Types and structures of curricula in Anglophone countries and their relationship with CEFR-VL

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Curricula, frameworks, standards: differing genres, similar intentions to scaffold visual literacy

In this section, curricula or similar documents of national significance for the discipline(s) covering art education in Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, and the United States of America will be discussed in reference to the CEFR-VL[1]. These countries were taken as examples as they reflect the same ambition as ENViL: to generate a model that is acceptable and applicable at a level that transcends the policy at (sub)state level. Next to this, competence-based educational planning has been an area of special interest in anglophone countries. Teacher training as well as curriculum design is supported by structured descriptions of knowledge, skills, behaviours and values to be acquired (Banks, 2009). Finally, American, Australian, British or Canadian pedagogical models have been disseminated easily in European art education because of English being the lingua franca in Europe as well as in many parts of the world, which makes comparisons more easy.

No detailed overview or comparison will be provided, as these would hugely surpass the scope of this sub-chapter, and their necessity may also be questionable. These documents were developed for national use and are widely debated by local bodies of educators and even more so by researchers. These debates, however, are in many cases still unpublished, as the curricula have only been released in 2013 and 2014. Here we intend to show how CEFR-VL may elevate debates on teaching and learning about the visual arts forward on a global level by proposing a common European standpoint. The countries whose documents will be involved in this initial discussion round, initiated by our volume of studies, were selected for their relevance to international art education theory and practice. The genres of these documents vary significantly, but they are all interpreted as curricula – more or less detailed and compulsory descriptions of the aims and content of art education.

The aim of CEFR-VL is different, but the first dissemination and utilisation projects show that it may also be used to support curriculum design. Representing results of European research and practice, it may serve as a basis for the development of teaching programs, research efforts and assessment strategies. Therefore, aims and objectives, competency levels and developmental trajectories described in the framework developed in the Comenius project by the ENViL community may be interpreted in relation to other documents influencing the fate of teaching and learning about art and visual culture, for example, by those coming from anglophone countries.

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[1] In Canada, the Ontario state curriculum is in French language is also discussed briefly in this chapter.

An overview of the status of curricula discussed here, with information on ages when elective disciplines are introduced (that generally means the end of compulsory art education), is given in the table below.

	Status of Curriculum	Curriculum specification	Time allocation	Age at which elective subjects are selected	End of lower secondary qualification
England	Statutory curriculum framework	Statutory programmes of study and attainment targets for local adaptation	Local time allocation	14+	Evaluation of students at the end of compulsory education (age 16) is normally by the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examination.
Northern Ireland	Statutory curriculum framework	Curriculum expressed through six 'areas of learning', cross-curricular themes and other skills (thinking skills and personal capabilities)	Local time allocation	14 for choices with the 'learning entitlement'. Schools may offer electives from age 11.	Evaluation of students at the end of compulsory education (age 16) is normally by the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examination.
Scotland	Non-statutory national guidance	The 'experiences and outcomes' for learning organised across eight curriculum areas	Local time allocation	Age 12 or 14	Standard Grade
Wales	Statutory curriculum framework	National curriculum and religious education	Local time allocation	14+	Evaluation of students at the end of compulsory education (age 16) is normally by the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examination.
Canada	No national curriculum. Responsibility lies with the individual provinces and territories. A National Secretariat (CMEC) ensures communication on curricula issues.	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies – the Pan-Canadian Assessment Programme (PCAP) is a series of cyclical tests of the achievement of 13-year-old students in mathematics, reading, and science involving all provinces and territories.
USA	No national curriculum. Responsibility lies with the federal states.	Varies	Varies	Varies	State and territory external examination system at age 18/19

Figure 1: Curriculum structure and organisation. Source: INCA, 2012, Table 8, p. 34. (Abridged).

CEFR-VL is beyond national educational considerations, but not independent from them. While not giving direct advice on what and how to teach, it can be easily translated into teaching and learning situations or assessment targets. In order to discuss if and how our European framework may contribute to international discussions, let us summarise structural similarities and differences among these guidelines that are intended to give shape to a school discipline that was considered in many countries, for many decades, too fluid and chaotic to formulate in terms of a structured educational document.

Structure and contents: conflicts of putting visions of art and research in education into practice

The CERF-VL is the result of a collaborative effort of countries that may be different economically and socially, but possess similar cultural values and are tolerant enough to accept differences of educational theories and practices. An important aspect for 21st century curriculum design is the multicultural, or rather, pluralistic stance. This aspect is already present in the *Manifesto*, an important document influencing the *New Secondary Curriculum* introduced in England in 2007 and in effect till 2010 that postulated the three basic values that should form the basis of the English art and design curriculum: difference, plurality and independent thought (Steers and Swift, 1999). The *Manifesto* was rejected by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) but its spirit of openness paved the way

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for a global consensus about values in art education. This document, as well as indications of multicultural values in the curricula of Australia and Canada, and the US standards, shows the importance of the effort to construct a common European framework by the ENViL community – one that accepts difference, gives voice to plurality and does not comply with any political agenda.

CEFR-VL is a framework, mapping a disciplinary area in terms of skills, knowledge and competency structures, though it can also serve as a basis for a variety of curricular approaches ranging from detailed input and output requirements to skeletal guidelines. Anglophone curricula are meant to provide detailed instructions for teaching and learning. They are backed by some professional bodies while others criticise them. As they are not compulsory in most countries, their acceptance depends on the authenticity and authority of their authors[2]. In Australia, associations of the arts (dance, drama, music and the visual arts) were commissioned by the national Ministry of Education to come to a consensus and create a unified arts curriculum. Its major parts are as follows:

– Band description: attainment targets for all the art forms;

– Content description: common learning content for all the art forms;

– Examples of knowledge and skills with output requirements for individual art forms.

This interdisciplinary, though not integrated approach to arts education, was finalised in 2014. The national curriculum has been controversial with several states resisting its implementation. For example, New South Wales (NSW) is refusing to implement it – so it is not a truly national curriculum in the sense that the states still determine what is taught by the various accrediting bodies (Australian Curriculum 2013[3]).

In Canada, provinces developed their own curricula, although some of them are more influential than others, and the documents of the provincial governments of British Columbia and Ontario seem to have national effect (Arts Education: Visual Arts K to 7, 2010, Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8: The Arts, 2008)[4]. The arts curriculum has a more pragmatic structure covering planning activities that art educators generally perform when preparing their local teaching plans:

– Rationale: why to teach the arts;

– Common areas of learning in the four arts education disciplines;

– Connections among disciplines;

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[2] In Canada and the US, there are no „national" curricula. We discuss the *Arts Standards*, published by the American National Art Education Association and state curricula in Canada, as these documents seem to have a similar role as national curricula in Europe. It must be also noted that in the UK, in the UK, the so-called national curriculum only applies to a minority of secondary schools.

[3] http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/the-arts/visual-arts/curriculum/f-10?layout=1

[4] https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/course.php?lang=en&subject=Arts_Education&course=Arts_Education_-_Overview&year=2010

- Safety considerations;

- Major activities: creating, presenting, and responding in arts education ;

- Working with the arts community;

- The creative process.

The Canadian arts curriculum is interdisciplinary also in its focus on everyday life experiences and the role of the arts within. When describing why people should engage in the arts, the curriculum gives the following reasons:

- to learn and play;

- to communicate;

- to honour rites of passage;

- to define, strengthen, and preserve culture and heritage;

- to nurture the emotional, social, intellectual, physical, and spiritual self.

These objectives have much in common with the situations used in the CEFR-VL to explain how competency clusters are activated when solving visual problems (see chapter A.4).

In England, the structure of the curriculum was embodied in the *Education Reform Act* of 1988. *The Art and design programmes of study: key stages 1, 2 and 3* (2013) is a statutory national educational document, published by the Department for Education in England[5]. Parts of the curriculum document are as follows:

- Purpose of study: the role of art and design in human life;

- Aims: why art and design are taught in schools, how they contribute to the development of skills and competences of children;

- Attainment targets: what students will be able to do after every key stage;

- Subject content: learning material for art and design;

- Program of study: methodological suggestions.

A traditional feature of the English curriculum is its theoretical emphasis on design education – not always evident in classroom practice.[6] "Art, craft and design embody some of the highest forms of

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[5] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-art-and-design-programmes-of-study/
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239018/PRIMARY_national_curriculum_-_Art_and_design.pdf
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239062/SECONDARY_national_curriculum_-_Art_and_design.pdf

[6] The discipline was called just 'Arts' for a short period in the 1980s but the NSEAD successfully fought for retaining this meaningful name.

human creativity. A high-quality art and design education should engage, inspire and challenge pupils, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to experiment, invent and create their own works of art, craft and design" (Key Stage 3, General teaching aims, 2013). Art appreciation is introduced in Key Stage 1 and continues to play an important role thereafter.

In the US, education is subject to a state legislation and district guidelines[7]. However, the *National Visual Arts Standards* published in 1994 by the National Art Education Association[8], can be perceived as the first quasi-curriculum for arts education in this country. They suggested a framework or structure for topics and areas involving curriculum development and instruction. The same model or approach is used in the 2014 *National Core Arts Standards* of the National Art Education Association (NAEA) that are not curricula in the strict sense of the word, but provide a detailed guidelines for state, regional and local curriculum documents. They are broadly acknowledged across this vast and culturally diverse country, so they may well be considered as while non-compulsory, still a relevant national resource. Standards have been prepared for all the art forms (dance, drama, music and the visual arts), with some connections in terms of *National Core Arts Standards*[9] and but no hints on integrating content. Authored and advocated by the major professional bodies for arts education in the country, (for visual arts the NAEA), the *National Core Arts Standards* are being constantly promoted in the journals, magazines, conferences and workshops and are likely to become the first national quasi-curriculum for art education in the country, where education is regulated by state legislation (National Visual Art Standards, 2013).[10]

The European CEFR-VL has an interdisciplinary significance as it can build bridges for other disciplines through formulating content areas, skills and competencies with relevance to a competency structures of other disciplines. To embark on defining what should be taught, curricula in arts education feel obliged to map their territory: describe what lies at the core of the school discipline. If we consider discussions that preceded decisions about how to name it, we may realise that it is mainly concepts about arts in general, and the visual arts in particular, that influence any further development of curricula, guidelines or frameworks. In the table below, we provide a brief summary about these major decisions.

Country	Name of discipline / group of disciplines in the curriculum	Grades, (approximate ages)	Interdisciplinary aspects

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[7] Each American school district has the autonomy to interpret standards and develop their own curriculum
[8] http://www.arteducators.org/store/NAEA_Natl_Visual_Standards1.pdf
[9] See for *National Core Anchor Standards*: http://www.nationalartsstandards.org/

[10] *National Visual Arts Standards At-A-Glance: overview of structure, objectives and contents.* http://ow.ly/zviYW

Australia	The Arts	Foundation Year 1 (age 6) till Year 12 (age 18)[11]	Common curriculum for Dance, Drama, Music, Visual Arts, and Media Arts[12] with special content descriptions for all five art forms.
Canada	The Arts	Grades 1-8 (ages 6-14)[13]	Common curriculum for Dance, Drama, Music and Visual Arts.
England	Art and Design	Key Stage 1, (ages 6-7), Key Stage 2, (ages 8-10), Key Stage 3 (ages 11-14)	Statutory curriculum for Art and Design and Music; Drama is part of English and Dance of Physical Education.
US	In the National Arts Standards and in some state curricula: Art Education, In other state curricula: Visual Culture	PreK-8 Standards (ages 5-14); High School standards (ages 15-18)	Visual Arts and Media Arts have embedded interdisciplinary aspects, although the standards do not directly address Interdisciplinary Learning. Standards for Music, Drama and Dance also developed by professional associations – none of them statutory.
ENViL	CEFR-VL Framework relates to visual literacy in general, but does not specify subjects.	pre-primary, primary and secondary education, (3-18	Underling theoretical orientation: both art and visual culture.

[11] The Australian curriculum has so far (2015) only been ratified by all States and Territories until the end of Year 10, although the draft of the curriculum content for Years 11 and 12 has been completed. (O'Toole, 2014).

[12] The discipline called Media Studies is an independent area. Previously it was part of art education, now (2015) it is the principal who decides how many lessons per art form. In some schools, it takes the form of an integrated arts project lasting 3 weeks. (Such a project may be the only Media Studies component of the Arts Education curriculum for a school, based on the decision of the Principal

[13] In Canada, visual arts, music and drama are offered through kindergarten and grades 1 to 12 – they are only mandatory until grade 8 and become electives after this. Many provinces, however, insist on students graduating from grade 12 with one fine arts subject.

		years)	

Table 1: Characteristics of anglophone curricula and the CEFR-VL

Curricular objectives: ambitious goals for minimal teaching time interdisciplinary versus discipline-based approaches to the arts

"In Australian Aboriginal and Islander societies, for instance, a holistic artistic process starting early, lasting through life and embodying visual, kinaesthetic, musical, poetic and representational elements, largely undifferentiated into discrete art forms, has traditionally provided a major component of the getting of wisdom and tribal survival skills (i.e. education) prior to European settlement. Even within post-Renaissance Western culture, both historically and in contemporary arts too, there are enough connectivities, integration and hybridisation of each art form (in shapes from grand opera to multi-media performance art) to provide a challenge to those discrete categorisations into separate 'subject silos' as we now typify them – and a challenge to writers engaged on producing a common curriculum". (O'Toole, 2014, p. 1)

This bold statement by the lead writer of the Australian Curriculum for the Arts indicates that the creation of interdisciplinary or discipline-based curricula, beyond considerations of educational policy makers about an 'economic' grouping of art forms in one package, also implies serious theoretical considerations about the genesis and co-evolution of art forms. In Australia and Canada, similarities were found more powerful, and interdisciplinary curricula were constructed – often in view of indigenous cultural practices. Another important effect of considering First Nations priorities was, that in the last British Columbia revision to all curricula (2014-2015), the arts were kept in as core subjects because their communities insisted they were essential to their ways of knowing the world. In the US, common principles guiding curriculum planning were formulated (these are the *National Core Arts Standards*, quoted above). The term 'interdisciplinary' is used here to indicate the interdisciplinary nature of learning in the arts and not the interdisciplinary learning between the arts and all other disciplines. In the UK, the curriculum is clearly discipline-based, as is CEFR-VL.

To illustrate problems and solutions of the interdisciplinary curriculum arrangement, let us take Australia as an example. Here, the essence of a common curriculum for the arts was to express the need of "arts for all", and ensure that none of the art forms is neglected and every child will benefit from each and every one of them (Ewing, 2010). This consensus put Music and Visual Arts in a less favoured position than before, when only these art forms enjoyed independent curriculum status. Dance was present in some states, but now it became a nationally required curriculum content area. Drama, on the other hand, has risen to independent discipline status for the first time in Australian history. The lead writer of the arts curriculum, who was a drama education specialist, and who gave a witty, if sometimes malicious report on how experts of visual arts education found it difficult or even impossible to accept an arts curriculum where creation (performance) and appreciation were divided (O'Toole, 2014). In some states, the national curriculum is rejected because it does not mandate time

in the curriculum. In New South Wales, for example, Visual Arts and Music are mandatory courses in secondary education. However, in the national curriculum, there are no mandatory hours and it is totally at the discretion of the individual school principals to decide which and how much the arts will be taught – a major reason the state has rejected it.

In Canada, the "Ideas Underlying the Arts Curriculum" section of the Ontario curriculum provides an excellent overview of an interdisciplinary, although not integrated curriculum approach (See table below). In the two countries presenting the arts in a unified curriculum model, Australia and Canada, experts repeatedly emphasize that integration is far from desirable, all the art forms require and deserve separate, discipline-specific contents descriptions and methodologies, and the common curriculum is restricted to an agenda shared by all arts forms (O'Toole, 2012, Review of the Australian Curriculum, 2013, 2014). The common core among the arts as school disciplines are

- Creativity development

- Communicative and expressive use of languages of the arts

- Cultural awareness

- Development of both the cognitive and affective domains

Ideas Underlying the Arts Curriculum	
Developing Creativity	• developing aesthetic awareness • using the creative process • using problem-solving skills • taking an innovative approach to a challenge
Communicating	• manipulating elements and forms to convey or express thoughts, feelings, messages, or ideas through the arts • using the critical analysis process • constructing and analysing art works, with a focus on analysing and communicating the meaning of the work • using new media and technology to produce art works and to convey thoughts, feelings, and ideas about art
Understanding Culture	• understanding cultural traditions and innovations • constructing personal and cultural identity (developing a sense of self and a sense of the relationship between the self and others locally, nationally, and globally) • making a commitment to social justice and dealing with environmental issues
Making Connections	• making connections between the cognitive and affective domains (expressing thoughts and feelings when creating and responding to art works) • collaborating to create works with others, and performing in ensembles • making connections between the arts and other subjects (e.g., transferring knowledge, skills, and understanding to other subject areas)

Figure 2: Ideas underlying the arts curriculum. (The Ontario Arts Curriculum, 2009, p. 6.)

These major objectives are present in the American arts standards as well, although all professional associations have developed their own, discipline-based interpretations. In England, an interdisciplinary curriculum model was initially suggested but later abandoned because representatives of the different art associations feared of suffering losses of school time and related benefits – a rejection on strategic rather than philosophical grounds. (Steers, 1988).

In the US, arguments in favour for a discipline-based structure seem to have been similar. *National Core Arts Standards* (2013[14]) were developed to describe commonly accepted artistic processes through which learning occurs in all of the arts. The standards provide commonalities across the art forms for learning targets.

The standards group content descriptions and attainment targets around these central activities:

- Creating: conceiving and developing new artistic ideas and work;

- Performing, presenting, producing:

    o Performing (dance, music, theatre): realizing artistic ideas and work through interpretation and presentation;

    o Presenting (visual arts): interpreting and sharing artistic work;

    o Producing (media arts): realizing and presenting artistic ideas and work.

- Responding: Understanding and evaluating how the arts convey meaning;

- Connecting: relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context.

All these 'aesthetic bridges' that may link the forms of art to each other are to be found, with contents and skills descriptions as well as related examples of teaching practice, in the CEFR-VL. This Framework to the visual arts, but did not exclude connections

Many 21st century artists practice in interdisciplinary genres, using multiple media and art forms, but education in the arts still remains clearly delineated. Teaching the genres of art (music, dance, drama, media and the visual arts) as a group of interrelated disciplines is an ever-reoccurring model, although a difficult one that may sometimes endanger the mere existence of individual arts. Understanding and managing interests and priorities of art genres among each-other and in relation to the other disciplines in the curriculum is a demanding task that few ENViL member countries have considered undertaking. The Australian argument, however, deserves consideration, also in the light of the Dutch aesthetic education curriculum:

"The experiential and cross-curricular approach to arts programming foreshadowed for the national arts curriculum document certainly has the potential be more meaningful than dividing the time up into

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[14] *National Core Arts Standards*: http://nationalartsstandards.org/. The body that developed them is described here: http://nccas.wikispaces.com/

proportions for different arts disciplines. Deep learning and understanding is more likely when integration is carefully planned to reflect real world learning experiences." (Ewing, 2010, 29. old.)

Output requirements, assessment targets and how to make them real

The CEFR-VL formulates visual arts-related competency levels and their development in relation to key competences promoted by the European Union (see chapters B.1 and B.2). In order to illustrate the relevance of this approach, we quote a similar approach from the coalition for the definition of 21st century skills (21st Century Partnership, 2015) about interrelationships of a core skill: critical thinking and problem solving, and its realisation through arts education (see chapter B.3). This map demonstrates how critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration and creativity and innovation can be integrated within arts curricula. The document was jointly produced by arts education associations in the US.[15] Experiences with building the arts skills map were used during the development of the 2014 national arts standards and ultimately led to the creation of the *National Core Arts Standards*[16] and the adoption of a common framework for creating these *National Core Arts Standards.* The arts competence map demonstrates skills and competences relevant for all the arts – an interdisciplinary approach that is fully realised in the Australian and Canadian curricula.

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[15] The map was released at a Capitol Hill Briefing by representatives from P21, the American Alliance for Theatre & Education, the Educational Theatre Association, the National Art Education Association, the National Association for Music Education, the National Dance Association, and the National Dance Education Organization.

[16] http://www.nationalartsstandards.org/

Figure 3: Introductory table from 21st Century Skills Map: the Arts. 21st Century Skills Partnership, 2010.

These requirements are formulated as learning outcomes in the *Visual Arts Standards* as knowledge, skills, and understandings taught through the study of the visual arts as "learning progressions". For the *Visual Arts Standards*, Dennis Inhulsen, Chief Learning Officer for NAEA is in charge of national professional development and practice-based learning programming. He co-ordinates practice-based explorations in this area to gain an understanding of the grade-by-grade progressions. Skills are described as clusters to facilitate unit planning and presented through varied teaching and learning settings to demonstrate the growth of visual skills over time.

Ü3 Relations to core or discipline-specific competencies: cross-area and area-specific skills

One of the most important novelties of 21st century arts curricula and frameworks is the extension of "high art" focus to include visual culture, from (hazily described) aesthetic sensitivity to visual literacy

and creativity in well-defined domains. This approach coincides with growing interest in this form of literacy[17] and helps formulate attainment targets as well as output requirements more precisely.

The *Melbourne Declaration* (2008) identified essential skills for twenty-first century learners – in literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology (ICT), thinking, creativity, teamwork and communication. It described individuals who can manage their own wellbeing, relate well to others, make informed decisions about their lives, become citizens who behave with ethical integrity, relate to and communicate across cultures, work for the common good and act with responsibility at local, regional and global levels. The seven general capabilities in the *Australian National Curriculum* [18] are literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology capability, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, ethical understanding, and intercultural understanding. For each capability, descriptions of relevant knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions at particular points of schooling. The *Australian Arts Curriculum*, however, focuses on relationships within the forms of visual art, and only occasionally refers to other disciplines.

In the US the *Visual Arts Standards*, parallel components with the *Common Core Arts Standards* and 21st-Century Skills are indicated to ensure a coherence among the standards of different art forms, though no direct links like interdisciplinary lesson planning or co-assessment are suggested. The *National Curriculum for Art and Design* in England describes attainment targets for visual arts and design only.

CEFR-VL takes a direction similar to both the Australian and the US standards: it describes visual skills and abilities while defining their relationship with cognitive and social competencies. It describes skills, abilities, attitudes and knowledge in relation with motivational, volitional and social abilities that enable their responsible and effective use. The CEFR-VL connects to the 21st century skills also, as it also elaborates on the key competence called "Cultural awareness and expression". Given the extremely limited time allocated for art education worldwide, assessment needs to be restricted to the evaluation of visual skills development. Future research on CEFR-VL will, as this framework suggests, offer forms of assessment that put visual skills into a social context and thus contribute to the efforts of the assessment systems of anglophone curricula: provide research-grounded evidence on the basic significance of arts education for cognitive, affective and social development.

Structuring requirements: linear and stage models

One of the most innovative structural features of the Australian curriculum is its description of attainment targets in two-year ranges. This arrangement seems to be ideal for visual competencies

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[17] See for example The Online Visual Literacy Project, http://old.pomona.edu/Academics/courserelated/classprojects/Visual-lit/intro/intro.html, and The Basics of Visual Literacy: Form and Content, http://www.humanities.umd.edu/vislit/basics.php, for summaries.

[18] http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/GeneralCapabilities/Overview

that tend to have an irregular developmental path with slow starters achieving the next required level of competency easily one or two years later. In this curriculum we find rather general output requirement that show how difficult it is to turn commonalities of aesthetic disciplines into *attainment targets* (performance indicators that students are required to possess) and *output requirements* (desirable developmental levels of competencies). These two basic constituents of curricula require different consideration: while attainment targets may be formulated through professional consultations (as with all the anglophone curricula discussed here), output requirements should be based on empirical research evidence.

The Arts: Years 7 and 8					
Thread	**Dance**	**Drama**	**Media Arts**	**Music**	**Visual Arts**
Exploring ideas and improvising with ways to represent ideas	Combine elements of dance and improvise by making literal movements into abstract movements	Combine the elements of drama in devised and scripted drama to explore and develop issues, ideas and themes	Experiment with the organisation of ideas to structure stories through media conventions and genres to create points of view in images, sounds and text	Experiment with texture and timbre in sound sources using aural skills	Experiment with visual arts conventions and techniques, including exploration of techniques used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, to represent a theme, concept or idea in their artwork
Manipulating and applying the elements/concepts with intent	Develop their choreographic intent by applying the elements of dance to select and organise movement	Develop roles and characters consistent with situation, dramatic forms and performance styles to convey status, relationships and intentions	Develop media representations to show familiar or shared social and cultural values and beliefs, including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples	Develop musical ideas, such as mood, by improvising, combining and manipulating the elements of music	Develop ways to enhance their intentions as artists through exploration of how artists use materials, techniques, technologies and processes
Developing and refining understanding of skills and techniques	Practise and refine technical skills in style-specific techniques	Plan, structure and rehearse drama, exploring ways to communicate and refine dramatic meaning for theatrical effect	Develop and refine media production skills to shape the technical and symbolic elements of images, sounds and text for a specific purpose and meaning	Practise and rehearse a variety of music, including Australian music, to develop technical and expressive skills	Develop planning skills for art-making by exploring techniques and processes used by different artists
Structuring and organising ideas into form	Structure dances using choreographic devices and form	Develop and refine expressive skills in voice and movement to communicate ideas and dramatic action in different performance styles and conventions, including contemporary Australian drama styles developed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dramatists	Plan, structure and design media artworks that engage audiences	Structure compositions by combining and manipulating the elements of music using notation	Practise techniques and processes to enhance representation of ideas in their art-making

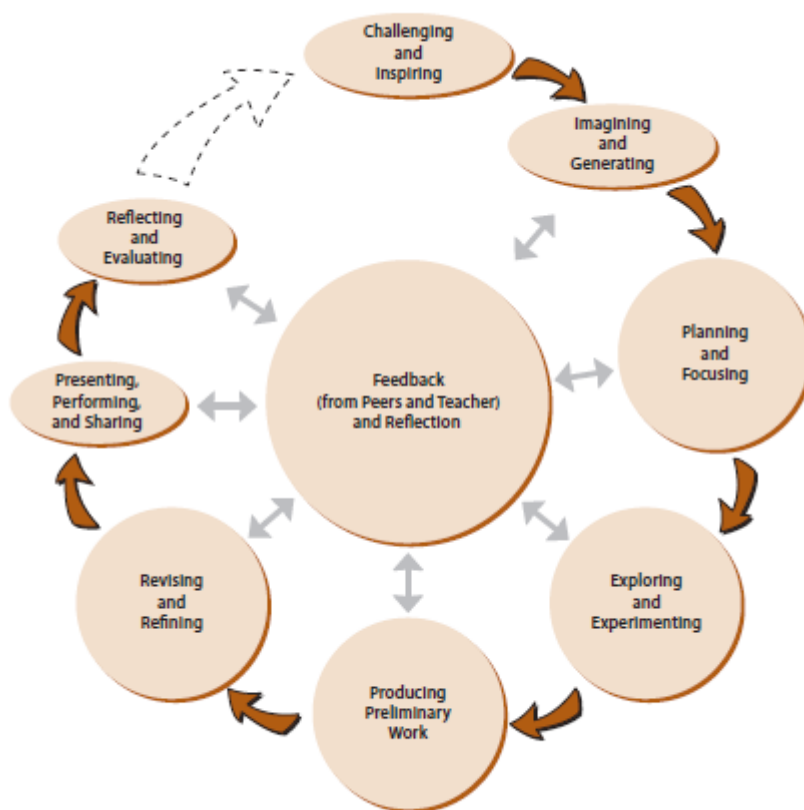Figure 4: Attainment targets of the Australian arts curriculum for Years 7 and 8

In the Comenius project it was decided, after long discussions about the (im)possibility of describing a competency structure and at the same time defining its developmental levels, to include these elements in separate sub-chapters: competency structure and competency development levels. While anglophone curricula are based on regional research, with reference to theoretical or empirical studies undertaken elsewhere, CEFR-VL synthesises professional debates and research evidence from several national school systems, and is grounded in Austrian, Czech, Dutch, French, German, Hungarian and Swiss experiences. This is still far from a global view, but involves new viewpoints in a discussion dominated by anglophone scholarship and practice at the professional forefront.

In Canada, the attainment targets of the curriculum are described as *competence dimensions* (creating, expressing, perceiving, and responding); *learning targets* (knowledge, skills, and

techniques*) and contexts* (personal, social, cultural, and historical). The creative process is characterised by activities of reflexion, exploration, selection, combination and refinement (see figure below).

It is noteworthy that there seems to be a controversy between contemporary Canadian research focusing on cultural anthropological issues and using arts-based methods and a return of the curriculum to 20th century objectives about teaching elements and principles of design. The *Ontario Curriculum* (2009) describes Fundamental concepts as "Elements: line, shape and form, space, colour, texture, and value, Principles: contrast, repetition and rhythm, variety, emphasis, proportion, balance, unity and harmony, and movement." (p. 20.) A similar discrepancy between researchers' and practitioners' views on core components of visual learning is observable in the US.
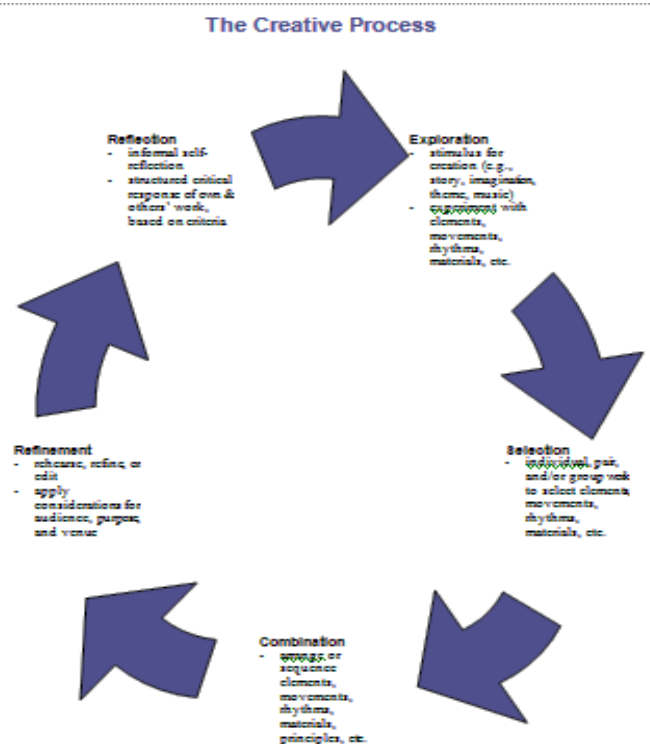
The Creative Process

The Creative Process

Figure 5: The creative process as described in the Ontario curriculum (2009, p. 22.)

In the US, the *Visual Arts Model Cornerstone Assessments*[19] developed as non-mandatory "examples" or "sample assessments" for the visual arts include a variety of activities that are not focused entirely on visual skills. Students are required to develop texts and engage in discussions about the visual arts and conduct research related to their studio or visual skills. These activities require a wide range of cognitive operations like self-reflection, critical reasoning. New types of assessments include the demonstration of higher order thinking, knowledge retrieval from other disciplines, evaluative skills and adaptation of information. These new strategies emphasize the development of thinking skills involved in arts education.

Assessment of skills (or abilities, or competences – all concepts are used, sometimes inconsequently, in the curricula) seems to be an increasingly important area for curriculum planners. Assessment strategies provide much-needed models for formulating a framework's (or curriculum's) skills, knowledge and competency structures as teachable attainment targets and measurable learning outcomes. Without such a clear interpretation, our field will lack accountability – a key factor for educational policy makers deciding over the fate of our discipline.

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[19] http://www.nationalartsstandards.org/mca/visual-arts

Introducing anglophone curricula to schools: from advocacy to practice

For the teaching profession, any curriculum is worth as much as it's authoring body. In three of the four countries discussed here, curricula in the sub-chapter have been written by trusted members of their professional communities. The process started similarly in England, too: "A remarkable change took place where the subject associations and other key stakeholders were once again seen as knowledgeable contributors to curriculum development rather than the perception of the previous decade or more that they were an irritating and always critical thorn in the side." (Steers, 2013a, 17). However, government authorities soon took over leadership, and NSEAD (National Society for Education in Art and Design) has indicated that its views were largely side-lined in the development of the 2013 curriculum in England.

The latest English curriculum puts a great emphasis on historical fine art led models focusing on appreciation, aesthetics and beauty, while the professional view is that a more balanced programme of study that includes contemporary, global and future gazing issues and references the creative, design and media industries would be desirable. Art and design and music remained as a statutory subject for children aged 5-14 in what is now the ever-diminishing minority of schools that are still maintained by local education authorities – in others, it is up to school leadership to decide. "The greatly slimmed down national curriculum is likely to present a minimalist approach to programmes of study with a strong emphasis on pupils acquiring 'core knowledge' of subjects – 'knowing that' in preference to 'knowing how'. The take-up of arts subjects by students aged 16-18 looks set to continue its decline." (Steers, 2013b, 200.) The English curriculum was introduced without prior school based trialling in 2014. Its results remain to be seen.

The English NSEAD promotes new content and methods through different curriculum resources.[20] Web pages full of lesson plans and films about methodological issues are also offered by professional associations such as the NSEAD for English art teachers.[21] In Australia, Scootle[22] offers teaching aids and mentoring groups. In the US, NAEA provides standards-based learning resources[23].

Even in countries where the arts curriculum is built on national consensus, in order to put it into practice, curricula should be accepted and realised by teachers. A stakeholder coalition is hard to build, even if curriculum design was a national endeavour, like in Australia and the US issuing it as

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[20] http://www.nsead.org/curriculum-resources/

[21] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-video-interviews-for-schools

[22] http://www.scootle.edu.au/ec/p/home

[23] Cf. the Resources catalogue for 2015-16, published by NAEA: http://www.arteducators.org/research/art-education-resource-guide. A virtual, interactive toolbox is also available: http://naeaworkspace.org/naeaapp/ . Webinars and digital teaching aids support the introduction of the curriculum: https://virtual.arteducators.org/

"statutory programmes of study and attainment targets", as in England, does not automatically result in general acceptance. In the US, NAEA has been very active in advocating the Standards and presenting them as results of a national, professional consensus – an art educators' coalition[24]. However, here, too, there is an opposition of researchers (who are also teacher trainers) for whom the pragmatic and fine arts-focused new American curriculum is unacceptable.[25] As the number of states that adopt the standards increases, there will be more experiences about its validity, and their inclusion in teacher education programs or its criticism will be based on educational research results.[26]

Conclusions: the relevance of CEFR-VL for international curriculum development

Given the diversity of curriculum types briefly outlined in this chapter, any comparison with the CEFR-VL has its limitations, as the European framework focuses on visual literacy, providing a competency structure of this educational area rather than details of art teaching - competencies rather than contents. The CEFR-VL can, however, serve as a catalyst for the modernisation of national curricula, providing guidelines for the formulation of objectives, description of competency levels and suggestions for their development.

The value of any curriculum or framework lies mainly in its acceptance. This section is intended to provide input to the discussions about if and how CEFR-VL will ever be recognised as a common European model to be used as a foundation for national curricula. Has our effort any potentials for being accepted by national groups of curriculum designers? The situation of CEFR-VL is not much different from the situation in the anglophone world. Are the documents briefly reviewed here truly "national"? Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States of America are alliances of states and provinces with their own, often contradictory to central initiatives, educational policies and resulting pedagogical strategies. Conceptions about how to put art education into practice vary, as we have indicated before, in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as well as in the federal states of Australia, Canada and the US. Authors of these curricula are striving for national consensus, but also seem to represent different theories and practices in art education as those shared by many professionals of their respective countries.

CEFR-VL offers a European consensus, built on the analysis of the curricula that represent a wide spectrum of European educational cultures and after years of intense discussions, in the form of a

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[24] National Coalition of Core Arts Standards. http://nccas.wikispaces.com/ http://nccas.wikispaces.com/Model+Cornerstone+Assessment+Benchmarking+Landing+Page

[25] These researchers founded the Art Education Research Institute as a parallel organisation for NAEA's research caucus and promote their ideas at yearly conferences starting in March 2016.

[26] Teachers' professional qualifications are formulated by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). According to its regulations, teachers are required to demonstrate skills in using state and national standards to build curriculum and assessment of student achievement. If a state adopts the arts standards, pre- and in-service training has to prepare them for their use.

mutually acceptable framework. This aspect makes ENViL a crucially important project for European consensus building in education. After successful international efforts to describe a culture-fair, internationally recognised common core in a variety of school disciplines and assess their development through IEA or PISA protocols, now the visual arts also have a European framework that may lead to the full recognition of this area as teachable, learnable and accountable.

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