



Education Report: Release of the refreshed Social Sciences curriculum content

To:	Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education		
Cc:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education Hon Kelvin Davis, Associate Minister of Education Hon Aupito William Sio, Associate Minister of Education		
Date:	3 November 2022	Priority:	High
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Messaging seen by Communications team:	No	Round Robin:	Yes

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is to seek your agreement to release the refreshed Social Sciences curriculum content, as part of the refresh of *The New Zealand Curriculum*.

Summary

1. *The New Zealand Curriculum* (NZC) is being refreshed to make sure every child experiences success in their learning, and that their progress and achievement across the full educational pathway from Years 1-13, is responded to and celebrated.
2. The Social Sciences learning area is the first learning area to be refreshed as part of the wider refresh of *The New Zealand Curriculum*, as it is where the new Aotearoa New Zealand's histories curriculum content sits. A draft of the refreshed Social Sciences learning area has been tested widely with the sector, ākonga, whānau, iwi and communities in terms 1-2 2022. The feedback we heard from these groups has now been incorporated and the refreshed content is now ready for release.
3. The refreshed Social Sciences learning area is future-focused and through this learning, ākonga develop understanding, knowledge, and skills about enduring local, national, and global social, cultural, economic, and political processes. They learn about environmental issues, such as those associated with human rights, inequity, mobility; and about religious diversity, alongside other diverse perspectives including cultures, identities, values, and faith. They will deepen their understanding of these issues as they progress through the learning phases.
4. Pending your agreement, the refreshed Social Sciences curriculum content will be available in PDF format on the new Curriculum Refresh website from 16 November 2022. The refresh website was launched at the end of September as a 'one stop shop' for

everything curriculum related and will transfer to sit on the Online Curriculum Hub (OCH) once it is launched.

5. The release of the new content in 2022 benefits schools, providing them with the wider refreshed Social Sciences learning area context, as they plan for implementation of Aotearoa New Zealand's histories from 2023. Exploration of the new content model in the context of Social Sciences is also an important part of our overall change and implementation plan for growing teacher and leader understanding of, and capabilities for, the refreshed NZC.
6. Feedback analysis (Annex 2) and a "*What we Heard*" overview (Annex 3) will also be released on 16 November 2022. They outline the feedback we heard from engagement with the sector, ākonga, whānau and communities, and how we responded. This approach mirrors that taken when we released the Aotearoa New Zealand's histories curriculum content.
7. The refreshed Social Sciences content is being released as a 'final draft'. This is because the refreshed curriculum content is being developed and released in phases, and some adjustments may be needed for alignment across the curriculum before the fully refreshed NZC is released in the New Zealand Gazette for schools to be fully implementing from the beginning of 2026.

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Recommended Actions

The Ministry of Education recommends you:

- a. **note** that the draft Social Sciences learning area was tested widely, alongside the draft Vision for Young People, with the sector, ākonga, whānau, iwi and communities in terms 1-2 2022, and the feedback we heard from these groups has been incorporated into the final draft

Noted

- b. **note** that the refreshed Social Sciences curriculum content will be available on the Curriculum Refresh website, which was launched at the end of September as a 'one stop shop' for everything curriculum related, until the launch of the Online Curriculum Hub (OCH)

Noted

- c. **note** that other than the Aotearoa New Zealand's histories content which must be taught from the beginning of 2023, schools and kura won't be expected to teach the refreshed Social Sciences learning area until the beginning of 2026, but they are encouraged to explore the new content, familiarise themselves with the Understand, Know, and Do progressions model, and plan for implementation

Noted

- d. **agree** that the final draft of the refreshed Social Sciences learning area is released on the Curriculum Refresh website on 16 November 2022

Agree / Disagree

e. **note** that we will release the feedback analysis and “*What we Heard*” overview, which outline what we heard during engagement and how we responded, alongside the refreshed Social Sciences learning area curriculum content

Noted

f. **agree** that the Ministry of Education release this Education Report in full alongside the release of the refreshed Social Sciences learning area curriculum content

Agree / Disagree.

Pauline

Pauline Cleaver
**Associate Deputy Secretary
Curriculum, Pathways & Progress
Te Poutāhū | Curriculum Centre**

3/11/2022

Jan Tinetti

Hon Jan Tinetti
**Associate Minister of
Education**

04/11/2022

Background

9. In September 2019, Cabinet agreed that the NZC and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* be updated to make explicit the expectation that Aotearoa New Zealand's histories (ANZH) are part of the local curriculum and marau ā-kura in all schools and kura [CAB-19-MIN-0455 refers, METIS 1204074 refers].
10. In December 2020, you agreed to the scope, process, and approach for changes to *The New Zealand Curriculum* (NZC) and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* (TMoA) so that all ākonga have access to an education that responds to their needs, that sustains their identities, languages, and cultures, and so that they are able to progress and experience success in schooling [METIS 1246277 refers]. The Ministry of Education is working alongside the sector, communities, and iwi to progress this work.
11. To provide clarity and make it easier for teachers to use the NZC, you agreed to a new, consistent approach for the content structure of the learning areas [METIS 1266499 refers]. Curriculum levels and achievement objectives have been replaced by a progressions approach with five phases of learning (Years 1-3, years 4-6, Years 7-8, Years 9-10 and Years 11-13). Each phase of learning has one progress outcome that describe what ākonga should Understand, Know and Do (UKD) at each phase of learning¹. The new ANZH curriculum content was the first to use this consistent structure and provided the sector and other stakeholders with an early indication of what the changes to the NZC would look like.
12. The Social Sciences learning area is the first learning area to be refreshed as part of the wider refresh of *The New Zealand Curriculum*, as it is where the new ANZH curriculum content sits. Seeing the full refreshed Social Sciences content will provide important context as schools and kura plan for implementation of ANZH from 2023.
13. During 2021, we worked with the Social Sciences Writing Group² to prepare a draft of the refreshed Social Sciences content using the new consistent content structure. The Writing Group worked with the Te Mātaiaho Reference Group (formerly the Bicultural and Inclusive Framework Working Group), Ohu Arataki, the coherence group, and key writers of ANZH. In September 2021, you agreed to the draft content being tested with the sector, ākonga, whānau and communities [METIS 1267995 refers].
14. In November 2021, Minister Hipkins announced a reset of the timelines for the national curriculum and assessment work programmes, in response to the ongoing impact of COVID-19 [METIS 1272052 refers]. This meant that engagement on the Social Sciences learning area draft content and the draft Vision for Young People was delayed from September 2021 to term 1 2022.
15. In March 2022, Minister Hipkins announced the release of the final ANZH and Te Takanga o Te Wā content, along with the expectation that all schools and kura would be teaching the new content from 2023. Alongside this, Minister Hipkins also announced the release of the draft Social Sciences curriculum content and the Vision for Young People for feedback [METIS 1283032 refers].

¹ [What's changing? | Curriculum Refresh \(education.govt.nz\)](#)

² Bronwyn Houliston, Bronwyn Wood, Hiria Wallace, Maia Hetaraka, Michael Clyne, Phonderly Siohane, Teresa Topp

16. This paper provides you with an overview of feedback on the draft refreshed Social Sciences Learning area and how we have responded to it. We seek your agreement to us releasing the refreshed Social Sciences content. This paper also provides an overview of resources and guidance to support change and implementation.

The refreshed Social Sciences learning area

Final content – what ākonga learn in Social Sciences

17. The refreshed Social Sciences learning area proposed for release is attached as Annex 1.
18. Social Sciences encourage ākonga to observe, to wonder and be curious about people, places, and society, and to take an interest in and engage in social issues and ideas. The refreshed Social Sciences content is future-focused and through this learning, ākonga develop understanding, knowledge, and skills about enduring local, national, and global social, cultural, economic, and political processes (civics), environmental issues, issues associated with human rights, inequity, and mobility.
19. Through Social Sciences, ākonga learn that people hold different perspectives on the world depending on their values, traditions, and experiences. They come to understand that people have different experiences and perspectives about culture and religion, and that recognising and drawing on this diversity helps them thrive as community members and citizens. This enables them to contribute to and participate in society as critically informed, ethical, and empathetic citizens with a concern for the wellbeing of communities and a commitment to a fair society for all. They will deepen their understanding of these issues as they progress through the learning phases.
20. Through Social Science processes, practices, and skills, ākonga learn how to research, evaluate the integrity of sources, communicate, reason, argue, and make decisions about social action. Kaiako support ākonga to develop critical thinking and literacy and numeracy skills, which they draw on in argumentation and reasoning, in evaluating the integrity of sources and claims, and in identifying and critiquing possible solutions to social issues.
21. This learning gives effect to a range of government commitments, including the Climate Change work programme, and to government commitments to social cohesion, civics, and citizenship in the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the terrorist attack on Christchurch masjidain. For example, through the 'contexts', ākonga of all ages strengthen their knowledge about:

Climate change, when they explore the relationship between human activity and the natural world and the consequences of competing ideas about the control, use, protection and regeneration of natural resources in topics associated with Turangawaewae me te taiao | Place and environment.

Social cohesion, when they explore the dynamic nature of culture and identity and the social and cultural importance of community practices, heritage, traditions, knowledge, and values. In Aotearoa New Zealand, the dynamic nature of culture and identity can be observed through people's different experiences of migration, settlement, and participation in topics associated with Ngā ahurea me ngā tuakiri kiritōpū | Culture and collective identity.

Civics, when they explore how societies organise systems and rules to create unity and order, roles and responsibilities related to these systems and rules, and the

impact of them on people's freedom and experience of justice. It explores how people exercise their rights and responsibilities and participate in acts of citizenship in topics associated with Tino rangatiratanga me te kāwanatanga | Sovereignty, organisation, and government.

22. Through building knowledge about contexts and drawing on Social Sciences practices such as critical thinking and perspective taking, ākonga progress through the phases of learning, and develop a deeper understanding of the six 'big ideas':
- 1) Māori history is the foundational and continuous history of Aotearoa New Zealand
 - 2) Colonisation and settlement have been central to Aotearoa New Zealand's history for the past 200 years
 - 3) People's lived experiences have been shaped by the use and misuse of power.
 - 4) People hold different perspectives on the world depending on their values, traditions, and experiences.
 - 5) People participate in communities by acting on their beliefs and through the roles they hold
 - 6) Interactions change societies and environments.
23. The writing group focused on ensuring the content enacts the draft Vision for Young People, and explicitly weaves mātauranga Māori, literacy, numeracy, and the key competencies throughout. This reflects the approach for the development of ANZH, and the recently refreshed draft English and Mathematics & Statistics learning areas which we are currently seeking feedback on.

Feedback from the March-June 2022 engagement

24. A copy of the feedback analysis report is attached as Annex 2. Key elements of the early draft of the refreshed learning area were tested with our Curriculum Voices Group and we undertook 'fast testing' with teachers from 23 schools. Updates were made to the content following this, and from March-June 2022, we tested more widely with the sector, ākonga, whānau and communities.
25. Teacher groups were generally positive about most aspects of the Social Sciences design. They liked the way the Purpose Statement and overview called out the "learning that matters" and the image showing the interweaving of Understand, Know, and Do. Just under three-quarters (74 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that the content is clear and easy to use.
26. Over 80 percent of teacher groups agreed or strongly agreed that the progression statements for the Know and Do parts of the curriculum fitted into their current social sciences programmes or would usefully add to what they already do.

27. Year 9-10 teachers tended to be less strongly positive than teachers of other year levels
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Final content – what we changed in response to feedback

28. An overview of 'What we heard and how we responded' is attached as Annex 3. The feedback we heard centred around four key themes.
- a) People wanted greater clarity about integration of ANZH into Social Sciences
 - b) Some people thought the 'Know' statements were at the wrong level and didn't reflect what people are doing now in Social Sciences

- c) Some feedback reflected that the research practices were not clear enough
- d) The senior secondary sector and 9(2)(g)(i)

29. As a result of feedback, refinements were made to the Social Sciences content as follows:

I. Aotearoa New Zealand's histories aligned with, and integrated into, the larger Social Sciences content

- Four of the six Social Sciences big ideas (the 'Understand' of UKD) are from ANZH. The big ideas around 'the use of power' and 'relationships and connections' expand to cover the present, as well as international/global contexts.
- The 'Knows' for ANZH and Social Sciences are the same.
- The 'Dos' have a specific ANZH 'Do', with other elements incorporated as part of the wider Social Sciences 'Dos'.

II. The progression of 'Know' statements are clear across the phases of learning

- Levelling was aligned with our National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement (NMSSA), which tracks students' progress in the NZC.

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- All ANZH 'Know' statements were reviewed to ensure they fit with a Social Sciences concept.

III. The research practices of Social Sciences are explicitly described

- The research 'Do' was expanded to make specific research practices easier to identify.
- This also made literacy and numeracy requirements for the learning area more explicit.

IV. There is a full statement for the Years 11–13 Progress Outcome

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Publication of the refreshed Social Sciences learning area

30. Pending your agreement, we propose making the refreshed Social Sciences learning area content available online as a PDF on 16 November 2022. The refreshed Social Sciences content is being released as a 'final draft'. This is because the refreshed curriculum content is being developed and released in phases, and some adjustments may be needed for

alignment across the curriculum before the fully refreshed NZC is released in the New Zealand Gazette for schools to be fully implementing from the beginning of 2026.

31. The ANZH curriculum content will continue to be available by itself so schools can use it with the current 2007 NZC but will also be available integrated into the refreshed Social Sciences learning area, so that if some schools and kura decide to redesign their Social Sciences learning, they can use the new content and supporting resources.
32. Our communications will be clear that although the refreshed learning area will be available from 16 November 2022, the only immediate requirement for schools and kura, is to implement the new Aotearoa New Zealand's histories curriculum content from the beginning of 2023. For the rest of the refreshed curriculum, schools will have until the beginning of 2026 to explore and get familiar with the framework and the learning areas as they are refreshed, in order to be able to implement them in their local curriculum.
33. An essential element in the process of refreshing the Social Sciences curriculum content was ensuring critical stakeholders had the opportunity to have their voices heard. In March-June 2022, we went out to the sector, including specifically targeting teachers and leaders in years 11-13, as well as government organisations and agencies with a strong interest in social science-related issues, to gather feedback, improve the draft curriculum content, ensuring it reflects the learning that matters in Social Sciences.
34. We will release the feedback analysis (Annex 2) and a "*What we Heard*" overview (Annex 3), which outline what we heard during engagement and how we responded, alongside the refreshed Social Sciences learning area curriculum content. We followed this process successfully when we released the new ANZH and Te Takanga o Te Wā curriculum content earlier this year. The same approach will be used when we release the refreshed English and Mathematics & Statistics learning areas in term 1 2023, and the remaining learning areas in 2024 and 2025.

Resources and support to implement the refreshed Social Sciences learning area

35. 9(2)(g)(i) [REDACTED] Some resources are already available, while others will be ready in terms 1-2 2023. They will be progressively added to over time, in response to what teachers and leaders tell us they find useful, and where gaps might be. As the refresh of the NZC progresses, we will provide resources that integrate learning across multiple learning areas, so there will be more to come that relates to Social Sciences.
36. The draft NZC refresh implementation pack, which is currently available for feedback [METIS 1294869 refers], provides an outline of the change process and the supports and resources leaders can expect as they plan and design for change. The implementation pack acknowledges that every school and kura will be at a different starting point, and that they can capitalise on their existing strengths, resources, and capabilities. From now and through 2023, leaders and teachers are encouraged to explore the new content even if they're not Social Sciences teachers, to familiarise themselves with the progressions model and the three interwoven elements of Understand, Know, and Do.
37. Exemplars of progress, a series to be known as '*Progression in Action*', are being developed to support schools to know what progress from one phase to the next looks like. They are part of a broad package of Teaching Guidance designed to support our overall change approach. They will help teachers really start to use progressions in a rich way, as well as help build the capability required to shift from curriculum levels and

achievement objectives to a progression-based curriculum. 9(2)(g)(i)

Next steps

38. The refreshed Social Sciences content will be in downloadable PDF format on the new [Curriculum Refresh website](#)³. [Social Sciences Online](#) will initially be home to supporting curriculum resources for the wider Social Sciences learning area. Each website will link to the other. 9(2)(g)(i)

39. Schools and kura will be advised of the release of the final content via our usual communications channels, including the School Bulletin and curriculum newsletter.

Annexes

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³ [Changes to The New Zealand Curriculum | Curriculum Refresh \(education.govt.nz\)](#)