Outline Model Curriculum Framework: Australian History Years 3-10
(CONSULTATION DRAFT ONLY – CONFIDENTIAL AND NOT FOR CIRCULATION)

Preliminary Considerations

General

This draft document is based on the outcomes of the August 2006 National History Summit and draws on the questions, key dates and events (milestones) identified by the summit working group following the National Summit.

The document is intended to contribute to the development of model curriculum in Australian history. It focusses on ensuring that all students have an opportunity to study Australian history in a systematic, structured way, with consistently high standards and adequate timetable allocation, by the time they complete Year 10. The primary and secondary programs are outlined as two sequenced syllabuses.

The aim of the draft curriculum framework is first, to help all students have a thorough narrative understanding of Australian history, encompassing key milestones, by the time they finish Year 10 and second, to provide opportunities for in-depth studies of certain areas.

The final version of the Outline Model Curriculum Framework will provide guidance on fostering historical skills including (1) helping to prepare students for exercising their rights and responsibilities as citizens (2) helping them evaluate evidence and make judgements and (3) fostering their powers of historical imagination and empathy. The National Centre for History Education definition of historical literacy (www.hyperhistory.org) developed under the Commonwealth History Project provides initial guidance on skills issues.

Progression and assessment issues are not specifically addressed at this stage.

Primary Curriculum

The main aim of the primary program is to introduce students to topics in Australian history, which will be studied in more depth and breadth in mid-secondary school.

The National Statements of Learning for Civics and Citizenship have outlined a series of historical perspectives at Years 3 and 5 which are factored into the primary framework.
To reduce the problem of duplication between primary and secondary content, and consequent student lack of interest, the primary framework is based on a more local-to-national focus, with regional/global perspectives introduced where appropriate.

Bearing that in mind, at the operational level, many smaller and mid-sized primary schools have composite classes (eg Grades 3/4 and 5/6), with changes on a yearly basis (eg next year, in same school there may be a Grade 3 and composite 4/5). This approach militates against an orderly progression through a year-by-year narrative sequence. The initial suggestion is that the primary history framework be divided into mid-primary (3-4) and upper primary (5-6/7). Even so, there will still be repetition issues for a small number of students, which might be ameliorated by allowing students or groups of students, who have already shown competency in the unit objectives, to undertake a study in depth arising out of that topic.

In many primary schools, allowing for administrative and pastoral tasks, the time available for actual teaching in History/SOSE/HSIE is quite limited. Largely, the fixed points in the primary school curriculum are the literacy and numeracy blocks, together with PE. The various jurisdictions have slightly different approaches to literacy/numeracy but whatever it is that schools are asked to do, the literacy/numeracy blocks can frequently be self-contained. Accordingly, with so many non-history trained teachers working in this kind of arrangement, integrating history with literacy/numeracy may be difficult. Having said that, there could be an opportunity to work Australian history into the literacy/numeracy blocks but, at the moment, there is little support material for this kind of approach and one implication of the establishment of a national curriculum would be appropriate, high quality support/resource materials.

Time limitations suggest that Australian history needs to operate as a topic-based subject, where appropriate, using knowledge and skills from other subject areas but within in a very limited timeframe. For example, in a 5 week period of study, the Australian history topics might be studied for a recommended 20 hours which is still a large chunk out of the teaching week. This implies that some of that time may be fed into the literacy/numeracy blocks as integrated history tasks in, say, reading/fiction/poetry and number.

The factors outlined above lead to a recommendation that the primary approach to Australian history curriculum be (1) introductory (2) local-to-national (3) topic-based (20 hours) with four major (5-8 week) units, each unit examined through an enquiry question (4) studied in two phases, middle primary and upper primary (see below) (5) integrated with other curriculum areas where appropriate.
DRAFT PRIMARY CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK 3-6/7

Introduction

The primary Australian history curriculum framework is essentially locality/community-based, with national/international contexts where appropriate, together with strong links to the national Statements of Learning for Civics and Citizenship at Years 3 and 5 (indicated in italics). The framework is topic-based, with four major (5-8 week\(^1\)) units of work, each unit examined through a major enquiry question accompanied by subsidiary research questions, all to be followed by a summary research activity. The units should be studied in two phases (A) middle primary and (B) upper primary. **NB: primary teachers will need to be aware of the nature of the secondary Australian history framework to avoid duplication and repetition.** This framework is intended to complement existing curriculum frameworks at the state/territory level but, at the same time, operate as a discrete entity in order to maintain stability in the teaching and learning of Australian history in the face of periodic changes to curriculum approaches in the various jurisdictions. Although the scope of the framework is 3-6, schools may make the necessary adjustments in those states/territories where Year 7 is the final year of primary schooling.

Middle Primary

Proposed course outline:

- **Topic 1 What is Australia and who are Australians?**

This topic examines the development of Australia through the histories of the local members of indigenous communities and the pre-arrival and post-arrival histories of local indigenous/pioneer/migrant members of the community, using studies of the family, community members, and the locality. Students start with the here and now and work backwards through oral history, discussion of artefacts, domestic architecture, photographs and other forms of evidence. Students may then construct, for example, a settlement/migration project using evidence to construct a map of Australia, with the continent being peopled by successive waves of migration, with student connections to the different waves being explored in detail to develop a sense of change and development of Australian identity over time. How social interaction adapts and changes over time could form a research focus for this unit.

**Research questions**
Who were the First Australians in our local area?  
Who were the pioneers and settlers in our local area?  
Who were the more recent migrants in our local area?  
How did each group settle here?

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\(^1\) The 8 week maximum timeframe takes into account Tasmania’s three term year.

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What cultural approaches did these groups have and how does their cultural legacy contribute to Australia today?
How has Australia been settled over time?

National Statements of Learning for Civics and Citizenship

…events and individuals that have helped shape Australia’s democracy….consider the importance of ‘country’ to Australia’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples…events and personal and group stories…recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander influences…Australia’s history pre-dates British colonisation…explore Australia’s cultural diversity through personal and local histories

- Topic 2 What did our ancestors encounter in early Australia?

Students will undertake a unit based on the problems, local or national (or both), encountered in settling new lands. The unit will examine Aboriginal use of trade routes, traditional indigenous land use practices and how settlement altered the indigenous population’s use of the land and its social organization. It could also examine regional/national relationships of the first Australians as well as relationships within the local area. This unit will look then at local and national exploration, survival at sea, difficulties of non-indigenous settlement in a new land. The growth of European settlement in the different colonies may be represented and analysed graphically through basic statistics, and spatially by mapping settlement patterns over the initial few decades of settlement.

Science, technology and number should form a research focus in this unit by looking at the ways, for example, in which science and technology have been used and developed for exploration, survival and settlement and how numbers help us understand the past. This scientific/technological/mathematical perspective will allow hands-on experimentation, model building and interaction with the surrounding natural environment.

Research Questions

How did local/regional/national indigenous Australians manage their environment?
How was the land cleared and made ready for European-style agriculture?
How did European settlers interact with indigenous communities?
Can we see how settlements form patterns in the landscape?
How was shelter constructed in pre-European and post-European periods?
What science and technology was used in hunting and farming practices in pre-European and post-European settlement periods?
How did indigenous Australians and settlers gain access to, and use, water?
Upper Primary

- **Topic 3 How did we live then?**

Students investigate how daily life in the local area has changed over time by examining social and economic aspects of successive historical periods, from pre-historic to modern. Students will use source materials such as maps, paintings, newspapers, diaries, directories, online databases and transcriptions, and published secondary sources. Excursions in the local area could focus on streets, roads, buildings, cemeteries and other clues to the past to build up a picture of the period(s) under investigation. Health and the economics of everyday life could form a research focus in this unit.

In the final section of the unit students will focus on one aspect of the lives of those in the local area, and briefly go back to explore earlier origins of the object of study (for example local family, local organisation, local buildings) and then trace the development of the object of study through to the present day. This kind of study could range across the whole period or part of the period, for example, in recently settled areas, a modern local study might take in the past twenty years or so and place local events in a national context.

**Research Questions**

How has the nature and structure of society changed in the local area during the period of study?
How did people earn a living over the past two centuries?
How have economic aspects of daily life changed over time?
How did people live their everyday lives in pioneering Australia?
What health and diet problems did pioneering Australians face?

*National Statements of Learning for Civics and Citizenship*

*events and individuals that have helped shape Australia’s democracy….events and personal and group stories*

- **Topic 4 How did we construct a new nation?**

Students will examine the way in which Australians managed to live together at the local and national level and how they interacted with each other. They will also examine the significance of commemorative days, icons and heritage sites, how these are observed/regarded locally and how these relate to the development of a national identity. The dates studied will include Australia Day, Remembrance Day and Anzac Day and might include others. Local
icons might include commemorative statues and other artefacts, as well as avenues and streets named after particular events. Heritage sites might include domestic and civic buildings as well as surviving remnants of an earlier nomadic, industrial, commercial and agricultural ways of life. Civics education should form a research focus in this unit.

Research questions

How were Australian communities involved in making the decisions that affected their lives?
How did these decision-making processes change over time?
How did the development of Australian democratic values contribute to the growth of the nation?
How do local communities commemorate the development of Australia as a nation?

National Statements of Learning for Civics and Citizenship

...events and individuals that have helped shape Australia’s democracy...events and personal and group stories.. (significant individuals and events...social organization of Australia’s Aboriginal peoples prior to 1788...how Australia was governed...civic terms.

Final Research Topic

To place events in a proper historical context, students will construct and discuss parallel timelines of the major events/periods in Australian national history, State/Territory history and local history, using and consolidating the knowledge gained in their study of all four primary-level topics.
Secondary Curriculum

The secondary program is intended to make the study of a sequenced narrative in Australian history memorable, challenging and enjoyable for students in the mid-secondary school.

This is a core program (ie ranked with English/science and mathematics) that has to be covered by end of Year 10.

The national *Statements of Learning for Civics and Citizenship* historical perspectives at Year 9 have been factored into the framework.

The milestones, curriculum content associated with them, and questions are outlined below. Further work is being done on the interaction between the questions and the curriculum content.

As with the primary model, the curriculum framework should be divided into levels rather than years eg, in this case, mid-secondary (9-10).

As far as the number of hours is concerned, the secondary curriculum framework provides a basis for the study of Australian history as a distinct subject in Years 9 and 10 with a recommended 200 hours of study over the two years. The proposed approach to timetabling Australian history at the secondary level is for schools to allocate enough time per week for serious study, either by semesterisation, or by ensuring that Australian history is taught for a minimum of three normal length (45-50 minute), or equivalent, lessons per week over the school year.

Timetable allocation is a school responsibility and, in that context, the secondary framework should encourage opportunity for study in depth. This means avoiding the 2 lessons per week approach.

A small number of topics might be covered in Year 8. However, many schools have introduced variants of the middle school approach (integrated studies) in Years 7 and 8, which complicates matters. Moreover, the links between Australian history and other histories in Years 8-10 also need to be considered to allow for the study of other histories, such as ancient and medieval history.
SECONDARY CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK 9-10

Introduction

The secondary curriculum framework is based on a series of key events, known as milestones, which are placed in a sequence of topic periods. The milestones are the intersected by a number of questions. These questions foster the development of student historical enquiry skills and provide an opportunity for depth studies, the development of higher order thinking and extended writing.

The topic periods will be studied as a context for the milestones. The topic periods, milestones and questions themselves, studied in chronological sequence, will need to be completed by the end of Year 10.

The milestones, grouped as they are in a sequence of topic periods, represent the essential content of the secondary framework but they are not exclusive. In other words, other milestone events in particular topic periods may be included at the school level and, where appropriate, the selection of essential milestones might be discussed to allow students to deal with issues of significance. Nevertheless, the essential milestones are the non-negotiable events, and the significance of each is to be studied in some depth.

Furthermore, where, in some cases, milestone events seem to replicate the study of similar events in primary school, teachers will need to be aware that the secondary framework builds on the local and introductory nature of the primary topics by taking a more national, regional and global perspective. **NB: Secondary teachers will need to be aware of the nature of the primary Australian history framework to avoid duplication and repetition.**

The questions address, in sequence, three broad chronological categories as follows:

- Pre-Federation – a minimum of 3 questions
- Post Federation – a minimum of 3 questions
- Whole period – a minimum of 2 questions

The range that can be covered under the questions is broad. For example ‘How did Australia become a nation’ includes the rise of national feeling and not simply the federation movement; ‘Who could be an Australian’ includes the changing status of Aboriginal people as well as which migrant groups were discouraged, allowed and welcomed; the role of government in protecting livelihood includes both the ‘Australian Settlement’ adopted after Federation and the free trade and other economic liberal policies argued for early in the twentieth century and adopted by its end.
## Topic Periods and Milestones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic Periods and suggested content</th>
<th>Milestones</th>
<th>Questions that may be applicable</th>
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| **First peoples**  
40-60,000 BC - 1600 AD  
Background to, and function of, Dreamtime myths. Comparison with other indigenous myths. The archaeological evidence for pre-historic migration, settlement, living/labour, movement, social groupings. | 40-60,000 years ago - First peoples occupied Australia | Q1  
Q2  
Q7  
Q8  
Q14 |
| **European encounters**  
1606 – 1788  
Reasons behind European exploration and expansion. Course of Dutch, French and British exploratory expeditions. | 1606 - First Dutch contact  
1770 - James Cook explores the east coast | Q1  
Q2 |
| **Colonial development**  
1788 – 1857  
Transportation as a remedy. Formation of a penal colony and the workings of a convict-based society. Mapping Australia. Moves towards emancipation and free settlement. The social and economic impact of the discovery of gold in NSW and Victoria. | 1788 - British Convict Settlement, Sydney  
1801-3 - Flinders Circumnavigation of Australia  
1840 - Convict Transportation ends to mainland  
1851 - Gold rushes start | Q1  
Q2  
Q3  
Q4  
Q5  
Q6  
Q7  
Q8  
Q9  
Q10  
Q11  
Q14 |
| **Self Governing Colonies**  
1857 – 1901  
1889 - Parkes calls for Federation at Tenterfield  
1890s - Economic Depression and Strikes | Q1  
Q2  
Q3  
Q4  
Q5  
Q6  
Q7  
Q8  
Q9  
Q10  
Q11  
Q14 |
**New Nation**

1901 – 1914

- Global/regional migration movements, race relations and the white Australia policy. Suffrage movement and its importance. Growth of trade union movement internationally and nationally, and impact on social and political landscape.

| Q4 |
| Q7 |
| Q8 |
| Q10 |
| Q11 |
| Q13 |

| 1901 - Commonwealth of Australia formed |
| 1901 - ‘White Australia’ policy introduced |
| 1907 - Family Wage determined (Harvester judgment) |

**Australia in WWI**

1914 – 1918

- Gallipoli campaign
- The Anzac legend
- Impact of war on the domestic politics and on domestic social conditions. Western Front campaign

| Q7 |
| Q8 |
| Q12 |

| 1914 - Australia enters WWI |
| 1915 - Australian soldiers fight at Gallipoli |
| 1918 - Armistice on the Western Front |

**Inter-war Years and Depression** 1918 – 1939

- Social and cultural impact of the war generally, casualty rates and adjustment of returning soldiers particularly. Social and economic growth in the immediate post-war period. The communications revolution – film/radio/cars/planes.
- Social and political impact of the Depression years on indigenous and non-indigenous communities. Developing political consciousness of indigenous community.
- Growing international tensions in Asia and Europe - and Australia’s response

| Q1 |
| Q4 |
| Q7 |
| Q13 |
| Q14 |

| 1929 - Great Depression starts |
| 1938 - Sesquicentenary of British settlement; The Aboriginal Day of Mourning |

**Australia in World War II** 1939 – 1945

- Implications of the war for all Australians. Study of the progress of the war from three standpoints (a) Australian contribution to northern hemisphere air/land/sea campaigns 1939-1942 (b) Australian contribution to land/sea/air campaign against Japanese military expansion 1941-1945 (c) Domestic impact of the war on society economy and politics.

| Q7 |
| Q12 |

| 1939 - Australia enters World War II |
| 1942 - Singapore falls; Darwin bombed; Kokoda Track |
Rebuilding Australia
1945 – 1967
International post-war migration movements and their social/political effect on Australia (development of multiculturalism in Australia...changes in government policies on issues, including immigration)

Australia and the Cold War (influence of past international events)

Australia’s developing international profile as a nation with a distinct identity.

The growth of a suburban consumer society and associated progress in domestic technology. Later effect of urbanism and suburban growth on rural Australia.

Shaping Modern Australia
1967 – date
International focus on civil rights and consequence for Australia (pursuit of citizenship rights.....effects of government policies on Australia’s Aboriginal people)

The Vietnam War and its political and social impact (influence of past international events)

Political movements and events in the 1960s and 1970s and their significance

Australia’s cultural, commercial and sporting contribution to the international community since 1960s

| 1946 - Large scale European migration begins | Q1 |
| 1949 - Snowy Mountains scheme begins | Q4 |
| 1951 - ANZUS treaty with the United States | Q7 |
| 1956 - First television broadcast in Australia; Melbourne Olympics | Q8 |
| 1967 - Constitutional referendum on Aborigines carried; End of ‘White Australia’ policy | Q9 |
| 1970-1 - Moratoriums to protest at Australia’s involvement in Vietnam War. | Q10 |
| 1975 - The Dismissal of the Labor Government | Q11 |
| 1992 - Mabo Judgment | Q12 |
| 2000 - Sydney Olympics | Q13 |
| 2005 - The Howard Government’s policy on multiculturalism changes | Q14 |
Secondary Questions

*Pre-Federation (minimum 3 questions)*

How did Aboriginal people live and how did they respond to the coming of Europeans? (Q2)

How did convict society change into a free society? (Q3)

What were the ideals for Australian society and how far were they realised? (Q5)

How did Australia’s democratic traditions emerge? (Q6)

*Post-Federation (minimum 3 questions)*

How did Australia become a nation? (Q10)

Who could be an Australian? (Q11)

Why did Australia go to war; what has been Australia’s experience of war? (Q12)

What role did governments play in improving the livelihoods of the people? (Q13)

*Whole Period (minimum 2 questions)*

What was the nature of the land and how have people interacted with it? (Q1)

What was the basis of Australia’s prosperity? How was the prosperity distributed? (Q4)

What were the roles of men and women? (Q7)

What religious faiths did Australians hold, and what were their influence? (Q8)

How different was the history of one of Queensland, Tasmania, South Australia, Western Australia from New South Wales and/or Victoria (Q9)

How did Australians spend their recreation and leisure time? (Q14)