

Ms Julia Finn MP
Committee Chair
Joint Select Committee on Arts and Music
Education and Training in New South Wales
E: ArtsandMusic@parliament.nsw.gov.au

27 September 2024

Dear Ms Julia Finn MP,

RE: Inquiry into arts and music education and training in New South Wales

Thank you for your letter inquiring about the arts and music education offered to students during initial teacher education (ITE) at Southern Cross University. We are pleased to provide the information you requested regarding the music preparation that primary school teachers receive in their initial teacher education program.

Our Primary education degrees have two units (subjects) dedicated to the Creative Arts. The foundations unit *CRTV1001 Creativity and the Arts* has the following Unit Learning Outcomes:

- LO1: Explain the interrelationship of critical thinking, creativity and the arts to each other and to society;
- LO2: Demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding across the range of creative arts;
- LO3: Demonstrate personal competency and development in the arts and skills in personal, academic and arts literacies; and,
- LO4: Demonstrate skills and understandings in the use of technology and media to present information and communicate with others.

This unit is taught over 6 weeks and covers all four artforms from the Creative Arts Syllabus, including music.

The second unit *EDUC2011 Creative Arts Education: Curriculum and Pedagogy* has the following learning objectives:

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- LO1: Demonstrate a sound knowledge of relevant national and state syllabuses and early childhood curriculum requirements;
- LO2: Plan learning experiences for primary and early childhood children in dance, drama, music and visual art using national and state Arts syllabus, and relevant Support Documents;
- LO3: Design teaching and learning strategies that may employ ICTs to maximise student engagement and inclusivity; and,
- LO4: Meaningfully integrate creative arts across other Key Learning Areas and across key transition points (early childhood/primary/secondary).

This unit is taught in a more integrated manner, with students exploring all four artforms and how they can be integrated across Key Learning Areas and the Cross Curriculum Priorities and General Capabilities. Students develop and demonstrate teaching skills using arts-based pedagogies.

Across both units' students explore the concepts of music and apply these concepts to their own music making. Students experiment in class time with tune and untuned percussion instruments to explore tone colour, structure, and duration. Students engage in the use of graphic and traditional notation through the composition of soundscapes using natural and found objects.

It is crucial to recognise that music and the arts are integrated throughout all curriculum areas in our ITE programs. The creative arts, in particular, effectively incorporate Australia's cross-curriculum priority areas through transdisciplinary teaching and learning across the broader ITE curriculum.

SCU's ITE programs are research evidenced. Data from SCU's course and unit evaluations alongside our own yearly impact and evidence measures indicate that pre-service primary teachers feel confident in teaching the arts, particularly music. As with all discipline areas in initial teacher education, professional experience further provides extensive opportunity to practice these core subjects and demonstrate the corresponding Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APSTs). This learning is further supported through ongoing professional learning once graduate teachers enter the profession.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of the Executive Dean.

Kind regards,

Professor Amy Cutter-Mackenzie-Knowles
Executive Dean
Faculty of Education, Southern Cross University