



**Stage 6
Languages Beginners
Syllabuses**

Advice on Programming and Assessment

2008

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1 The revised syllabuses

1.1 The syllabuses

The revised *Stage 6 Arabic Beginners Syllabus* is available on the Board of Studies NSW website (www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au), and has been distributed to schools. It will be implemented in the Preliminary course 2008. The first HSC examination will be in 2009. The revised syllabus will replace the current syllabus, which is described in two documents, the *Arabic 2 Unit Z Syllabus* and the *Stage 6 Arabic Beginners Syllabus Amendments*.

While the Board's revised Beginners syllabuses provide a new approach and differ to an extent from the current syllabuses, there are also many similarities. The revised syllabuses build on the current syllabuses in directions identified through research into the teaching of languages in other systems nationally and internationally. They have been developed based on consultation at forums, meetings and during wide circulation of the draft syllabus. Objectives, outcomes and assessment requirements reflect the philosophy of the New HSC and a standards-referenced framework, and ensure a level of rigour and challenge consistent with other Stage 6 courses.

The Board's revised Beginners syllabuses continue to provide an opportunity for students with little or no background in a language to take up the study of that language as beginners in Stage 6. All students wishing to enrol in a Beginners course are required to meet the eligibility criteria outlined in Section 8.2.2.3 of the Board of Studies' *Assessment, Certification and Examination (ACE) Manual*. Students must also complete the *Beginners Languages Eligibility Declaration*, which includes a statutory declaration, in the *ACE Manual*. All documentation relating to a student's eligibility should be kept by the school until the student completes the HSC course in the Beginners language.

The revised Beginners syllabuses are derived from the *Framework for Stage 6 Languages Beginners Syllabuses* (2005). This ensures parity across the Beginners courses and defines clearly the knowledge and understanding that students are expected to achieve, as well as the skills and processes they are to learn and develop. The syllabus objectives represent the communicative use of the language, and integrate the macro skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing.

1.2 Structure of the Preliminary and HSC courses

The learning outcomes are the same for the Preliminary and Higher School Certificate courses. In the Preliminary course, students will develop their communication skills in the language, and their knowledge and understanding of language and culture.

The HSC course provides opportunities for students to extend and refine their skills, and to gain deeper knowledge and understanding. Other features of the two courses include:

- objectives that integrate the communicative use of the language with linguistic and intercultural knowledge and understanding
- outcomes that provide explicit statements of the knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes that each student will be expected to achieve as a result of effective teaching and learning
- *Learn about* and *Learn to* statements that are derived from the outcomes and comprise the course content that is to be studied within the context of the prescribed topics
- a list of text types that students may be expected to produce in the external examination
- the use of dictionaries, not only to enhance learning throughout the course, but also as a reference tool in the HSC examination
- parity across the eight syllabuses in internal assessment requirements and external examination specifications which reflect the Board's *Principles for Examination and Assessment in HSC Syllabuses*.

2 Support for implementation – advice on programming and assessment

This support document has been developed in collaboration with the NSW Department of Education and Training, the Association of Independent Schools of NSW and the Catholic Education Commission NSW. It has been designed to assist teachers in understanding key aspects of the revised Beginners syllabuses and to provide guidance for their implementation. The document shows how these aspects can be incorporated into appropriate teaching, learning and assessment programs that clearly set out what students should know and be able to do by the end of the Preliminary and HSC courses.

Teachers may find that current programs can be adapted to meet the requirements of the revised syllabuses, and that a number of existing units of work will form the basis of effective teaching, learning and assessment programs.

Current resources will be appropriate for use with the revised syllabuses, although possibly with some adjustments in the way teachers use them. A list of suggested teaching and learning resources, including dictionaries, will be placed on the Board's website .

Generic requirements for internal and external assessment will ensure consistency across languages. Teachers should ensure that their assessment programs reflect changes to the weighting of components, especially for the HSC internal assessment where the weightings are mandatory.

The support materials included in this document comprise:

- advice on programming, including a suggested model for teachers to use in adapting their current programs or in developing new programs for Beginners courses
- advice on internal assessment, including a sample assessment task planning proforma which illustrates the Board of Studies' approach to assessing student achievement.

The following documents will be available on the Board of Studies' website www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au

- a specimen paper package for each of the Beginners courses
- prescribed character lists for Chinese and Japanese.

3 Advice on programming

The acquisition of a language is a cumulative process that can be represented as a spiral that increases in breadth and depth of knowledge, understanding and skills, as students progress through a stage of learning, experiencing a language across a range of learning contexts.

A fundamental step in the design of an effective teaching, learning and assessment program is the establishment of a scope and sequence plan. The scope and sequence plan provides an overview of the units of work to be taught in the Preliminary and HSC courses, with details about placement, sequence and duration.

3.1 Establishing a scope and sequence plan

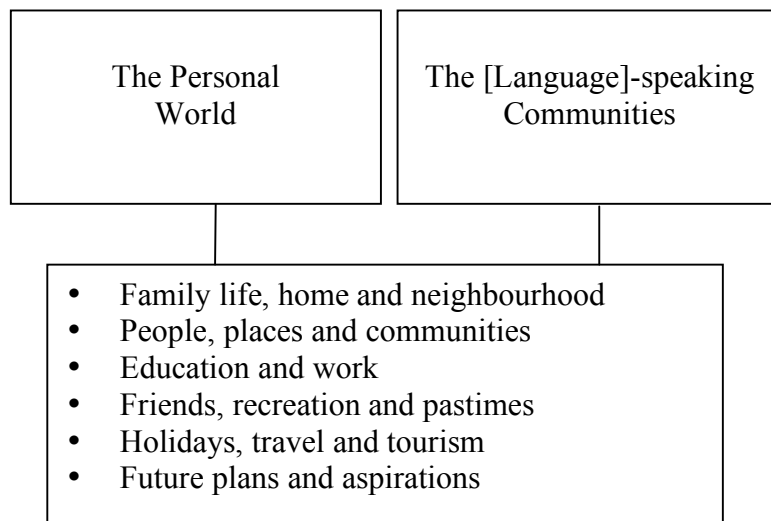
A number of factors should be considered when establishing a scope and sequence plan:

Syllabus requirements

For Beginners courses, prescribed topics provide contexts in which students develop, extend and refine their communication skills in the language and develop their knowledge and understanding of language and culture.

The prescribed topics should be studied from two interdependent perspectives:

- the personal world
- the [Language]-speaking communities.



Further considerations

When designing a scope and sequence plan, teachers should decide on the order in which the prescribed topics will be studied, and the time that will be required to cover the scope of each prescribed topic.

Teachers should also consider:

- the specific needs, interests and abilities of students
- the most effective use of existing and available resources
- prior knowledge and learning experiences of students
- the provision of a range of learning experiences that increase in challenge and sophistication.

The syllabus content is expressed in the form of *Learn about* and *Learn to* statements, which are derived from the syllabus outcomes. These statements form the basis for planning programs of study that will enable students to maximise their learning and demonstrate the outcomes in a range of learning contexts.

The following sample scope and sequence plan is an example of a model that teachers may wish to consider.

3.2 Sample scope and sequence plan for the Preliminary course

Total Hours: 120 indicative

Outcomes	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3
A student:	Family life, home and neighbourhood (hours)	Friends, recreation and pastimes (hours)	People, places and communities (hours)
1.1 establishes and maintains communication in [Language]	✓	✓	✓
1.2 manipulates linguistic structures to express ideas effectively in [Language]	✓	✓	✓
1.3 sequences ideas and information	✓	✓	✓
1.4 applies knowledge of the culture of [Language]-speaking communities to interact appropriately	✓	✓	✓
2.1 understands and interprets information in texts using a range of strategies	✓	✓	✓
2.2 conveys the gist of and identifies specific information in texts	✓	✓	✓
2.3 summarises the main points of a text	✓	✓	✓
2.4 draws conclusions from or justifies an opinion about a text	✓	✓	✓
2.5 identifies the purpose, context and audience of a text	✓	✓	✓
2.6 identifies and explains aspects of the culture of [Language]-speaking communities in texts	✓	✓	✓
3.1 produces texts appropriate to audience, purpose and context	✓	✓	✓
3.2 structures and sequences ideas and information	✓	✓	✓
3.3 applies knowledge of diverse linguistic structures to convey information and express original ideas in [Language]	✓	✓	✓
3.4 applies knowledge of the culture of [Language]-speaking communities to the production of texts	✓	✓	✓
	Suggested sub-topics	Suggested sub-topics	Suggested sub-topics
Note that the lists of sub-topics are neither exhaustive nor definitive; they are suggestions only.	Greetings and introductions Family and pets House and home Life at home Daily routine Food and drinks Local area	Appearance and personality Shops and shopping Local transport Health and fitness Leisure and sport Going out	Entertainment Famous people Places of interest Nationalities Town and country Special events

3.3 Sample scope and sequence plan for the Preliminary course

Total Hours: 120 indicative

Outcomes	Topic 4	Topic 5	Topic 6	Topic 7
A student:	Education and work (hours)	Holidays, travel and tourism (hours)	Future plans and aspirations (hours)	Bringing it all together – Expanding and Enriching (hours)
1.1 establishes and maintains communication in [Language]	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.2 manipulates linguistic structures to express ideas effectively in [Language]	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.3 sequences ideas and information	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.4 applies knowledge of the culture of [Language]-speaking communities to interact appropriately	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.1 understands and interprets information in texts using a range of strategies	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.2 conveys the gist of and identifies specific information in texts	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.3 summarises the main points of a text	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.4 draws conclusions from or justifies an opinion about a text	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.5 identifies the purpose, context and audience of a text	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.6 identifies and explains aspects of the culture of [Language]-speaking communities in texts	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.1 produces texts appropriate to audience, purpose and context	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.2 structures and sequences ideas and information	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.3 applies knowledge of diverse linguistic structures to convey information and express original ideas in [Language]	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.4 applies knowledge of the culture of [Language]-speaking communities to the production of texts	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Suggested sub-topics	Suggested sub-topics	Suggested sub-topics	Suggested sub-topics
Note that the lists of sub-topics are neither exhaustive nor definitive; they are suggestions only.	School studies and activities School routine Occupations Work places Part-time work	Holiday destinations Transport Accommodation Seasons and weather Sightseeing Help!	Skills Possibilities Travel plans Holiday jobs Careers	Relationships and feelings Out and about Celebrations Town and country Australia’s connections with [Language]-speaking communities Future education The right career Travelling in [Language]-speaking communities

3.4 Programming units of work

The Languages Beginners Stage 6 syllabuses promote an approach to programming that emphasises the outcomes as the focal point. The annotated proforma for a unit of work in Section 3.5 of this document has been developed using the following process:

Step 1 *Identify outcomes*

Identify the outcomes that will be addressed in the unit. It is *recommended* that all outcomes be addressed.

Step 2 *Select the topic*

Select from the prescribed topics in Section 8.2 of the syllabus.

Step 3 *Select the relevant syllabus content*

Select the *Learn about* and *Learn to* statements which will be the focus for the unit of work. Organise the statements into a logical sequence according to the learning context.

Step 4 *Determine the evidence of learning*

Identify the specific evidence of learning to be observed through the teaching, learning and assessment activities. This evidence will enable judgements to be made about achievement in relation to the outcomes and content.

Step 5 *Plan the teaching, learning and assessment activities*

Plan the most suitable teaching, learning and assessment activities for the selected content, ensuring that they will provide the desired evidence of learning determined in Step 4. Teachers are encouraged to include creative and stimulating experiences that present the content in a meaningful context for students. Activities should be student-centred, promoting the development of knowledge, understanding and skills.

Assessment for learning activities occur as a normal part of the teaching process. Assessment tasks should relate to the evidence of learning determined in Step 4 and be designed to ensure a valid measurement of student performance in relation to the targeted outcomes.

Step 6 *Plan feedback opportunities*

Feedback provides students with the necessary information and direction to progress their learning, and occurs normally through good teaching practice, often in an informal manner. However, when planning units of work, teachers should consider how to maximise feedback in the context of the teaching, learning and assessment activities and how the feedback contributes to student learning.

Step 7 *Plan opportunities for reflection and evaluation*

Evaluate the extent to which the planning of the unit has remained focused on the outcomes. After the unit has been implemented, provide an opportunity for both teacher and students to reflect on and evaluate the degree to which students have progressed as a result of the experiences and what should be done next to assist them in their learning.

3.5 Sample unit proforma

<p>Language: [Language] Beginners</p>	<p>Target group: Preliminary or HSC</p>	<p>Topic: Select from the prescribed topics in the syllabus, Section 8.2.</p>	<p>Indicative time: Allocate sufficient time to cover the scope of the unit within the context of the essential syllabus content, which comprises 120 indicative hours of study for each of the Preliminary and HSC courses.</p>
<p>Unit description: Provide an overview of the unit, identifying its purpose and placing it in a learning context, eg how it relates to prior learning.</p>			
<p>Outcomes Select outcomes from the syllabus appropriate for the unit of work. If you write them using the syllabus codes only, it is recommended that all outcomes be presented in full at the front of your teaching program for easy reference. Alternatively, you might prefer to enter them in full in this section.</p>	<p>Students learn about: Select and enter these statements directly from the syllabus without alteration then, if appropriate, add contextual detail and examples that relate to the unit. Limit your selection to the key ones for the unit of work to make your emphasis explicit. There should be a matching statement for each 'learn about' in the 'learn to' section.</p>		<p>Students learn to: Select and enter these statements directly from the syllabus without alteration – then, if appropriate, add contextual detail and examples that relate to the unit. There should be a matching statement for each 'learn to' in the 'learn about' section.</p>
<p>Teaching, learning and assessment activities: This section should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • build the field to explain how the context of the unit will be established and reinforced by drawing on students' prior learning and cultural knowledge • list the activities in which students will engage • show the sequence of activities • show how students' learning will develop • include a culminating activity that brings all the learning of the unit together. <p>Consider how your progress through the unit will be recorded.</p> <p>Mark with the symbol (*) the activities you will include in your program of assessment.</p>			<p>Evidence of learning and ongoing feedback for students Include the observable evidence of learning that will allow judgements to be made in relation to the outcomes, eg ability to maintain an interaction, identification of main ideas and specific details in texts, use of vocabulary and structures, sequencing of ideas, using culturally appropriate language. Show how students will be provided with feedback to inform further progress, eg teacher observation and oral/written feedback, self-evaluation, peer evaluation.</p>

<p>Grammar – recognition and use: <i>Select from the grammar prescribed for productive and receptive use in the syllabus, Section 8.</i></p> <p>Characters – recognition and use: <i>For Chinese and Japanese, select from the prescribed characters.</i></p>	<p>Resources <i>Include a variety of texts, eg extracts from newspapers, magazines and films, advertisements, announcements, reports, messages, notes, emails, websites, diary entries, postcards, conversations, interviews, songs, puzzles, recipes.</i></p>
<p>Evaluation and variation <i>Reflect on and evaluate the degree to which the unit has remained focused on the outcomes. Evaluate the degree to which students have progressed and decide on strategies to assist them in their subsequent learning. Include any variations you implemented or would choose to implement the next time you teach this unit.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Date completed:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Signature:</p>	

4 Advice on internal assessment

Designing effective learning and assessment experiences requires the selection of activities that develop students' knowledge, understanding and skills and allow evidence of learning to be gathered. Methods of gathering evidence include informal teacher observation, questioning, peer evaluation and self-evaluation, as well as more structured assessment activities and formal assessment tasks.

The information in this document has been developed using advice provided in the Board of Studies' publications, *HSC Assessment in a Standards-referenced Framework – A Guide to Best Practice* (2003) and *The New Higher School Certificate Assessment Support Document* (1999). These documents assist teachers in incorporating the key features of standards-referenced assessment into their assessment planning. Teachers are strongly advised to consult these documents when designing assessment programs and individual tasks. The documents can be viewed or downloaded on the board's website www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/manuals

The following principles underpin the development of an internal assessment program:

- Assessment of learning outcomes is an integral part of the teaching and learning process.
- Assessment of targeted outcomes occurs after the outcomes are addressed through teaching and learning strategies.
- Outcomes do not need to be assessed every time they are targeted for teaching and learning.
- All outcomes, excluding those explicitly addressing values and attitudes, are assessed as part of the assessment program.
- Well-designed assessment tasks can effectively assess more than one outcome and more than one component.

Internal assessment programs for the Preliminary and HSC courses should provide a measure of student achievement based on a wider range of syllabus outcomes and content than those addressed in the external examination.

There is parity across the eight Beginners courses with regard to the requirements, components and weightings for internal assessment. Teachers will continue to use their discretion in determining the manner in which they allocate tasks within course content.

The suggested components and weightings for Preliminary assessment are:

Component	Weighting
<i>Speaking</i>	20
<i>Listening</i>	30
<i>Reading</i>	30
<i>Writing</i>	20

The mandatory components and weightings for internal HSC assessment are:

Component	Weighting
<i>Speaking</i>	20
<i>Listening</i>	30
<i>Reading</i>	30
<i>Writing</i>	20

When designing an assessment task, teachers should consider whether the task:

- is integral to the teaching and learning program
- clearly assesses syllabus outcomes
- has explicitly stated purposes that are linked to the outcomes
- allows students to demonstrate the extent of their knowledge, understanding and skills
- provides explicit advice to students about the criteria being used to assess their performance
- includes marking guidelines, where appropriate, which are related to the criteria
- provides valid and reliable evidence of student learning
- allows for discrimination between students' performances.

The sample proforma for an assessment task in Section 4.1 below has been designed and annotated to reflect the guidelines described in the Board's assessment support documents.

4.1 Assessment task planning proforma

Language:	Target group:
Mark: Weighting:	Time required:
Syllabus topic(s): <i>Select from Section 8.2 of the syllabus</i>	
Component(s): <i>Consider designing the task to assess more than one component.</i>	
Context <i>Set the context for the task, linking it to the teaching and learning program. Assessment activities should be planned when the unit of work is being developed.</i>	
Task <i>Describe the task, linking it directly to the targeted outcomes.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Does the task reflect the weightings and components specified in the syllabus? Note that these are mandatory for the HSC course only (see Section 9.5 of the syllabus).</i> • <i>If the task comprises more than one component, is it clear how these components will be assessed?</i> • <i>Will the task be single-marked or double-marked?</i> • <i>What should students show that they know and/or can do?</i> • <i>Will the task allow each student to demonstrate his/her level of achievement?</i> • <i>Does the task reflect good assessment practice?</i> <p>www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus_hsc/newhsc_assessment.html</p>	
Outcomes to be assessed <i>Identify the syllabus outcomes that are to be assessed.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Internal assessment provides a measure of student's achievement based on a wider range of syllabus content and outcomes than may be covered by the external examination alone. This is where outcomes 1.4, 2.6 and 3.4 which relate to intercultural knowledge and understanding may be included.</i> 	
Marking criteria <i>Identify the criteria to be used when awarding marks. The marking guidelines relate to the criteria. Criteria should be established at the time the activity/task is designed.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Are criteria related to syllabus outcomes?</i> • <i>Do the criteria clearly indicate the basis for assessment?</i> • <i>Are the marking criteria given to the students prior to beginning the task?</i> • <i>Is there enough scope in the marking guidelines to differentiate between students?</i> 	
Feedback <i>Outline how feedback will be provided to students.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Does the feedback focus on the students' strengths and weaknesses as well as their marks?</i> • <i>Is the wording of the outcomes and the band descriptions used where appropriate?</i> • <i>Does the feedback assist students to improve their performance?</i> • <i>Will there be an opportunity for students to discuss the task and their performance?</i> 	

5 External assessment

The HSC external examination for each of the Languages Beginners courses will be developed in accordance with the Board's *Principles for Setting HSC Examinations in a Standards-Referenced Framework* (published in *Board Bulletin* Vol 8 No 9, Nov/Dec 1999).

For all information relating to the Board of Studies' requirements for assessing and reporting achievement in the Preliminary and HSC courses for the Higher School Certificate, see Section 9 of the [Language] syllabus. A Specimen HSC Examination paper for each language will be available on the Board of Studies website.