

Submission
No 92

INQUIRY INTO ARTS AND MUSIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: NSW Government

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Joint Select Committee on Arts and Music Education and Training in New South Wales

NSW Government Submission

July 2024



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Terms of Reference

1. That a joint select committee be established to inquire into and report on arts and music education and training in New South Wales, and in particular:
 - a. the quality and effectiveness of arts and creative industries education, including:
 - i. progress towards a long-term goal of quality arts and creative industries education
 - ii. the present level and status of formal arts and creative industries education across all levels, including primary, secondary, and tertiary levels
 - iii. robust and evidence-based arts and creative industries education in initial teacher education courses in the tertiary sector
 - iv. the role of arts organisations and creative professionals in education and the development of creative skills across the arts
 - v. the contribution of the national performing arts training organisations in New South Wales and the adequacy of the support they receive
 - vi. the efficacy of the current primary and secondary school curriculum in delivering learning outcomes in arts and creative industry-related subjects
 - vii. the availability of support for teachers and principals in delivering quality arts education, and ensuring that an inclusive approach is taken towards resource allocation for regional schools across New South Wales
 - viii. the most effective approach for the arts, culture, and creative industries to co-ordinate with the education system to support the development of creative skills
 - ix. ways that students can learn entrepreneurial skills and gain industry experience to ensure they are job-ready
 - x. measures of success in arts education
 - xi. factors influencing student decisions to pursue further arts education, including but not limited to course choice, course location and the method of study
 - xii. notable approaches to arts and creative industries education in other jurisdictions
 - b. the quality and effectiveness of music education and training, including:
 - i. progress towards a long-term goal of quality music education, including actions to address identified barriers
 - ii. the present level and status of formal music education across all levels, including primary, secondary, and tertiary levels
 - iii. robust and evidence-based music education in initial teacher education courses in the tertiary sector
 - iv. the role of regional conservatoriums and creative professionals in music education
 - v. the efficacy of the current primary and secondary school curriculum in delivering learning outcomes in music related subjects
 - vi. the availability of support for teachers and principals in delivering quality music education and ensuring that an inclusive approach is taken towards resource allocation for regional schools across New South Wales

- vii. the most effective approach for the music and the creative industries to co-ordinate with the education system to support the development of creative skills
 - viii. ways that students can learn entrepreneurial skills and gain industry experience to ensure they are job ready
 - ix. measures of success in music education
 - x. factors influencing student decisions to pursue further music education, including but not limited to course choice, course location and the method of study
 - xi. notable approaches to music education in other jurisdictions, and
- c. any other related matters.
2. That the committee report by 29 November 2024.

Introduction

On 12 December 2023, the NSW Government released *Creative Communities*, an inclusive arts, culture and creative industries policy that both supports the traditional arts sector and cultural institutions and expands to include the broader creative industries in the state.

Creative Communities is a 10-year, whole-of-government policy with the goal of sustainably growing the depth and breadth of creative industries throughout NSW, and over the next decade enabling creative individuals, organisations, and communities throughout the state to reach their potential.

At the heart of the policy is people, ensuring all NSW citizens have the opportunity to contribute to, and experience, arts and culture; and that there is equitable access to sustainable career pathways, and employment opportunities for NSW creative practitioners.

Creative Communities recognises that the creative industries are economically impactful. They account for a fifth of services exports and ten per cent of the state's workforce and with potential for meaningful sustainable growth. In 2019/20, the federal Bureau of Communications Arts and Regional Research found cultural and creative activity contributed \$122.3 billion to the national economy. It is estimated that in this same period, the creative industries contributed \$55.1 billion to the NSW economy, representing around 9 per cent of Gross State Product (GSP).

NSW has the largest creative workforce in Australia, with creative industries representing 12 per cent of the Greater Sydney workforce. Creative industries generate highly skilled jobs, foster innovation, attract global investment and tourism and boost the profile of NSW. Jobs in creative industries grew at nearly twice the rate of the broader Australian workforce pre-pandemic. The creative industries are a critical segment of the NSW economy, particularly in relation to jobs, export revenue, pace of growth, opportunity and trade. Internationally, the export of creative goods and services is one of the fastest growing sectors in the world.

Create NSW led development of the *Creative Communities* policy and carried out extensive consultation across the state in 2023. A summary of the feedback Create NSW received on education in arts, culture and creative industries skills development and training, from primary and secondary schools to higher education and vocational training, received throughout the consultation for the *Creative Communities* policy included:

- Skills shortages in the screen, performing arts, and festival industries have been exacerbated by COVID-19. The pandemic disproportionately affected the sector and production technicians for live productions in performance and music, and professionals in 'below-the-line' jobs in the screen industry, sought more stable work opportunities. Many creative professionals with these skills have not returned to these industries.
- There is a lack of training opportunities in TAFE and in higher education to fill the skills deficits in the sector. This issue is felt at all levels of creative production, from the State's cultural institutions to major film productions in NSW, through to skilled labour shortages in regional theatres. The lack of training opportunities in regional NSW is of particular concern.
- In the creative industries, including the fashion and textile industry, there has been a substantial loss of technical and manufacturing skills. There is a need to rebuild this capability, alongside digital training through TAFE and other opportunities, and involve industry leaders in curriculum development.

- The high cost of tertiary education and recent increases to the cost of study in some disciplines due to the previous federal government’s *Job-Ready Graduates* reform package (JRG). This continues to present a significant challenge to students undertaking tertiary education in the arts and humanities, including financial barriers to study and student loan debt, in contrast to other areas of study including Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.
- The differing levels of arts and music education in primary and secondary schools across NSW, including geographic disparities, was raised as a key issue by respondents throughout consultation for the *Creative Communities* policy.

Attachment A contains further detail.

One of the priority streams of the *Creative Communities* policy is creative industries education and training reform, including a creative industries skills audit, ensuring the health and sustainable growth of the sector, and referring arts and music education to a parliamentary inquiry.

The policy’s first objective of ‘People’ commits the NSW Government to “Reform arts education and creative industries training in NSW to give young people, career-changers and current creative workers access to training and skills to support sustainable careers and businesses right across NSW.”

During the development of the policy, Create NSW met with representatives from the Department of Education to explore potential areas of reform. Create NSW is committed to working with the Department of Education to further these potential initiatives ahead of releasing a whole-of-government implementation plan for the *Creative Communities* policy in 2024.

Present level and progress of NSW Arts and Creative Industries Education

Creative Arts Syllabuses: Kindergarten to Year 12

Research has shown that children and young people who engage with artistic and creative activities are more likely to do well at school, and experience positive social and emotion development. It is therefore vital to maintain creative learning, including the arts, creative industries and music, in the primary and secondary curriculum.

The Education Act 1990 (NSW) includes reference to the minimum curriculum requirements for arts and creative industries education in NSW.

The NSW Creative Arts syllabuses Kindergarten – Year 12 provide opportunities for students to learn about the significant role the arts play in society and in engaging, inspiring, enriching and transforming peoples' lives.

The syllabuses enable students to investigate the role of the arts in defining and representing their ideas and interests, identities, shaping and commenting on community values in global cultures and histories, as well as exploring social and cultural values, beliefs and expression.

The syllabuses provide opportunities for personal expression, enjoyment, creativity, imagination, emotional response, aesthetic pleasure and the creation of shared meanings. All K-12 NSW syllabuses for Creative Arts identify that each artform (dance, drama, music, visual arts) offers students a unique and discrete body of knowledge, skills, understanding and values.

The NSW Creative Arts K-6 Syllabus is mandatory for students from Kindergarten to Year 6. In Years 7-10, NSW has mandatory syllabuses for Music, and Visual Arts. It is mandatory for students to study 200 hours, consisting of the 100-hour mandatory courses in each of Visual Arts and Music. Elective syllabuses for Dance and Drama, Photographic and Digital Media, Visual Arts and Visual Design are also available for Years 7-10 with 100- or 200-hour options.

In Years 11-12, NSW has board-developed courses in Dance, Drama and Visual Arts. Content endorsed courses for Years 11-12 are available for Visual Design, Ceramics, and Photography, Video and Digital Imaging.

Additionally, NSW Technology and applied studies syllabuses engage students in creative design and production activities to develop skills in identifying technological needs, opportunities, and solutions in creative industries.

NSW students must study 200 hours of Technology Mandatory in Years 7-8. Students may choose to study a range of Technology and Applied Studies elective syllabuses in Years 7-10, including Agriculture Technology, Design and Technology, Food Technology, Graphics Technology, Industrial Technology, Information and Software Technology, and Textiles Technology. From 2024, Computing Technology 7-10 replaced Information and Software Technology. In Years 11-12, Technology and Applied Studies syllabuses include Agriculture, Design and Technology, Engineering Studies, Food Technology, Industrial Technology, Software Engineering, Enterprise Computing, and Textiles and Design.

Syllabus updates

A new Creative Arts K-6 syllabus has recently been published with mandatory implementation from 2027. New syllabuses have been published for Dance 7-10 and Drama 7-10. A new syllabus for Visual Arts 7-10 is being finalised with proposed release later in 2024 and other elective 7-10 syllabuses

are currently being reviewed. New syllabuses for 11-12 Dance, Drama and Music are expected to be released in 2025 and Visual Arts released in 2026.

Comprehensive teacher support is being developed to implement the new syllabuses through professional learning and curriculum resources.

Department-developed courses

The NSW Department of Education has also developed 2 elective courses for Stage 5 (Years 9-10) students that focus on arts industry practices. These approved elective courses are:

- Design and media studies, and
- Performing arts.

These courses explore a wide range of arts industry practices, supporting specialist learning with clear industry connections, and also enable the continued delivery of specialist arts content formerly delivered through school developed board endorsed courses.

The department facilitates ongoing engagement with tertiary educators through engagement as critical friends, responding to enquiries and hosting online professional learning open to all sectors, tertiary educators and pre-service teachers to build a cohesive approach to creative arts curriculum across all levels.

Measures of success

Measures of success in schooling are varied and encompass both formal and informal achievements. In NSW formal measures include:

- Record of Student Achievement (ROSA) (provided to students who leave school before completing the Higher School Certificate) noting completion and attainment in any creative subjects studied (Dance, Drama, Photographic & Digital Media, Visual Arts and Visual Design)
- HSC completion and attainment in Stage 6 Dance, Drama and Visual Arts courses studied
- Related improvements in literacy, numeracy, attendance, belonging and wellbeing.

Informal, but equally important, measures include:

- Participation in local, regional and statewide arts education events
- Student, parent, teacher and community feedback
- Participation in opportunities for further development.

The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) coordinates showcase events of submitted works, projects and performances created by students for the HSC exams. Additionally, NESA is responsible for OnSTAGE (Drama) and in collaboration with the NSW Department of Education, NESA supports the CALLBACK (Dance) and ARTEXPRESS (Visual Arts) events.

For educators, success is measured by opportunities to upskill and broaden knowledge through quality professional development opportunities.

Post school-level

In NSW, tertiary level formal arts and creative education is provided by a range of providers including TAFE NSW, universities, and specialist educational institutions. There are different levels of qualifications available from Certificate through to degree-level qualifications. In addition to

these, non-qualification courses are also offered through various providers, including Adult and Community Education.

Training package information

In NSW, creative arts and music education in Vocational Education and Training (VET) is primarily delivered through the *CUA - Creative Arts & Culture Training Package*, which consists of 54 qualifications and 56 skills sets. This Training Package was last updated between 2018-2020.

Most Diploma and higher qualifications are delivered fee for service, though some Certificate II, III and IV level qualifications are delivered under government funded programs. There are 21 qualifications in arts and music funded on the NSW Skills List, of which eight are available via traineeship pathways (note: the Fee-free Traineeships initiative has been extended to 30 June 2025):

- CUA20620 - Certificate II in Music
- CUA30420 - Certificate III in Live Production and Technical Services
- CUA30520 - Certificate III in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Cultural Arts
- CUA30620 - Certificate III in Arts and Cultural Administration
- CUA30720 - Certificate III in Design Fundamentals
- CUA30920 - Certificate III in Music
- CUA31020 - Certificate III in Screen and Media
- CUA31120 - Certificate III in Visual Arts
- CUA40420 - Certificate IV in Live Production and Technical Services
- CUA40820 - Certificate IV in Arts and Cultural Administration
- CUA41120 - Certificate IV in Photography and Digital Imaging
- CUA41220 - Certificate IV in Screen and Media
- CUA51020 - Diploma of Screen and Media.

In 2023, CUA31120 Certificate III in Visual Arts was added to the NSW Skills List following a proposal from TAFE NSW through the annual Skills List Review process.

In 2022, the CUA training package qualifications classified under the 'Creative Arts' field of education had 13,280 enrolments. Top 3 enrolments were in the following qualifications:

- CUA30420 - Certificate III in Live Production and Technical Services – 2,210 of 2,575 total enrolments were government funded
- CUA30720 - Certificate III in Design Fundamentals – 1,445 of 1,620 were government funded
- CUA51020 - Diploma of Screen and Media – 440 of 1000 were government funded.

Service and Creative Skills Australia is the responsible Jobs Skills Council (JSC) with carriage of the CUA training package. It is currently undertaking a CUA: Unit Currency Audit project to identify and remove superseded and deleted units of competency in the training package and better align the training package to the needs of the sector. The NSW Department of Education is working with the JSC and NSW stakeholders to actively engage on consultations in this project.

University qualifications

Universities in NSW offer degree specialisations such as Arts, Fine Arts, Performing Arts and Secondary Arts in combination with initial teacher education programs, typically as dual qualifications.

Initial teacher education

The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers provides a common reference point to articulate, celebrate and support the complex and varied nature of teachers' work and describes what teachers need to know, understand and be able to do as well as providing direction and structure to enhance the preparation, support and development of teachers.

When graduate teachers begin their teaching career in NSW, they have undertaken an approved program of teacher preparation (initial teacher education program) and possess the required knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes to plan for and manage successful learning. Accreditation of an initial teacher education program by NESA ensures that the program will enable students to meet all the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers before graduation. NESA's [Subject Content Knowledge Requirements Policy](#) describes the requirements for the accreditation of initial teacher education courses relating to the arts and creative industries.

The role of arts and culture organisations

National Training Organisations

There are eight national training organisations for the performing arts, funded by the Federal Government. Together, these make up the Australian Roundtable for Arts Training Excellence (ARTS8). NSW is fortunate to be home to five of the ARTS8 national training institutions: The National Institute of Dramatic Art, Australian Film Television and Radio School, NAISDA Dance College, Australian Youth Orchestra and Flying Fruit Fly Circus.

The National Institute of Dramatic Art engages with the Sydney Opera House, key commercial theatres and other national performing arts organisations to deliver their Diploma of Live Production and Technical Services, enabling potential new workers to engage with key NSW venues and their specific technologies.

The federal budget for 2024-25 included \$117.2 million over four years for the eight national training organisations. This is a welcome investment that will help to achieve NSW policy objectives in this area. Sufficient federal funding for these organisations is required to support student and industry demand, and to grow the creative industries in Australia.

Cultural Institutions

There are six NSW State cultural institutions and each play a significant role in arts and culture education for NSW schools and students in Greater Sydney, particularly in supporting the K-12 curriculum. School incursions and excursions have long been a platform for introducing the world of art and music to young people.

The Art Gallery of NSW, Australian Museum, Museums of History NSW, Powerhouse Museum, State Library of NSW, and Sydney Opera House have dedicated departments for providing education programs, resources, activities, and spaces for teaching and learning.

While most activities are centred on engaging with collections and exhibitions on-site, the cultural institutions also offer digital and online research and education experiences. Powerhouse Museum, whose main site is currently closed for renovation, offers comprehensive courses online. Most of the cultural institutions also offer professional learning opportunities for teachers.

Collection-based institutions, including the Australian Museum, Art Gallery of NSW, Museums of History and the State Library of NSW, play a critical role in preserving and presenting both tangible and intangible First Nations arts and culture, which is vital to teaching students at all levels about First Nations histories and cultures.

The Art Gallery of New South Wales' Djamu Program for Indigenous Art Education provides ongoing opportunities for First Nations students to learn about art, culture and vocational pathways in the visual arts sector. The gallery also runs the Djamu Youth Justice program which supports First Nations young people in the NSW youth justice system through creating meaningful connections to art and culture and provides mentorship and vocational pathways post-release.

The cultural institutions have forged a range of different relationships with the education and higher education sectors through student engagement and academic Research & Development partnerships and collaborations. Initiatives range from joint appointments, Australian Research Council (ARC) partnerships, tertiary course practicums, student programs, fellowships and internships.

One example of this is the Sydney Opera House's Creative Learning program: a respected destination for the creative development of teachers and students, offering a year-round program of performing arts, digital, hands-on creative and educational experiences. The Creative Learning Modules cater for both primary and secondary students, and includes a 90-minute Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) workshop exploring the mathematics of the Opera House through visual arts in 'Dissecting Geometry', and a creative writing workshop for Musical Theatre and Drama students. School students gain experience of STEAM and First Nations perspectives that enrich their understanding of their world using the Opera House as a site of learning. More than 1,400 students and teachers participated in the program in 2023-24. In addition, creative learning performances at the Opera House provide valuable opportunities for students to experience and understand story telling centred around curriculum-based topics and themes.

National Performing Arts Partnership Organisations

There are 37 National Performing Arts Partnership Organisations in Australia and 13 are based in Sydney. These organisations are supported through a tripartite agreement with Creative Australia and Create NSW. Like the NSW State cultural institutions, each of these organisations employ personnel dedicated to providing education resources delivered alongside their programming.

Organisations including Bell Shakespeare and the Australian Chamber Orchestra, whose artistic output has strong ties to the school curriculum, produce comprehensive resources for primary and secondary school students, as well as teacher learning and schools incursion programs which take their practice into the classroom.

National Art School

The National Art School is recognised as a State Significant Organisation and is supported by both NSW Department of Education and Create NSW, as the Minister for Education and the Minister of the Arts are the two joint shareholder ministers.

Operating as an art school in different forms since 1922, the National Art School is recognised for its important role as a leading tertiary education institution. In 2019, the National Art School was granted a 45-year lease on the former Darlinghurst Gaol site, providing stability into the future. The

school's education courses are grounded in practical, studio-based learning and development, and all lecturers employed at the school are well-regarded practicing artists.

Local Government and Community Organisations

Regional galleries, museums and theatres play a critical role in providing arts and culture education, infrastructure, and expertise across regional NSW. These organisations are primarily run by local government authorities, many of which are additionally supported by Create NSW through its Arts and Cultural Funding Program.

These organisations provide important opportunities for students of all ages to learn about arts and culture practice in professional settings. While learning artistic and cultural practice in traditional education is important, it is also important for students to have access to professional standards of arts and culture presentation wherever they live.

NSW Department of Education engagement

The NSW Department of Education engages with a range of arts organisations and creative professionals in education and the development of creative skills across the arts. The department's online excursion platform 'DART Learning - Bringing the world to your classroom' provides opportunities for engagement with a range of arts organisations through online events coordinated with organisations such as National Portrait Gallery, Sydney Opera House, Red Room Poetry, ACMI (formerly Australian Centre for the Moving Image), Sydney Jewish Museum and Kamay Botany Bay Environmental Education Centre.

Department teams are engaged with arts industry institutions, professionals, and providers at multiple levels, in accordance with specific project requirements. The NSW Department of Education's Arts Unit are one point of engagement, with various programs and projects delivered in partnership with arts and cultural institutions, as well as NESAs and other creative arts teams within the department. The Arts Unit also supports student connection to creative industries through their provision of workshops, ensembles, camps and festivals.

Other examples of engagement include:

- co-ordination include HSC showcases for creative arts subjects including dance, drama, music, visual arts delivered in partnership with NESAs, school sectors and hosted by arts institutions.
- working with industry professionals and teaching artists in dance, drama and visual arts to develop resources and support materials to support the implementation of the new syllabuses in Dance 7-10 (2023), Drama 7-10 (2023) and Visual Arts 7-10, which is scheduled to be published in 2024. Through a range of projects, the department is developing models of creative practice such as choreographic processes, scripted works accessible in a range of contexts and video tutorials by artists working with a range of materials. These resources are being developed to support teachers in NSW public schools to make connections between curriculum changes and industry practices.
- developing a series of filmed interviews with 5 Aboriginal creative artists exploring their application of cultural protocols to their arts practices. Through this authentic connection to practicing artists, delivery of this project and associated curriculum materials developed in partnership with the department's Aboriginal Education and Communities directorate will support teachers to apply the 'Protocols for collaborating with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities and engaging with Cultural works' required by new

creative arts syllabuses across 7-10 published by NESA as part of the current curriculum reform project in NSW.

- bespoke online professional learning leveraging current trends in Creative Arts practice to inspire teachers. By engaging a range of industry professionals, these professional learning opportunities link industry practice to curriculum. Across 3 series addressing drama, music and visual arts, over 1300 participants gained new ideas and strategies for classroom practice and appreciated practical knowledge, links and resources provided by the industry experts.
- working with arts organisations such as art galleries, theatre companies and dance companies to build the capacity of arts educators to support department of education teachers and students through curricular and co-curricular learning opportunities.

The role of creative practitioners

Artists and creatives as educators

Artists and creatives, particularly those who are solo practitioners across different artforms, rarely generate enough income from their practice alone to make a living in Australia.

The research published in *Artists as Workers: An Economic Study of Professional Artists in Australia* (2023) by David Throsby and Katya Petetskaya states that the most common form of arts-related work is teaching, mostly in the artist's own art form but occasionally crossing into another art form. On average, 70 percent of artists across all art forms who are engaged in arts-related work do so through teaching. The second top industry in 2023 was education and research, with 42 per cent of all artists working in this sector.

This research shows that artists are working across higher education, vocational education, and in secondary and primary school education.

Continuing artistic practice is valued in the academic context, and there are academic research outputs including public exhibitions and performances. The Department of Education's creative arts curriculum teams deliver resources, professional learning and projects in collaboration with arts industry figures and institutions.

Entrepreneurial skills and industry experience

NSW Creative Arts and Technology and Applied Studies syllabuses provide opportunities for students to learn about entrepreneurship, and to develop entrepreneurial skills, through subject-specific content. Students develop skills in the ideation, development and presentation of works across these syllabuses.

Study in the Creative Arts prepares students to be producers and informed consumers of culture. Study in Technology and Applied Studies supports students to develop solutions to identified problems, exploring the impact of emerging technologies on individuals, societies and the environment.

NESA provides advice about related industries for all Stage 6 Creative Arts and Technology and Applied Studies syllabuses. This advice highlights some industries related to each course. Students are provided access to the [Your Career website](#), supported by the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

Entrepreneurial skills and industry experience in the arts are also supported through the range of work experience and workplace learning opportunities extended to secondary students in NSW, in

accordance with the [Work experience and workplace learning \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au) policy. Students aged 14 or over in public schools are eligible for work experience, and students are supported by schools to engage in placements that meet their education needs and interests. This can include placements in the arts industry such as public and private institutions, organisations and businesses.

There are a range of vocational education and training (VET) courses available for Stage 6 students that provide ways for students to learn entrepreneurial skills and gain industry experience in the arts to ensure that they are job ready. The role VET courses play in helping students prepare for further education, training, employment and lifelong learning is widely recognised by key stakeholders in education.

Students in NSW have the option of studying VET courses at school and students in Years 9-12 VET can receive recognition towards their school qualification (Record of School Achievement or HSC), as well as a nationally recognised VET qualification. The department supports a range of [VET courses](#) in the arts, including Assistant Dance Teaching, Music Industry, Entertainment Industry, Visual arts and Contemporary craft and Screen and Media. All these VET courses have optional work placement hours for students to gain industry experience, with Assistant Dance Teaching and Entertainment Industry both requiring 70 hours of work experience to complete the course.

Present level and progress of NSW Music Education

Music Syllabuses: Kindergarten to Year 12

NSW is delivering new music syllabuses as part of the NSW Curriculum Reform, with the recently published K-6 Creative Arts Syllabus due for implementation in 2027.

The new Music 7-10 syllabus (2024) has been released, to be implemented in schools from 2026 and for Years 11-12, syllabuses for Music 1, Music 2, and Music Extension are scheduled to be released for consultation in 2024, with implementation from 2027.

Current primary and secondary school curriculum

In NSW, mandatory arts education is provided in the following curricula: Primary Creative Arts (including Music) in Years K-6, and Secondary: Music (students are required to study 100 hours of Music for the Record of School Achievement). As students progress through secondary education, schools may offer the following elective subjects:

- Music in Years 9-12 (NESA Board-developed)
- Performing arts (Department of Education-endorsed).

The current Creative Arts K-6 Syllabus (2006), which includes music as one of 4 artforms, is designed to be used by primary classroom teachers. In music, students develop knowledge and understanding and skills in performing, organising sound and listening through learning experiences with the musical concepts of duration, pitch, dynamics, tone colour and structure.

The NSW Music 7-10 Syllabus (2003) includes learning outcomes across each of performing, composing and listening. Content builds on the knowledge and skills developed in K-6 and supports students to continue learning in formal and informal music settings during and beyond the years of schooling.

HSC music education includes options of Music 1, Music 2 and Music Extension (NESA Board-developed).

The Music 1 and Music 2 courses in Years 11-12 build on learning in Years K-10. Learning outcomes are included across performance, composition, musicology and aural components.

Music Extension in Years 11 and 12 is an extension of the Music 2 course and includes advanced performance or composition or musicology skills. Students specialise in performance or composition or musicology and follow an individual program of study which is negotiated between the teacher and student.

The new Music 7-10 syllabus is to be implemented from 2026. One change in the new music curriculum is the significant reduction in the number of outcomes seen in Stages 4 and 5 for music. This reduction in outcomes makes explicit the learning students need to demonstrate and what teachers need to assess. The Music 7-10 syllabus (2024) also allows teachers greater flexibility with the inclusion of repertoire requirements. In public secondary schools, the content of the 7-10 music courses is largely taught by a specialist music teacher, however, in some schools it is delivered by a non-specialist teacher.

The department offers ongoing professional development and curriculum resources to support teachers in schools, and the Arts Unit also delivers music and ensemble programs to support teachers and students in NSW public schools from K-12 with co-curricular opportunities.

Measures of success

In 2023, 4,380 students completed Music 1, 727 students completed Music 2, and 386 students completed Music Extension, which indicates the level of interest in the study of Music in Stage 6 (Years 11-12).

Measures of success in schooling are varied and encompass formal and informal achievements. Formal measures include:

- Record of Student Achievement (ROSA) (provided to students who leave school before completing the Higher School Certificate)
- HSC completion and attainment
- Related improvements in literacy, numeracy, attendance, belonging and wellbeing.

Informal, but equally as important, measures include:

- Participation in local, regional and statewide arts education events
- Student, parent, teacher and community feedback
- Extension performance, composition and ensemble opportunities.

NESA presents the Encore showcase each year. Encore showcases performances and compositions selected from the previous year's HSC exams and recognises the outstanding achievements of students studying HSC Music for the HSC and the quality of the NSW Music curriculum.

For educators, success is measured by opportunities to upskill and broaden knowledge through quality professional development opportunities. Evidence notes that in addition to the intrinsic value of learning about music, exposure to quality music education provides students with a range of developmental benefits, including positive social, cultural and educational outcomes (*Arts Education Partnership 2011, Caldwell 2012, Parliament of Victoria 2013, Hallam 2015*).

The role of music institutions and organisations

National Training Organisations

The Australian Youth Orchestra has a base in Sydney and is one of the eight national training organisations. It presents tailored training and performance programs each year for young musicians, composers, arts and administrators and music journalists aged between 12 and 30. The organisation provides professional pathways for young people seeking to perform professionally in orchestras.

The Australian National Academy of Music in Melbourne is dedicated to training exceptional classical musicians from Australia and New Zealand. The academy is one of a few pre-professional performance-based training institutions in the world. The academy engages the world's best international and national performers and educators with whom enrolled musicians collaborate in a year-long program. The academy produces accomplished, dedicated and knowledgeable musicians, many of whom go on to become leaders in classical music or will do so in the future.

Regional Conservatoriums

Regional conservatoriums are self-governing not-for-profit organisations that are managed by community boards and are partly funded by the NSW Department of Education. There are 17

regional conservatoriums across NSW that service catchments in areas with larger regional populations. The members of the regional conservatorium network offer a range of different programs, from early childhood music lessons, programs for classrooms, to tuition in specific instruments including keyboard, brass, string and woodwind. Percussion and vocal classes are also taught. Most conservatoriums operate their curriculum from a strong foundation in classical music and theory towards traditional jazz and improvisation.

Some conservatoria offer contemporary music options that include rock and blues including the Central Coast Conservatorium of Music, Clarence Valley Conservatorium and the Riverina Conservatorium of Music. The Hume Conservatorium in Goulburn and the Upper Hunter Conservatorium in Muswellbrook and Singleton offer a range of industry relevant technical units alongside tuition supporting contemporary music, including live sound and music production. The curriculum offered by the majority of conservatoriums in general does not focus on directly supporting young people in the development and presentation of contemporary music, or in providing pathways to employment in the contemporary music sector. This is an area where greater support could be provided to expand the music curriculum with other styles and genres, including in the electronic and digital space.

The NSW Department of Education administers the Regional Conservatorium Grants Program for the 17 regional conservatoriums. The grants aim to offer a wide range of music education, training, performance and engagement opportunities for schools, students, teachers and community members in regional, rural and remote areas by catering for learners, performers and audiences of all ages, interests, and abilities. There are 5 key outcomes for the program:

- Increased number of public schools participating in music education activities.
- Increased number of public school students engaged in quality-assured music education and training.
- Increased number of young people from equity target groups (Aboriginal, English as an additional language or dialect, persons with a disability, isolated and remote, gifted and talented) participating in music education activities.
- Increased delivery of music education services to regional and remote locations, including the use of video conferencing.
- Increased number of professional learning opportunities for public school teachers.

Grants are made on the understanding that the money will not cover the full operating costs of the regional conservatorium.

Regional Conservatorium Grants Program funds are not provided to support:

- VET courses that are eligible for funding from other public sources
- tertiary programs
- full-time students at regional conservatoriums.

Australian Chamber Orchestra Foundation Program

The ACO Foundations program is an in-school program which uses music learning to improve the developmental and educational outcomes of children in low socio-economic status schools. ACO Foundations has been running as an expansive pilot program in St Marys North Public School in Western Sydney since 2018. Now in its sixth year, ACO Foundations sees over 160 students and their classroom teachers participate daily in the program, with life-changing impacts and demonstrates how music learning can be integrated into the core classroom curriculum for the benefit of all

students. The outcomes for students that completed the program were significant and can be found in the ACO Foundations 2018-2022 evaluation report

The department has commissioned various music compositions for use in music curriculum resources, working directly with artists and composers. These industry professionals form a significant part of the work the department does to deliver high quality, relevant and local musical works for study for students statewide.

The role of creative practitioners

The role of music teachers

Over several decades, music education has declined in many public primary schools, often out of necessity. This is in contrast to the academic evidence which demonstrates that good music education assists all students, including the most disadvantaged students, in their core subjects.

The Department of Education notes the findings in the ‘Fading Notes: The State of Music Education for the Next Generation of Primary Teachers’ report indicating that the inadequate provision of music education in primary teaching degrees is having a detrimental impact on the quality and quantity of music education in Australian schools (page 8).

Under Our Plan for NSW Public Education, the department is committed to delivering outstanding leadership, teaching and learning through the provision of high-quality, evidence-based curriculum resources.

The department has several education support teams dedicated to providing schools with curriculum and co-curricular support, to ensure the quality and effectiveness of arts and creative industries education. Dedicated teams supporting the arts include subject matter experts for K-6 and 7-12 Creative arts teams who provide significant support for teachers statewide. Support provided includes:

- subject-specific resources, published on the [department’s website](#)
- online real time and self-paced professional learning to ensure access for all teachers, including those in regional, rural and remote areas
- 1:1 support and advice
- Statewide staffrooms NSW public school teachers designed to offer a platform for sharing ideas, asking questions, receiving and providing support.

The department’s Arts Unit promotes growth, connection and inclusion through the arts in a variety of settings, providing inspiring arts opportunities for every student in NSW, reducing the impact of disadvantage and enriching school communities.

The Arts Unit delivers programs in dance, drama, music, visual arts, debating, public speaking, spelling, literary arts, film and special events, supporting student engagement, wellbeing and development from Kindergarten to Year 12 in diverse school contexts across the state.

The Arts Unit also provides targeted professional learning to support teachers’ delivery of high-quality arts education, strengthening trust and respect for the teaching profession and school support staff. Core activities include festivals and performances, ensembles, exhibitions, camps and workshops, competitions and challenges, digital resources and teacher professional learning.

Under department’s HSC Strategy, tailored professional learning is provided for Stage 6 teachers, designed to support High Impact Professional Learning practices in schools.

The HSC Strategy aims to improve student achievement collectively, regardless of a student's postcode or school's socio-economic status, and increase the number of students who achieve in top bands in the HSC. The department has teams to support Music 1 and Visual arts through the HSC Strategy initiative.

Entrepreneurial skills and industry experience

The NSW Department of Education funds the Talent Development Project (TDP) school program, which is a free program designed to nurture and expand the talents of young musicians, singers and songwriters within an artistic and professional environment. The School Program is open to NSW public secondary students, in Years 9, 10, 11 and 12 and encourages students from all over NSW to apply.

TDP involves a tight network of consultants that work professionally across a range of creative fields, and these consultants guide and mentor students on their journey to creating a sustainable career in the performing arts.

The success of TDP is based on the direct access to the music and entertainment industry. By engaging in the program, students develop the artistry, optimism and resilience required to pursue a professional career in the performing arts.

Attachment A - Creative Communities consultation feedback

Respondent feedback relating to arts and culture education

The *Creative Communities* policy settings were informed by a significant number of public submissions. Between July and August 2023, the Minister for the Arts and Parliamentary Secretary for the Arts hosted town hall meetings in twelve centres – Lismore, Newcastle, Sydney, Penrith, Bega, Wagga Wagga, Leichhardt, Dubbo, Tamworth, Wollongong, Liverpool and Broken Hill. Four additional consultation sessions were held online. More than 1000 people participated in the meetings and shared more than 3000 ideas and comments. 775 written submissions were lodged.

Consultation responses consistently called for arts and humanities to be valued equally alongside Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects in K-12 school education and in the full range of tertiary education and training settings.

Note: the information below represents a summary of the feedback provided by members of the public, organisations and other participants in consultation with government agencies. It is not intended as a summary of NSW Government policy.

Curriculum prioritisation of STEM subjects over arts and humanities subjects

Some respondents suggested that action over recent decades by Federal and State Governments to address skills deficits in key industry sectors dependent on science, technology, engineering and mathematics skills (STEM) was perceived to be at the expense of education in arts, culture and the creative industries. A consistent perception that was communicated throughout consultation was that arts and creative industries education and training at all levels have lost significant support from State and Federal governments.

K-12 School Education

There was consensus in feedback from across the arts, culture and creative industries that it is vital that children are engaged in culture and creativity from an early age to support their development. It was agreed that access to a range of arts teaching in schools is essential to realising this, however some respondents suggested that these subjects are perceived to be unevenly distributed, underfunded, or lacking in many schools across the state.

Skills and training

Direct government investment in arts and cultural training programs was seen as essential, with accessible and affordable university-level courses in creative practice and fee-free or affordable training at TAFE for arts, production and creative industries being the bedrock of industry sustainability. It was agreed that professional development creates pathways, job opportunities, growth and lifelong learning, and that industry informed and led training enables entry to the creative workforce, increases sustained workforce participation, and promotes opportunities for career progression and diversification.

Higher education

A number of respondents commenting on higher education were critical of the previous federal government policies, the increased costs borne by students selecting arts, culture and humanities courses, and the negative impact on arts and culture education opportunities for people from

socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Some of the consultation feedback emphasised the sector's need for skilled workers to fill current and worsening employment deficits across technical production areas in the screen and performing arts sectors, with more training opportunities seen as critical.

Tertiary level teacher education

A common theme raised in the feedback to the consultation for *Creative Communities* was the need for evidence-based teacher training and professional development at a higher education level in the arts. Arts in higher education is seen to be taught largely by industry professionals often without education-based degrees. Numerous submissions called for mandatory education-based qualifications for teachers in the arts at the tertiary level, noting that the quality of teaching and course content was often out of step with current industry standards, and lacking in academic rigour, particularly in disciplines suffering from reduced funding and course cutbacks.

Regional Education Hubs

There are some signs that the popularity of people moving to regional NSW during the COVID-19 pandemic may be a limited trend, and that the long-term experience of regional locations worldwide, where young people gravitate to cities for higher education and work opportunities, will continue. To combat this, many regional leaders are looking to new ideas and concepts to retain population numbers, economic activity and quality of life and work. Higher education is seen as a key means of keeping young people in their home region. The concept of regional creative hubs was raised many times in the *Creative Communities* feedback and is worth further exploration.

Western Sydney

When compared with the central and eastern localities of Greater Sydney, Western Sydney is significantly underserved in education. As the demographic centre of Sydney is beyond Parramatta, the *Creative Communities* policy committed to strategies to address this significant education imbalance. Create NSW is seeking to work in partnership with the Department of Education to establish and promote arts and creative industries education and training opportunities.

Feedback relating to music education

Feedback and insight relating to music and contemporary music has been received through numerous channels. The most recent responses are a result of the *Creative Communities* policy consultation process, as well as consultation undertaken to aid in the development and delivery of a Contemporary Music Strategy for NSW. Over 80 pieces of feedback relating to music were gathered through the *Creative Communities* process, and over 100 stakeholders from the NSW contemporary music industry have been consulted by Sound NSW in 2024.

Consultation feedback from all avenues suggest several recurring themes, including the need for music education and contemporary music to be valued as an integral part of the NSW education system and for skilled practitioners to educate students.

Note: the information below represents a summary of the feedback provided by members of the public, organisations and other participants in consultation with government agencies. It is not intended as a summary of NSW Government policy.

Music education in the public education system

Respondents commenting on music education in NSW schools, particularly in the public school system, noted a perception that music programs are often considered expendable and the first to be removed as a subject or extra-curricular activity when school budgets are constrained. This perception of music, and arts and culture subjects in general, as ‘nice to have’ results in students missing out on the opportunity to access the benefits of these experiences as part of their education. The perceived limitation of music school-based programs was argued to place the responsibility and cost of music education on parents and carers, resulting in additional financial pressure.

The feedback emphasised that pathways need to begin in primary school in order to nurture a young person’s interest and skill in any artform, and that many people rely on the current education system to ensure that young people have access to quality music experiences. Also emphasised was that it was imperative that these pathways are inclusive and do not exclude participants based on their location and socio-economic background.

The role of music teachers and professional practitioners

The role of music teachers and professional practitioners was a recurring theme in feedback received throughout consultation processes. The inconsistent quality of school music education and the use of generalist teachers in music classes was of concern, and there was a wider call for increased support to promote an equitable approach to music education from primary school onwards.

Attachment B – Case Study – Sydney Opera House - Creative Leadership in Learning (CLIL)

The Opera House’s innovative CLIL program embeds arts and creativity in schools by combining professional learning for school principals and teachers, and collaborative creative projects between students and Opera House artists, developed in the classroom or online over a 20-week period. Evaluation¹ has demonstrated the program’s positive impact across school’s teaching staff, students, artists, families and communities, and the dramatic increase in student engagement – equipping students and the teaching community with the skills and capabilities to meet difference, difficulty and the previously unimaginable with confidence.

Not intended as a one-size-fits-all model, CLIL is not delivered the same way in each school, and is delivered via a tailored approach underpinned by a methodological framework in each learning environment. This deep, longer-term and co-constructed method is seen as part of CLIL’s in-built creativity and value creation for schools.

This flexible program is a powerful catalyst for school transformation, embedding a culture of creativity and risk-taking in schools, as well as increasing the wellbeing of educators and enhancing social cohesion within school communities. CLIL brings the artistic resources and creative processes of the Opera House and creative industries into the school ecosystem by increasing creativity, communication, collaboration, and curiosity in teaching and learning.

Within school communities, CLIL increases the capacity for creative learning, supporting schools to develop the skills and knowledge required to increase engagement, build resilience, and equip students and teachers for future social and professional contexts. The program plays a critical role in demonstrating how creative skills and processes are innate, but often need to be re-learned or strengthened so that innovative thinking and collaboration can flourish. This supports teachers to teach any subject through creativity, increasing capabilities to engage creativity as a teaching methodology across the school curriculum. More broadly, the program builds capacity and creativity over time by strengthening relationships between cultural institutions and the education sector.

Three main streams of activity include:

1. Artist in Residency Program (delivered on site at schools in Terms 2 and 3) - A 9-session project facilitated by Opera House teaching artists that results in a creative outcome for students and the school community to celebrate. The teaching artists work with students to develop a creative response to an Opera House performance. Sessions support students in their creative learning journey, with a process driven by child-led agency, critical thinking, creative play and exploration. In 2024 the selected performance for students to respond to was Game Theory from Switzerland-based, internationally renowned Joshua Monten Dance Company.

¹ Creative Australia 2020, Cultivating Creativity: A study of the Sydney Opera House’s Creative Leadership in Learning program in schools.

2. Teacher Professional Learning Program (delivered on site at both schools and Opera House) - A 6-session program of interactive learning workshops for teachers that develops confidence in teaching through creativity – facilitated by Opera House teaching artists. The program supports teachers in unpacking the Opera House’s Creativity Framework – a guide to embedding creativity and artistic perspectives into the classroom. Teachers learn to identify a range of creative perspectives and techniques they can work with in the classroom to open up creativity for both learning and engagement, including a resource pack to help build lesson plans.
3. Amplified Festival (delivered on site at the Opera House) - A final outcome for schools participating in the Artist In Residency Program. Schools showcase their creative response and performance developed with the assigned teaching artist/s. Students take ownership of their learning and feel empowered in public spaces by performing on stage at the Opera House, with family and friends invited to watch and celebrate the performance and the students’ achievements.

In 2023-24, the CLIL program engaged about 160 primary and secondary NSW students and teachers and 10 artists.

