to actively participate in community life and exercise their human rights and responsibilities. This is particularly pertinent for people who live in rural and remote areas, older people, people with disabilities, and those that are experiencing social disadvantage.

* The Commission recommends that digital citizenship and digital inclusion be integrated into content descriptions and elaborations and is included in a glossary of key terms identified on page 4.

## Recognition of the rights of different groups

The Commission has made recommendations in the content descriptions and elaborations to identify opportunities to explore the rights of different groups and the impacts of discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, disability and age.

The Commission also recommends specific recognition of the human rights of people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex (LGBTI). This recommendation is of particular relevance as recent legal reforms[[17]](#endnote-17) have enhanced protection of the rights of LGBTI people. In addition, high levels of violence and harassment of LGBTI people remains a problem, including in the education system.[[18]](#endnote-18) The Commission has made some specific recommendations in the Year 6, Year 9 and Year 10 content elaborations to discuss these issues.

# Rationale and aims

# *Rationale*

The Commission recommends the inclusion of an explicit reference in the rationale to human rights by including the following amendment on page 4, paragraph 1:

* Through the study of the Civics and Citizenship curriculum students will learn about Australia's political and legal systems and effective participatory citizenship in contemporary Australian society. They will develop knowledge, understanding, skills, values and dispositions to become beneficiaries of and contributors to society. The curriculum will enable students to ***understand their human rights and responsibilities and*** be active and informed citizens in local, national, regional and global contexts. The curriculum content integrates the study of ‘civics’ with the study of ‘citizenship’.

The Commission recommends the following amendment on paragraph 2, page 4:

* The Civics and Citizenship curriculum aims to develop students’ knowledge and understanding of Australia's representative democracy and the key institutions, processes, and roles people play in Australia’s legal and political systems at local, state/territory, national and international levels. Emphasis is placed on Australia's federal system of government based on liberal democratic ***and*** ~~values such as~~ ***human rights values including*** freedom, equality and rule of law; how the people, as citizens, choose their governments; and how the system safeguards democracy by vesting people with civic rights and responsibilities. The curriculum explores how ***all people, including children and young people have human rights and how*** laws and the legal system protect the rights of ***individuals and*** ***groups*** ~~people’s rights~~ and how ~~individuals and groups~~ ***they*** can influence civic life.

# *Aims*

The Commission believes that human rights should be in the aims and recommends and that the following amendment be included on page 5:

* a lifelong sense of belonging to and engagement with civic life as an active and informed citizen in the context of Australia as a secular democratic nation with a dynamic, multicultural and multi-faith society ***that respects, protects and promotes human rights.***

# Content structure

The Commission supports the organisation and content structure into *Civics and Citizenship Knowledge* and *Understanding and Civics and Citizenship Skills*.

### Civics and Citizenship Knowledge and Understanding Strand

The Commission generally supports the three key focus areas at each year level: *Government and democracy; Laws and citizens;* and *Citizenship, diversity and identity*.

However, the Commission recommends the following amendment to the second focus area on paragraph 2 and 3, page 5:

* Laws, ***rights*** and citizens

This amendment will ensure that human rights is studied as it relates to all people in Australia, in addition to a narrower focus on citizenship.

### Civics and Citizenship Skills Strand

The Commission generally supports the focus areas within the civics and citizenship skills strand. However, we recommend the following amendment to the ‘problem solving and decision-making’ skill on page 5, paragraph 6:

* ***Participation,*** problem solving and decision making

This amendment will enable the integration of children and young people’s right to participate in the development of policies and decisions that affect their lives.

# Diversity of Learners

* The Commission recommends that a specific section for Sex and Gender Diverse Students is included in the Diversity of Learners section of the Civics and Citizenship Curriculum on page 8.

The Commission recommends that paragraph 1 on page 8 be amended to be inclusive of the hundreds of thousands of students[[19]](#endnote-19) who are not Australian citizens:

* ACARA is committed to the development of a high-quality curriculum that promotes excellence and equity in education for all ~~Australian~~ students ***in Australia.***

The Commission congratulates ACARA on its broad understanding of student diversity and is pleased to see reference to students with a disability and students with an additional language or dialect. The Commission believes that sex and gender diverse students also need to be included under a separate heading as was included in the draft Health and Physical Education Curriculum.[[20]](#endnote-20)

### Students with a disability

The Commission notes that the curriculum guides people to the diversity section of the Australian curriculum website is only available in PDF. This is not compliant with the web content accessibility guidelines version 2.0 that all government agencies are required to be compliant with under the *Website Accessibility National Transition Strategy*, *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.[[21]](#endnote-21)

* The Commission recommends that the Australian Curriculum website, including the diversity section be made compliant with web content accessibility guidelines version 2.0

### Students with English as an additional language or dialect

The Commission notes that the draft curriculum refers to the significant number of students who have had little or no formal schooling and do not have a high level of literacy in their first language.

As well as needing the additional time and support by teaching staff, Civics and Citizenship content should use appropriate examples that are relevant to their lived experience in Australia.

### Same sex attracted and gender diverse students

The Commission recommends that a section on same sex attracted and gender diverse students be included in the Diversity of Students section on page 18:

* ***Same sex attracted and gender diverse young people are part of all school communities. The Australian Curriculum: Civics and Citizenship is designed to ensure that it meets the needs of these young people, particularly in the context of recognising the contribution LGBTI people have made to civic life and identifying how to address discrimination and inequality.***
* ***This is particularly important given the health, wellbeing and educational experience of same sex attracted and gender diverse young people is directly impacted upon by homophobia and transphobia in schools. The National Safe Schools Framework aims to reduce these issues by promoting a safe and supportive school environment. To support these aims, it is expected that when implementing the Civics and Citizenship curriculum the teaching is inclusive and relevant to their lived experiences.***

There are opportunities for reference to LGBTI peoples’ rights in the knowledge and understanding strand in the laws and citizens and citizenship, diversity and identity sections. The Commission has included specific examples in the relevant content descriptions and elaborations.

# General Capabilities

### (a) Ethical behaviour

The Commission recommends that there is explicit reference to human rights in the ethical behaviour general capability. The following amendment on page 11, paragraph 2 is recommended:

* In the Civics and Citizenship curriculum, students identify how people relate to each other in communities and how this reflects their values, dispositions, identity and commitment to ***human rights and*** democratic citizenship. They recognise different perspectives and have opportunities to explore ambiguities and ethical considerations related to political, legal and social issues.

###  (b) Intercultural understanding

The Commission recommends that intercultural understanding include reference to the negative impact that racism and discrimination can have on civic engagement and the health and wellbeing of members of the community. There is strong evidence that shows that tackling racism and supporting intercultural understanding is an essential component of living in a healthy democracy.[[22]](#endnote-22) The Commission also believes that the curriculum should explore how democracies can protect the rights of people from cultural minorities.[[23]](#endnote-23)

The Commission also recommends that cultural competency be addressed in the context of intercultural understanding. A culturally competent person has the understanding, skills and strategies to effectively and sensitively communicate with people who have different languages, cultures, religions, genders, ethnicities, disabilities, ages and sexualities.[[24]](#endnote-24)

The Commission recommends that the following paragraph be included after paragraph 4 on page 11:

* ***Students recognise occasions when tensions between individuals and groups are based on cultural differences or discrimination. They develop cultural competency and learn to act in ways that maintain individual and group integrity and that respect the rights of all. They will also gain an understanding of how racism can impact on a democracy and explore the positive impacts of Australia’s multicultural policy and national anti-racism strategy.***[[25]](#endnote-25) ***They will be able to examine stereotypical representations of various social and cultural groups and harmful consequences in relation to civics and citizenship and the factors that contribute to a socially just and diverse society.***

# Cross-Curriculum Priorities

### (a) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

The Commission recognises that ACARA has taken some steps to incorporate some of these aspects but believes that there needs to be stronger inclusion of respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ rights particularly in rationale, year level descriptions, achievement standards and content descriptions and elaborations. Specific recommendations have been made in the content descriptions.

**The development of cultural competency is also an essential skill** for students to communicate and engage sensitively and effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in a range of contexts.

On page 12, paragraph 1 the Commission recommends the inclusion of:

* Across the Australian Curriculum, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures priority provides opportunities for all learners to ***develop cultural competency*** and deepen their knowledge of Australia by engaging with the world’s oldest continuous living cultures. Students will understand that contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are strong, resilient, rich and diverse. The knowledge and understanding gained through this priority will enhance the ability of young people to participate positively in the ongoing development of Australia

On page 12 between paragraph 1 and 2 the Commission recommends the inclusion of:

* ***Students*** ***develop cultural competency and an understanding of the different social, political, legal, economic, cultural and environmental factors that influence Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ health and wellbeing.*** ***Students will also gain an understanding of the relationship between human rights, civic engagement and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing.***

The Commission believes that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross curriculum priority could be further integrated into the curriculum through more thorough inclusion of contemporary and historical human rights issues that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are engaged with.

In particular, the Commission recommends that the constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (Constitutional Recognition) be used as a case study in Year 7. Constitutional Recognition has bipartisan[[26]](#endnote-26) support and addresses the historical exclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other discriminatory elements in the Australian Constitution.

There are already contemporary teaching resources, such as the bipartisan Recognise[[27]](#endnote-27) campaign, that can be connected to the curriculum.

(b) Sustainability

The Commission congratulates ACARA on linking social justice and sustainability.

A healthy environment is essential for children and young peoples’ wellbeing. The Convention on the Rights of the Child recognizes the dangers and risks of environmental pollution to the health of children and young people.[[28]](#endnote-28) A core aspect of children and young people being able to live in a healthy environment is promoting their right to participate in environmental decision-making processes.

In order to support children and young people’s right to participate the Commission recommends that the sustainability section be strengthened to unpack some of the structures and systems that relate to participation and decision-making around sustainability at the local, national and international level. Whilst we believe that it is important for students to learn about local government many environmental decisions are made at the state or federal level.

The Commission recommends the following amendments on page 13:

* In the knowledge and understanding strand, students examine local government services including environment and waste services.~~,~~ ~~and t~~***T***hey explore ***the roles and responsibilities of the three levels of government and the impact this has on*** issues such as river ***health*** and water management and the rights that community members have to participate in environmental decision making processes.

##

# Year 3 to Year 10: Content Descriptions and Content Elaborations

The Commission has made a range of specific recommendations to enhance content descriptions and elaborations. The general recommendations that the Commission has made earlier in the submission should also be applied to the content descriptions and elaborations.

**Year 3**

**Year level description**

The Commission recommends that children should be introduced to human rights concepts in Year 3 as having an understanding of human rights principles is an essential foundation for a healthy democracy.

The Commission recommends that the year level description inquiry question on page 14 include: ‘***What are human rights?’***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Content description**  | **Elaborations (changes noted in *bold and italics*)** |
| **Government and democracy** How some decisions are made in a democracy, including rule by majority and one person, one vote  | * ***Identifying what human rights are and why they are important to democracy***
* ***Identifying the key features of a democracy***
* identifying reasons why ‘rule by majority’ and ‘one person, one vote’ are used in a democracy
* organising and running class meetings that involve collaborative decision-making processes
* identifying how people can be involved in the process of making a decision, for example, attending a local community gathering or forum
 |
| **Laws, *rights* and citizens** How and why people make rules  | * ***Identify what human rights all children have by investigating a child friendly version of the Convention on the Rights of the Child***
* developing a set of fair rules for the classroom or school
* considering the issues that emerge when playing a game with unfair rules describing the
* consequences of breaking rules, with an emphasis on rules relevant to their personal lives
* identifying who makes the rules, for example, at home or at school or in a sporting club, and what gives them the power or authority to make rules
* ***Identifying how some rules can protect the rights of others(for example rules in the classroom to create a safe learning environment protect everyone’s right to education)***
* ***Discussing how some rules can be unfair and how these rules could be made to be fair.***
 |
| **Citizenship, diversity and identity** How and why people participate within communities and how students can actively participate and contribute  | * exploring the roles and purposes of local community groups, including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community groups ***and women’s groups***
* investigating how they could participate in a school or community project, for example, raising money for an overseas aid project that they have studied or helping collect rubbish on Clean Up Australia Day
* researching the motivation of people who have contributed to communities, what they have done and the ways they have gone about it, for example, recipients of the Australian of the Year Award ***or the Young Person’s Human Rights Award***
* ***Exploring the role and purpose of a community organisation that advocates for the rights of different groups***
* ***Exploring the benefits of a diverse community***
 |
| ***Participation,* problem-solving and decision-making**Listen to others with respect, share your views and recognise there are different points of view  | * implementing strategies to ensure multiple views are shared in group situations (for example, issuing a limit of tokens for each individual, to eliminate ‘talking over’ others, ***making sure that girls and boys have equal talking time***
* ***discussing strategies to ensure that students who speak different languages or have different needs can participate equally***
* ***exploring who makes decisions at home, school, and in the community by listing all the people who make decisions and discussing their age and gender and whether it seems fair***
* resolving differences by looking at alternatives, making decisions and explaining choices
 |
| **Communication and reflection** Present ideas, opinions or a position on civics and citizenship issues using civics and citizenship terms  | * creating and presenting a position on an issue (such as appropriate laws for graffiti artists, equality of access to school/community buildings ***for people with disabilities***)
* using appropriate terms (such as democracy, ***human rights,*** government, rule, law, roles, responsibilities) when investigating relevant issues
 |
| Reflect on personal and family cultural identity and how it might be similar and different from others  | * reflecting on personal and family cultural identity, its similarity and difference from others, and how this may influence decision-making
* examining local or regional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural and family identity
 |

**Year 4**

**Year level description**

The Commission recommends the inclusion of human rights and social inclusion in paragraph one, page 16:

Students examine how rules and laws affect their own lives, reflecting on the ~~key~~ ***human rights*** values of equality, fairness, and shared responsibility. Students explore cultural diversity ***and social inclusion***, and in particular how different groups contribute to their communities.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Content description** | **Elaborations (changes noted in *bold and italics*)** |
| **Government and democracy** The three levels of government within Australia and the role of leaders at each level  | * identifying the key places of government at a local, state/territory and national level
* identifying the key positions of the people who lead government in these places and describing their roles: at the local level (for example, the mayor), state/territory level (premier or chief minister) and national government level (the prime minister)
* ***Identifying the role of the National Children’s Commissioner and how they help children***
 |
| The purpose of local governance and some familiar services provided, including forms of local governance found in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities  | * investigating what local government does including the services it provides such as community services, libraries, health, environment and waste, parks, pools and sport, arts, pet management
* evaluating how local government services impact on the lives of young people
* examining the governance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and the services they provide with reference to a local example (or another example where there is available information)
 |
| **Laws, *rights* and citizens**The differences between ‘rules’ and ‘laws’, and how they impact specifically on the lives of young people  | * identifying the key places of government at a local, state/territory and national level
* identifying the key positions of the people who lead government in these places and describing their roles: at the local level (for example, the mayor), state/territory level (premier or chief minister) and national government level (the prime minister)
* examining relevant ‘laws’, such as road laws, ***discrimination laws*, *child protection laws*** and property laws, in relation to their purpose and their impact on the lives of young people
 |
| The qualities and values considered to be important for ‘good’ laws, such as laws ***protecting and respecting human rights and*** applying equally to everyone  | * using a law or a hypothetical proposed change to an existing law to identify the features of what makes a ‘good law’, for example, ***respect for human rights,*** fairness and equity
* ***identifying what human rights children have including the right to education, health care, participation, and having their voice heard***
 |
| **Citizenship, diversity and identity** How a person’s identity, including their own, can be shaped by the different cultural, religious and/or social groups to which they may belong | * identifying, after discussing with family members, the different social, cultural, and religious groups a person can belong to and that different family members belong to
* listing and comparing the different purposes, beliefs, traditions or forms of identification used by the different groups a person may belong to
* describing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language groups in Australia and broader aspects of identity such as caring for Country
* investigating the cultural or religious groups to which Australians of Asian heritage belong
* examining the ways that difference can be protected and celebrated
 |
| The qualities and values considered to be important for ‘good’ laws, such as laws applying equally to everyone  | * using a law or a hypothetical proposed change to an existing law to identify the features of what makes a ‘good law’, for example, ***respect for human rights including*** fairness and ***equality***
 |
| **Questioning and research** Create and explore questions about the society they live in  | * posing appropriate questions when investigating the impact of services provided by local government, such as ‘Why do people need ***public transport and*** roads?’, ‘How do people use the local park?’ ***How does local government make services accessible to people with a disability.***
 |
| Use critical thinking to explore democratic practices  | * categorising the range of services in the local community to evaluate the role of local governance
* developing criteria ***to***~~for~~ evaluat***e*~~ing~~** if a law is a ‘good’ law ***for protecting human rights (such as does it keep people safe from violence, does it help people with a disability to access services)***
 |
| ***Participation,* Problem-solving and decision-making**Listen to others with respect, share your views and recognise there are different points of view  | * exploring different stories about where people come from, the groups they belong to, and the activities they participate in (social, cultural, religious) to discover their thoughts and feelings
* comparing and contrasting the different roles at home based on age and gender and whether it seems fair.
 |
| **Communication and reflection** Present ideas, opinions or a position on civics and citizenship issues using civics and citizenship terms  | * using civics and citizenship terms, for example, ***‘human rights’***, ‘social’, ‘cultural’, ‘religious’, when talking about people’s ‘identity’
* ***creating a powerpoint presentation of children’s rights based on the child friendly version of the Convention on the Rights of the Child***
 |
| Reflect on personal and family cultural identity and how it might be similar and different from others  | * comparing the influence of family on their lives with other class members to identify similarities and differences
* examining the impact of the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, including its effect on identity
 |

**Year 5**

**Year level description**

The Commission recommends the inclusion of human rights in the following sentence on page 18:

* The Year 5 curriculum introduces students to the key features of Australia’s liberal democratic system. This includes examining some key ***human rights*** values – specifically freedom, equality, fairness and justice.

The Commission recommends the inclusion of an explanation of groups on page 18:

* Students investigate the role and purpose of ***different types of*** groups ***in the community.***

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| **Content description**  | **Elaborations (changes noted in *bold and italics*)** |
| **Government and democracy** The key values that underpin Australia’s democratic system of government  | * identifying the purpose of each of the key values of Australian democracy ***including human rights concepts*** such as freedom, equality and justice
* ***exploring how freedom of expression and opinion impact on Australian democracy***
 |
| The roles and responsibilities of electors and representatives in Australia’s liberal democracy  | * identifying the characteristics that would make for a ‘good’ representative at the local, state/territory, or national level
 |
| The key features and characteristics of the Australian electoral process, including the right to vote, secret ballot, preferential voting and proportional representation and their value/contribution to a democracy  | * comparing and contrasting different perspectives on the value of the secret ballot ***including the perspectives of people with vision impairments who got the right to the secret ballot in 2010.***
* clarifying who has the right to vote in Australian electoral processes, such as local elections
* participating in mock elections using the guidance from the local Australian Electoral Commission
* using numeracy techniques to illustrate how preferential voting works and explore the number of women and men that are parliamentarians
 |
| **Laws, *rights* and citizens** The purpose of laws within a democracy and how laws affect the lives of citizens including experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples  | * categorising the different types of laws in our community and who enforces them (road laws – police; health rules – public health department)
* researching the incidence and effects of breaking certain types of laws, for example, speeding laws, in our community
* comparing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ engagement with the legal system to other groups ***(such as achieving social justice outcomes including land rights)***
* ***Identifying laws that protect peoples’ human rights such as sex, disability, race and age discrimination laws***
 |
| **Questioning and research** Identify questions and gather a range of information to inform an inquiry about the society they live in  | * establishing criteria to justify an inquiry into an important citizenship issue associated with the environment, such as waste disposal or river pollution ***or use of land by different groups***
* clarifying the best ways to find out answers to questions, such as deciding ~~whether it is better to use~~ ***what source(s) will be most useful*** ***such as*** personal observation, internet sources, books, interviews or surveys, reports, blogs
* providing reasons why information sources were used and explaining the issues associated with them
 |
| **Analysis, synthesis and interpretation** Identify over-generalised statements and their implications  | * investigating different media views on a civics and citizenship topic of interest, for example, the effectiveness of law enforcement ***or obligations to asylum seekers***
* ***identifying and challenging gender and age stereotyping in media***
* comparing young people’s observations of a local issue with information derived from other sources and perspectives
 |
| Use critical thinking to identify democratic features and practices  | * developing criteria for deciding if groups in the community use democratic practices
* identifying the strengths and weaknesses of Australia’s system of voting
* ***Analysing why Australia’s parliament does not have equal representation of women***
* ***Analysing why Australia’s parliament has inadequate representation of minority groups such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and people with disabilities***
* ***Identifying how democratic structures can protect the human rights of people from minority groups such as people with a disability or children***
 |
| Use and evaluate a range of information to develop and defend a position  | * developing a narrative that establishes a position on an issue with clear supporting evidence from more than one source
* relating their opinions, and explaining their views, on issues that affect themselves and society
 |
| ***Participation,* Problem-solving and decision-making** Listen to others with respect, identify different points of view and share personal perspectives and opinions  | * identifying ***human rights*** values associated with roles in a democratic decision-making process , for example, ‘fair go’, ‘right to be heard’, ‘respect’ and ‘responsibility’
* sharing their opinions on things that matter to them, explaining their views, and inviting responses
* identifying criteria to ensure participation by everyone in democratic decision-making processes
 |
| Work in groups to identify problems and develop possible solutions and plan for action using decision-making processes  | * using group mediation strategies to guide positive group interaction
* ***identifying participatory strategies for positive group interaction to ensure everyone gets a chance to have their views heard***
* clarifying key group strategies and tasks to identify problems and possible solutions
* participating, for example, in the school's decision-making process, relating it to democratic structures and processes such as councils, parliaments, government and voting
* using voting as a key strategy in decision-making in the classroom
 |
| **Communication and reflection** Present civics and citizenship ideas and opinions for a particular purpose using civics and citizenship terms and concepts  | * identifying the audience for a digital presentation about ~~an issue~~ ***children’s rights*** and using communication strategies that appeal to, and connect with, that audience
* investigating moral dilemmas that they may encounter and strategies for resolving them, for example, encouraging mutual respect and understanding between different groups
* using terms and concepts appropriately, such as electoral process, ***human rights,*** democracy, legal system, shared beliefs and values
 |
| Reflect on personal roles and actions as a citizen in the school and in the community  | * evaluating the activities that a young person can participate in, for example, locally, regionally (Asia) and globally, and the benefits associated with working with others
* ***exploring meaningful ways that young people can be active digital citizens by investigating online human rights campaigns***
 |

**Year 6**

**Year level description**

The Year 6 curriculum provides a study of the key institutions of Australia’s democratic government, including state/territory and federal parliaments and the court system. Students learn how state/territory and federal laws are created and enacted in a parliamentary system. ***Students examine the human rights that all people in Australia have.*** Students examine Australian citizenship and reflect on the rights and responsibilities that being a citizen entails. They explore the obligations that people may have as global citizens.

A framework for developing students’ civics and citizenship knowledge, understanding and skills at this year level is provided by the following inquiry questions:

* What are the roles and responsibilities of the different levels of government in Australia?
* How are laws developed in Australia?
* ***What human rights do everyone in Australia have?***
* What does it mean to be Australian citizen?

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| **Content description**  | **Elaborations (changes noted in *bold and italics*)** |
|  The roles and responsibilities of the three levels of government, including shared roles and responsibilities  | * identifying the shared roles and responsibilities of levels of government, using a Venn diagram
* identifying instances where there may be multiple levels of government involved, such as local, state/territory and Commonwealth government in relation to an environmental issues such as ***looking after the environment eg pollution (laws, policy, funding, implementation***. **~~roads (policy, funding, implementation)~~**
 |
| **Laws, *rights* and citizens** How state/territory and federal laws are initiated and passed through parliament  | * investigating the stages of the passage of a bill, including amendments, at one level of government
* role-playing the passage of a bill at one level of government
* investigating how and why an idea for a new law was initiated
* observing an Australian parliament in session, in situ or virtually
 |
| **Citizenship, diversity and identity** Who can be an Australian citizen and the shared values, formal rights and responsibilities of Australian citizenship, including the Australian citizenship pledge  | * ***Identifying the human rights that all people in Australia have regardless of citizenship***
* clarifying the rights and responsibilities of Australian citizenship
* ***Identifying how the rights of minority or vulnerable groups are protected in Australia by exploring the 2013 changes to the Sex Discrimination Act to protect the rights of people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual transgender or intersex***
* investigating the experiences of people of Asian heritage who have migrated to Australia and who have taken up Australian citizenship
* investigating the processes for those seeking Australian citizenship, such as the citizenship test and the citizenship pledge, and reflect upon the ethical dispositions expected of them
 |
| The obligations citizens **~~may consider they~~** have beyond their own national borders~~,~~ **~~that is~~**~~,~~ as global citizens  | * investigating the moral or ethical disposition people may have as a global citizen, such as how they relate to the environment and to others, and the belief that people can make a difference beyond their national borders
* identifying the obligations people may consider they have as global citizens, such as an obligation to be aware of human rights issues, to have concern for the environment and sustainability, and to be ‘active’ as a global citizen
* ***Identify ways that global citizens or civil society groups can be active such as by participating in human rights and environmental campaigns***
 |
| **Analysis, synthesis and interpretation** Identify over-generalised statements and their implications for society  | * identifying facts and opinions in media reports about the effectiveness of governments in Australia
* exploring stereotypes in society related to ***women and men,*** homeless people, minority groups, people with a disability, ***and people who are lesbian or gay***
 |
| Use critical thinking to identify democratic features and practices  | * developing flow charts to map the passage of a bill, to identify the democratic processes at work, ***including showing how human rights statements of compatibility are used[[29]](#endnote-29)***
* creating a survey to investigate people’s understandings of the rights and responsibilities of Australian citizenship
 |
| ***Participation,* Problem-solving and decision-making** Listen to others with respect, identify different points of view and share personal perspectives and opinions  | * identifying community or family members who have taken up Australian citizenship and conducting an interview to learn about their experiences of being an Australian citizen
* ***Identifying active citizens who are engaged in human rights or social issues and learn about their experiences***
* explaining where points of view differ and clarifying the reasons for the points of view that others have taken
* analysing the language used in a news article or report to identify the opinions held about the role of the monarchy in Australia’s system of government
 |

**Year 7**

**Year level description**

The Year 7 curriculum provides a study of the key features of Australia’s system of government and explores how this system protects all Australians. Students examine the Australian Constitution and how its features, principles and values shape Australia’s democracy. They look at how the ***human*** rights of individuals ***and groups*** are protected through the justice system. Students also explore how Australia’s secular system of government supports a cohesive multi-faith and multicultural society.

A framework for developing students’ civics and citizenship knowledge, understanding and skills at this year level is provided by the following **inquiry questions**:

* How is Australia’s government and democracy shaped by the Constitution?
* In what ways does Australia’s system of law provide opportunities for all ***people in Australia*** ~~Australian citizens~~ to have access to justice?
* How is Australia a diverse society and what factors contribute to a more cohesive and ***socially inclusive*** society?

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| **Content description**  | **Elaborations (changes noted in *bold and italics*)** |
| The process for constitutional change through referendum and the reasons for change since Federation  | * describing the process by which referendums to change the Australian Constitution can be initiated, implemented and decided
* exploring examples of attempts to change the Australian Constitution by referendum, for example, the 1951 referendum to ban the Communist Party, the 1967 referendum on Aboriginal People, the 1999 referendum on the Republic and the Constitution’s preamble and the ***proposed referendum on constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples***
 |
| **Laws, *rights* and citizens** How Australia’s legal system – with the presumption of innocence, access to justice, right to a fair trial and right to legal representation ***and freedom from arbitrary detention*** – aims to protect all ***people***  | * discussing the advantages and disadvantages of the principle of presumption of innocence
* investigating the elements of a ‘fair trial’, including ***people’s*** ~~citizens~~’ roles as witnesses and ***citizens’ roles as*** jurors, though a legal case study, or a role-play simulation
* identifying how ***people in*** Australia~~ns~~ can receive access to justice and legal representation, such as legal aid
* ***identifying the rights that children and young people have in the legal system***
 |
| **Citizenship, diversity and identity** Australia ~~is~~ ***as*** a secular nation and ~~has been described~~ as a ***socially inclusive,*** multicultural and multi-faith society  | * defining the terms ***‘social inclusion’***, ‘secular’, ‘multicultural’ and ‘multi-faith’ and discussing their relevance ***and contributions of members of different communities*** to Australia today
* using the Australian Bureau of Statistics and other demographic, economic and social data sources to identify the nature and trends of diversity in Australian society
* recording evidence of diversity and ***social inclusion*** in the local community (for example, places of worship, signage) and comparing this local diversity with the national picture
 |
| How ***human rights*** values, including respect for freedom, inclusion, respect, civility, responsibility, ‘fair go’, compassion and equality, can promote cohesion within Australian society  | * ***identifying how human rights values are consistent with Australian values***
* clarifying how these values create a cohesive Australian society
 |
| **Questioning and research** Identify a range of questions to inform an inquiry about Australia's social, legal and political systems  | * ***posing a question, why is it important to have access to justice and what groups in society may not have adequate access to justice such as people with disabilities***
* posing a key question, such as ‘How does the law provide access to justice?’ and identifying related questions to inform the inquiry, for example, ‘What does a fair trial mean?’, ‘How can people receive legal support?’, ‘What is the role of jurors?’
 |
| **Analysis, synthesis and interpretation** Critically analyse information and ideas from a range of relevant sources to identify the purpose, audience and context and to determine the reliability and relevance of information  | * analysing the language choices that can be used to appeal to different groups in an attempt to persuade others about a particular point of view
* ***analysing the use of sexist language and how it can contribute to discrimination against women in public life***
* explaining the assumptions or missing information that may have affected the reliability of an opinion piece about an issue related to access to justice
 |
| Use critical thinking to assess the effectiveness of democratic practices  | * comparing and contrasting an example of Australia’s democratic practices, for example, trial by jury, with a practice used in other countries
 |
| Develop a reasoned argument based on evidence to support a position  | * developing arguments to support a proposed hypothetical ***or actual*** constitutional amendment with relevant evidence from reputable or defensible sources, ***such as the proposal to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Australia’s Constitution***
 |
| ***Participation,* Problem-solving and decision-making**Use active listening and empathy to appreciate multiple perspectives and strategies to negotiate and resolve differences  | * acknowledging another person’s point of view and asking insightful questions before presenting a response and taking care to acknowledge any points of agreement
* identifying where there is a common understanding or points of agreement in a discussion as a basis for resolving a conflict or differences
 |
| Use ~~democratic~~ ***consensus decision making*** processes to reach consensus as a group on a course of action relating to a civics or citizenship issue and plan for that action  | * developing a plan of action that incorporates a public consultation process to ensure a range of views are heard and people are provided with opportunities to respond
 |
| **Communication and reflection** Present civics and citizenship ideas using subject-specific language for an intended purpose, audience and context  | * developing a presentation about the importance of ‘shared values’ within Australian society that considers the effects of different visual elements upon the reader/viewer
* using appropriate terms and concepts such as ‘Westminster system’, ‘presumption of innocence’ and ‘secular nation’
* creating an audio-visual presentation, using ICT and graphic displays, to show how Australia is a multicultural and multi-faith society ***that respects human rights***
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**Year 8**

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| **Year-level description** The Year 8 curriculum provides a study of ~~the~~ ***people’s*** rights, obligations and freedoms ***and how*** of ~~citizens and how~~ ***people in*** Australia~~ns~~ can actively participate in their democracy. Students look at the various sources of law that are used in and influence Australian society. Students also examine what it means to be Australian by identifying the reasons for and influences that shape national identity. A framework for developing students’ civics and citizenship knowledge, understanding and skills at this year level is provided by the following **inquiry questions**: * ***What are the human rights and responsibilities of all people in Australia?***
* What are the rights, liberties and obligations of citizens in Australia’s democracy?
* What are the foundations and principles of Australia’s legal system?
* What different perspectives are there about national identity?
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| **Content description**  | **Elaborations (changes noted in *bold and italics*)** |
| **Government and democracy** The rights and liberties that enable active participation in Australia’s democracy, including freedom of speech within the bounds of the law, freedom of association, freedom of movement and freedom of religion  | * explaining how each ***right and*** freedom supports active participation in Australia’s democracy
* identifying and explaining the limitation on these freedoms, for example, limitations on ‘freedom of speech’ through such law as ***anti-discrimination law,*** sedition law, hate speech, defamation and obscenity law
* ***using a case-study that explores how freedom of expression and opinion has enhanced Australian democracy***
 |
| How ~~citizens~~ ***people*** can participate in Australia’s democracy, engage in debate, express their opinions and take action about issues in Australian society through the electoral system, the use of traditional media, social media, contact with their elected representatives, lobby groups, ***civil society organisations*** and direct action  | * using local, national or global examples of a current political, social, ***human rights*** or environmental issue to examine the range of forums and media platforms used by ***people in Australia*** ~~Australian citizens~~ to engage in contemporary political debate and discussion
* constructing a ‘what if …’ scenario to examine what the consequences to Australia’s democracy ***and human rights*** would be if the ‘secret ballot’ ~~or the ‘compulsory voting’ provision~~ were to be removed
* ***Identifying the pros and cons of compulsory voting and other ways to encourage people to vote***
* identifying and connecting with ~~current~~ local representatives of state/territory and federal parliaments to examine how to influence government on a current local, national or global issue
* investigating forms of citizen’s direct action that are evident in local, state/territorial or national issues to describe their origin, objectives, strategies and effectiveness in achieving positive outcomes
* ***examining how civil society organisations advocate and educate on human rights issues***
 |
| **Laws, *rights* and citizens** The different sources of law used in Australia, including statutory law, criminal law, civil law, customary law (such as in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities) and international law  | * investigating, using laws of local relevance, how law is made in Australia through parliament (statute law) and through the courts (common law)
* comparing and explaining the difference between criminal law and civil law
* examining and discussing customary law in Australia including how it contrasts with European law and how customary law is used in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Australia
* ***examining the Convention on the Rights of the Child as a source of international human rights law***
 |
| The responsibilities of a citizen participating in and contributing to Australia’s democracy  | * identifying and discussing the key responsibilities including paying taxes, enrolling to vote, being informed, voting at all elections and referendums, obeying the law, respecting the ~~liberties and~~ ***human*** rights of others, supporting parliamentary democracy
 |
| **Citizenship, diversity and identity**  | * investigating representations of Australian identity evident in national day events, the media and popular culture to examine different perspectives on the interpretation of national identity
 |
| ~~Different~~ ***Diverse*** perspectives about Australia’s national identity including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and what it means to be Australian  | * examining the influences that have affected changes to understanding of Australian national identity, such as public debate, immigration, attitudes to Asia and reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and other Australians
* ***exploring the meaning of cultural competency and how to communicate in a culturally competent manner***
 |
| **Analysis, synthesis and interpretation** Critically analyse information and ideas from a range of relevant sources to identify the purpose, audience and context and to determine the reliability and relevance of information  | * analysing media portrayal of civics and citizenship issues such as freedom of the press to identify viewpoints, bias and stereotypes
* ***critiquing media portrayals of a minority or vulnerable group and identifying stereotypes***
* examining the language choices used by candidates in an election campaign or by a lobby group ***or civil society organisation*** to identify the purpose and audience
 |
| ***Participation,* problem-solving and decision-making** Use active listening and empathy to appreciate multiple perspectives and strategies to negotiate and resolve differences  | * identifying the influences or circumstances that may have informed two or more different perspectives about a civics and citizenship idea or issue, ***such as same-sex marriage***
* assessing assumptions in people’s thinking, inviting alternative opinions ***and using human rights to inform discussions***
* ***Identifying how the Convention on the Rights of the Child gives children and young people the right to participate in the development of policies and programs that impact on their lives***.
* ***Implementing culturally competent practices in a meeting***
 |
| Use ~~democratic~~ ***consensus decision making*** processes to reach consensus as a group on a course of action relating to a civics or citizenship issue and plan for that action  | * participating in a mock court case as a member of a jury to hand down a collective judgement about a case related to criminal law
* ***holding a formal meeting of a civil society group to develop a strategy for action on a human rights issue***
 |
| **Communication and reflection** Present civics and citizenship ideas using subject-specific language for an intended purpose, audience, and context  | * creating a graphic representation to show how citizens can participate in Australia’s democracy
* using appropriate terms and concepts such as ***‘human rights***, ’‘liberties’, ‘statutory law’, ‘civil law’
 |
| Reflect on personal identity and commitment to democratic citizenship and what it means for self, for interactions with others and for the community  | * assessing how personal experiences and circumstances affect who they associate with and how they relate to others
* identifying the values positions that may inform their commitment to democratic citizenship
* reflecting on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives of identity and what it means to be Australian
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**Year 9**

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| **Year-level description** The Year 9 curriculum builds student understanding of how Australia’s democracy operates and enables change. Students examine the ways political parties, interest groups, media and other individuals and groups influence government and decision-making processes. They look at the features and principles of Australia’s court system, including its role in applying and interpreting Australian law. Students also examine global connectedness and how this is shaping contemporary Australian society. A framework for developing students’ civics and citizenship knowledge, understanding and skills at this year level is provided by the following **inquiry questions**: * What influences shape the operation of Australia's democracy?
* How does Australia's court system work in support of a democratic and just society?
* How does citizen participation in a global and interconnected world influence notions of citizenship, identity and diversity?
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| **Content descriptions**  | **Elaborations (changes noted in *bold and italics*)** |
| How citizens’ choices are shaped at election time through public debate, the media, social media, opinion polls, advertising and political party campaigns  | * examining a range of strategies used to persuade citizens’ electoral choices
* ***examining how media diversity contributes to peoples’ right to information***
* ***investigating how the fundamental freedoms of speech, religion and association impact of democracy***
 |
| **Laws, *rights* and citizens** The key features of Australia’s court system, including the hierarchy and jurisdictions of federal, state and territory courts  | * describing the structure of Australia’s court hierarchy, such as level of hearing, type of law and realm of law
* allocating a selection of hypothetical cases from different types of law, such as criminal law, consumer law, family law, environmental law, ***anti-discrimination law,*** ***human rights law*** and workplace law, and/or jurisdiction to the courts in which they would be heard
 |
| The role of courts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ means of legal governance, to apply and interpret the law, resolve disputes and make law through judgements  | * describing and comparing the different roles of criminal courts and civil courts
* explaining how courts can make law through the use of precedent and interpretation of statutes
* using a relevant case study of a breach of rights being addressed through the court system, ***such as the 2012 Equal pay Case[[30]](#endnote-30)***
* investigating how ~~citizens~~ ***people*** can be empowered by the legal system
* investigating how communities can resolve disputes, for example, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ legal governance
 |
| The key principles of Australia’s justice system, including equality before the law, habeas corpus, impartiality of the law, independent judiciary, fair trial and right of appeal | * describing what is meant by each principle and how each works to protect ***people’s rights*** ~~citizens~~ and contribute to a fair society
* investigating how the principles of justice are reflected and communicated, for example, in the symbols, dress, ceremony, rituals and rules of behaviour used in Australia’s court system
* examining factors that can undermine the application of the principles of justice, for example, bribery, coercion of witnesses, trial by media, or social media and court delays
 |
| **Citizenship, diversity and identity** The influence of traditional and new media in shaping identities and attitudes to diversity  | * examining how traditional and new media represent minority groups in Australian society and assessing the impact those representations have on community cohesiveness
* ***Examining how traditional and new media represent women in Australian society and how this could contribute to discrimination and influence Australian democracy***
* ***Investigate a human rights campaign that uses new media and identify how members of the public have engaged in the issue***
 |
| Reflect on personal identity and commitment to democratic citizenship and what it means for self, for interactions with others and for the community  | * identifying behaviours (verbal and non-verbal) that can be used to better understand others and establish and maintain positive relationships
* ***Identifying how to use inclusive language to establish and maintain positive relationships***
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**Year 10**

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| **Year-level description** The Year 10 curriculum develops student understanding of how Australia maintains a civil society which recognises its responsibilities within Australia and internationally. Students examine Australia’s role and responsibilities within the international context, such as its involvement with the United Nations. Students also study the purpose and work of the High Court, including its role in interpreting Australia’s obligations under international law. They investigate the values and practices that enable a civil society to be maintained. A framework for developing students’ civics and citizenship knowledge, understanding and skills at this year level is provided by the following inquiry questions: * How is Australia’s democracy defined and shaped by the global context?
* How are government policies shaped by Australia’s international legal obligations?
* What is a civil society and how can it be maintained?
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| **Content Descriptions** | **Elaborations (changes noted in *bold and italics*)** |
| ***Government and democracy***Australia’s role and responsibilities at a global level, including provision of foreign aid, peacekeeping, and participation in international organisations, particularly the United Nations  | * defining what international citizenship means and how Australia interprets and fulfils this role
* identifying and categorising the types of assistance that Australia provides in the Asia region and internationally, for example, scholarships to study in Australia, peacekeeping, people with expertise to help with running elections, health programs, and technology
* ***analysing Australia’s engagement with international human rights processes such as treaty bodies or the Universal Periodic Review into Australia’s human rights performance.[[31]](#endnote-31)***
* analysing the role of the United Nations and Australia’s membership of and involvement with it, including Australia’s financial contributions, representation in the organisation, and adherence to conventions and declarations that Australia has ratified
 |
| **Laws, *rights* and citizens**The role of the High Court, including its role in interpreting the Constitution and Australia’s international legal obligations | * exploring an instance of a High Court judgement in interpreting and applying Australian law and applying international legal obligations to Australian law, ***such as important cases involving immigration detention in Al-Kateb[[32]](#endnote-32) and Re Woolley[[33]](#endnote-33) or exploring freedom of speech in Australia***
 |
| How international law and Australia’s international legal obligations shape Australian law and government policies, including in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples  | * listing some of the international agreements Australia has ratified and identifying examples of how each one might shape government policies and laws, for example, protection ***of human rights*** and World Heritage areas
* researching the ***Convention on the Rights of the Child,*** International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and identifying how these have and may further shape Australian government policies with regard to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
* ***Exploring a human rights statement of compatibility used in Australia’s parliament[[34]](#endnote-34)***
 |
| ***Citizenship, diversity and identity***The concepts of the ‘common good’ and a ‘civil society’ and the challenges to sustaining a civil society such as the influence of vest interests, organised crime and corruption, incapacity to resolve disputes, and lawlessness | * finding various definitions of these two terms and using them to create a common understanding
* identifying examples to support or challenge the idea that Australia is a civil society which incorporates the idea of the common good
* ***exploring the role of civil society organisations in promoting ideas of the common good***
* ***analysing a current strategy of a civil society organisation or movement to protect human rights***
* listing situations that can threaten a civil society, ***such as racism, sexism or homophobia,*** and identifying the features of Australia’s democratic system which may be used to respond to such threats
* using media reports to identify contemporary examples of behaviour or situations that pose a threat to Australian civil society.
 |
| Formal process used to resolve conflicts in Australian communities, including, conciliation, arbitration and judicial determination | * clarifying why parties who have a disagreement, for example, a divorcing couple, ***employer and employee***, or juvenile offender and victim, might opt to use processes other than judicial determination to resolve their situation
* analysing a current example from the media which ***could have*** involved a formal conflict resolution process, for example, arbitration of an industrial dispute **or conciliation of allegations of discrimination at work**
 |
| ***Analysis, synthesis and interpretation***Use critical thinking to assess the effectiveness of democratic practices and systems  | * using push-pull analysis to evaluate the factors that influence where and how Australia contributes resources to alleviate global poverty ***and protect human rights***
* developing a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis of a process used to resolve conflicts, for example, conciliation, arbitration, judicial determination
 |
| Identify and account for different interpretations and points of view  | * analysing how an interpretation or point of view was arrived at by examining the reliability of the information used and the circumstances involved
* ***Analysing how the conciliation process at the Australian Human Rights Commission uses the law to reach resolution***
 |
| Develop a reasoned argument based on evidence to support a position  | * developing an argument about Australia’s commitment to its international legal obligations that provides an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the evidence provided or alternative claims being made
* ***examine if Australia has met its obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child***
 |
| Use ~~democratic~~ processes to reach consensus as a group on a course of action relating to a civics or citizenship issue and plan for that action  | * developing a plan for action that takes into account challenges, opportunities, risks and strategies to respond to a civics and citizenship issue
 |
| Reflect on personal identity and commitment to democratic citizenship and what it means for self, for interactions with others and for the community  | * identifying leadership qualities for democratic citizenship (such as initiative, ***ethics, compassion,*** ***people skills,*** vision, resolve, leading by example)
 |

1. Australian Human Rights Commission, *Strengthening Human Rights Education in the Civics and Citizenship Curriculum, Recommendations on the Civics and Citizenship Shape Paper* (2012), p 8. At <http://www.humanrights.gov.au/strengthening-human-rights-education-civics-and-citizenship-curriculum-2012> (viewed 3 June 2013). [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. See for example ACARA, *Draft Civics and Citizenship Curriculum* (2013) p 21. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Citizenship Status by Age,* Census of Population and Housing (2011). [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. For a summary of protections under federal anti-discrimination laws see Australian Human Rights Commission, *Legislation* (2013). At <http://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/legal/legislation> (viewed 6 June 2013). [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. See for example, *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, 1966, Preamble, At <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CCPR.aspx> (viewed 4 June 2013). [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
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13. *CRC*, 1989, art 12. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child*, The Rights of the Child to be Heard,* General comment No. 12, CRC/C/GC/12 (2009), para 13 At <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/comments.htm> (viewed 30 May 2013). [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
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19. Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Citizenship Status by Age,* Census of Population and Housing (2011). [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
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27. Recognise, *Schools Kit* (2013). At <http://www.recognise.org.au/get-involved/schools-kit> (viewed 5 June 2013). [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. *CRC,* art 24 (c) [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. A statement of compatibility is required by all bills that pass through the Australian Parliament. It is an assessment of whether the Bill is compatible with the rights and freedoms recognised in international human rights treaties that Australia has signed. See Attorney-General’s Department, Parliamentary Scrutiny (2013). At <http://www.ag.gov.au/RightsAndProtections/HumanRights/PublicSector/Pages/Parliamentaryscrutiny.aspx> (viewed 6 June 2013). [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. Fair Work Australia, *Remuneration Case*, 1 February 2012. Fair Work Australia recognised that social and community services workers have been undervalued on the basis of gender and that rates of pay in these sectors should be significantly increased. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. The Universal Periodic Review occurs every 4 years and is a report card of Australia’s progress meeting its human rights obligations under International Human Rights law. For more information see Australian Human Rights Commission, *Australia’s Universal Periodic Review on Human Rights* (2012). At <http://www.humanrights.gov.au/australias-universal-periodic-review-human-rights> (viewed 7 June 2013); For a user friendly database on Australia’s performance at the Universal Periodic Review see UPR-Info, *Database of UPR Recommendations* (2013). At <http://www.upr-info.org/database/> (viewed 7 June 2013). [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. Al-Kateb v Godwin (2004) 219 CLR 562, where a majority of the High Court held that the mandatory detention provisions in the Migration Act that resulted in the indefinite detention of a stateless Palestinian were constitutionally valid [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. Re Woolley; Ex parte Applicants M276/2003 (2004) 225 CLR 1, where the High Court upheld the constitutional validity of the long-term detention of children [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. A statement of compatibility is required by all bills that pass through the Australian Parliament. It is an assessment of whether the Bill is compatible with the rights and freedoms recognised in international human rights treaties that Australia has signed. See Attorney-General’s Department, Parliamentary Scrutiny (2013). At <http://www.ag.gov.au/RightsAndProtections/HumanRights/PublicSector/Pages/Parliamentaryscrutiny.aspx> (viewed 6 June 2013). [↑](#endnote-ref-34)