COMMUNITY LANGUAGE SCHOOLS QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK
- SUMMARY GUIDE -

COMMUNITY LANGUAGES AUSTRALIA

Erebus International

Acknowledgment

Disclaimer

The views expressed here are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views of the Australian Government Department of Education.

Foreword.

Community Language Schools play an important role in languages and culture education across all Australian States and Territories. They offer major advantages for communities, in particular families, who are keen to maintain the language and culture of their heritage. They are a complementary provider for the teaching and learning of languages which would otherwise be unavailable as it is not possible to offer over 70 languages through one system.

In order to provide valid and reliable teaching and learning contexts, it is essential that every community language school be provided with clear guidelines which ensure the preparation of excellent learning and teaching activities.

This revised version of the Quality Assurance Framework will enable Community Language Schools to develop improvement plans that can be evaluated in terms of a set of concrete measures, as well as qualitatively through record-keeping and the establishment of a school profile. Such a framework, which has clearly delineated dimensions and suggestions for their implementation, will provide a set of performance indicators for State and Territory Education jurisdictions to rely on in determining accreditation and registration of community languages schools. This process will enable these schools to validate and reward the significant amount of time and effort invested by their administrators, teachers, parents and students in the continuing provision of languages and culture programs for large numbers of young people in Australia.

Here at Community Languages Australia, our goal is to support Community Language Schools and we are keen on supporting schools with the adoption of the Quality Assurance Framework. We believe this is a significant step in the implementation of consistent quality in the teaching and learning of languages in these schools on a nation-wide basis.

Stefan Romaniw, OAM
Executive Director
Community Languages Australia

Introduction.

In operation since 1857, Australia's community language schools are one of the many tools used to consolidate Australia's identity as a truly multicultural society. Community Language schools play an important role in languages and culture education across all Australian states and territories. They offer major advantages for communities, in particular families, who are keen to maintain the language and culture of their heritage. Community language schools play a crucial role in complementing mainstream education, providing languages and cultural education at the community level through over 1400 schools, teaching more than 70 different languages.

The Quality Assurance Framework reflects the views and work of many teachers and school leaders currently engaged in community languages education throughout Australia. The Quality Assurance Framework consists of two documents: this overview of the Framework, and a more detailed Implementation Guide. The Framework is intended to assist community language schools to achieve excellence in teaching and learning for their students, recognising the unique context within which such schools operate. It was also intended to be a tool to improve national coordination and communication between all stakeholders and initiate models for quality assurance processes that link to State and Territory accreditation processes.

The original Quality Assurance Framework document was developed as a result of work undertaken by Community Languages Australia on behalf of the Australian Government during 2003-2006. Since that time, research on the teaching of community languages has become more sophisticated, the requirements for community languages schools have continued to grow, government policies have changed and the professional needs and accountabilities of teachers in community languages schools have also evolved.

The refinements made to the original Framework have been based on feedback gathered nationally from teachers and principals in community languages schools as well as key stakeholders from the representative groups of each state/ territory.

The Framework reflects known best practice in the teaching and learning of community languages, as well as the principles of second language acquisition. The revised Quality Assurance Framework reflects the *2019 Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration*, agreed by the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) Education Council. It also supports and reflects the key dimensions of the *National Statement for Engaging Young Australians with Asia in Australian Schools* developed through the Ministerial Council for Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA, 2006).

Let's Get Your Community Language School QAF-Ready!

I'm so excited you're joining us for this comprehensive training on The Quality Assurance Framework, where we'll help you understand best practices of community languages teaching and learning, as well as help you assess whether the various elements of quality community language schooling are being practised at your school.

There is some IMPORTANT preliminary reading you need to do BEFORE you attend the workshop and this Summary Guide is one of the three resources you will receive as a hard copy at the training.

The 2023 revision of the Quality Assurance Framework has been reorganised into three separate documents. The first is this **Summary Guide** which outlines the key principles and overarching format of the Framework. It can be employed to provide an overview of the kinds of actions that would be expected of effective community language schools.

The second document is the **Reference Guide** and is a more comprehensive guide that could assist school leaders, teachers and community members to conduct professional learning activities and reviewing aspects of professional practice.

The third document is the **Self-Audit Tool** which can be used to assess where your school is situated with the Framework at the present time and will allow you to identify the areas that need more work.

Familiarising yourself with these 3 resources ahead of time will set you up for SUCCESS at the Quality Assurance Framework Professional Learning Workshop.

Let's get started!

Heba El-Hakim, BSc, MBA
Project Coordinator & QAF Facilitator
Community Languages Australia

Handy Links.

Here are some handy links you can use to easily access the resources and support at any time.

Download the Resources
https://www.communitylanguagesaustralia.org.au/quality-assurance/

Facebook Group Join the Conversation
Coming Soon!

Help & Support
heba.elhakim@communitylanguages.org.au

Your Expert Instructors.

Dr Tim Wyatt is an internationally recognized leader in the field of program performance monitoring and evaluation. He has degrees from the University of New England, University of Sydney and University of Western Sydney. He has held senior public service roles in NSW and has led and participated in government evaluation projects both nationally and overseas. He has worked with a range of international organizations including the OECD, US Department of Education, US National Academy of Public Administration, among others.

Tim was a co-founder of Erebus International. As an independent consultant since 1999, Tim has contributed to over 300 major evaluation projects across a diverse range of topics for a wide range of government agencies. Tim's experience in central government agencies provides a unique appreciation of the policy context of evaluation findings.

As an active contributor to the education research literature, Tim specialises in quantitative data analysis techniques and the development of performance measurement methodologies at local, systemic and national levels. Tim has a long association with languages education, including the community language sector, having led reviews for the Commonwealth and several state governments. Along with colleague Dr Bob Carbines, he developed the first Quality Assurance Framework for community language schools, along with the revised Framework in 2023.

Dr Bob Carbines is a distinguished educator and an eminent evaluator, who has held senior public service roles in both NSW and Victoria and led government evaluation projects both nationally and overseas. Bob has degrees from Macquarie University and the University of New England. Bob was the holder of both a NSW Teaching Service Fellowship and a NSW Senior Executive Service Fellowship. He was recognised as an outstanding teacher, principal and senior executive in the government school sector in NSW and Victoria.

As co-founder of Erebus in 1999, Bob has directed and participated in over 300 evaluations in Education and other areas of the public service. In the evaluation arena, Bob specialises in the development, analysis and measurement of qualitative data in advising about program impact. Bob has also developed an enviable reputation for his interactive and informative style in leadership training and the development of teamwork and strategy with clients.

Bob has a long association with languages education, including the community language sector, having led reviews for the Commonwealth and several state governments. Along with colleague Dr Tim Wyatt, he developed the first Quality Assurance Framework for community language schools, along with the revised Framework in 2023.

Why use the QAF?

The revised Quality Assurance Framework provides teachers, administrators, parents and other school community members with a practical way of understanding best practice provision of community languages education, and a tool for assessing whether the various elements of quality community language schooling are being practised. It also serves as a reference manual to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in community languages schools.

The Quality Assurance Framework is not intended as a means of assessing an individual or their performance, but as a means to enhance teaching and learning practices across school communities. Using the Framework can also demonstrate that a quality approach is currently being adopted by the school.

The QAF Dimensions.

The Quality Assurance Framework consists of eight interrelated dimensions, that combine to provide an overview of best practice in teaching and learning and school operation and management within the community languages sector in Australia.

The Framework reflects the current research literature in relation to effective school practices generally, as well as what is known about the promotion of mother tongue maintenance and cultural understanding in particular. It draws on the practical experience of teachers and principals in many community language schools across Australian.

The revised Framework continues to be based on the belief that all of these dimensions need to be addressed to achieve quality in a school or a program. The dimensions work together in an integrated way, and overlap to some extent. The Dimensions of the revised Framework are represented in the figure below.

Definition of Dimensions.

Each of the eight Dimensions has a particular meaning when being applied to the teaching and learning of Community Languages. A detailed description of each Dimension is outlined in this table:

DIMENSION	DESCRIPTION
Enhancing Curriculum Relevance	Ensuring the curriculum is relevant to student learning needs, mandatory external curriculum requirements, and delivered through authentic cultural and community contexts.
Leading Effectively and Efficiently	The practices involved in inspiring school community commitment to student learning and ensuring resources for teaching and learning are being used efficiently.
Encouraging Community Partnerships	Those relationships with other key stakeholders/organisations that produce reciprocal benefits for students in community language schools.
Evidence-Based Decision-Making	Strategies undertaken to seek and report information in relation to student outcomes at both classroom and whole school level and to use this information to improve teaching and learning.
Teaching Effectively	Those strategies undertaken by teachers to maximise student learning outcomes at both classroom and whole school level and to use this information to improve teaching and learning.
Engaging Students in Purposeful Learning	Ensuring student participation in learning activities that focus on their needs and goals in relation to the community language being taught.
Ensuring Student Wellbeing	The promotion of a positive, safe and secure learning environment that ensures each student is treated as a unique learner.
Promoting Family Participation	The active participation of families in all aspects of community language school life.

Definition of Dimensions.

These elements themselves can be further described by a series of pointers and examples of the kinds of practices that would be observed in high functioning community language schools.

This is the **Summary Guide**. A more comprehensive overview of the dimensions of the Framework is shown in the Quality Assurance Framework **Reference Guide**.

The Framework can be used in a number of ways:
- As a checklist for a focused review of school performance around particular Elements of good practice.
- As the basis for professional development for teachers and other community languages.
- As a basis for communicating about best practices in teaching and learning with parents and community members.

The Reference Guide is available on the Community Languages Australia website (See Handy Links Page)

Now let's go through an Overview of each Quality Assurance Framework Dimension and Elements.

You can use this Summary Guide to quickly refer to a Dimension and its respective Elements.

You can also use each of the following pages as a Checklist to mark off the Elements you feel your school is doing well in.

1. Enhancing Curriculum Relevance.

☐ 1.1   The school's curriculum is understood by teachers and families.

☐ 1.2   The structure of the school's curriculum makes provision for age appropriate and realistic and relevant student learning experiences.

☐ 1.3   The school's curriculum is appropriately aligned with the relevant State/Territory curriculum structures.

☐ 1.4   The school's curriculum provides for the teaching of the language in appropriate cultural contexts.

☐ 1.5   The school's curriculum is appropriately resourced to promote student learning.

☐ 1.6   Structures are in place for monitoring and updating the school's curriculum to ensure that it is reflective of broader curriculum change.

2. Leading Effectively and Efficiently.

☐ **2.1** The leader establishes and communicates a culture that ensures excellence in student learning.

☐ **2.2** The leader provides direction and guidance for achieving the school's goals.

☐ **2.3** The leader is responsible and accountable for all aspects of the school's operation.

☐ **2.4** The leader develops and monitors policies and processes to support all aspects of the school's operation.

☐ **2.5** The leader ensures that relationships within the school are based on trust collegiality and ethical practices.

☐ **2.6** The leader efficiently manages financial, physical and human resources to support teaching and learning.

3. Encouraging Community Partnerships.

☐ **3.1** The school is building a positive relationship with relevant mainstream schools, including (where appropriate), schools that host community language schools.

☐ **3.2** The school is building positive relationships with the local community to promote the value of language learning.

☐ **3.3** The school is establishing ongoing relationships with other community language schools.

☐ **3.4** The school regularly engages with the relevant State/Territory education authority

☐ **3.5** The school seeks to engage with relevant professional language associations to develop an authentic learning context.

4. Evidence-Based Decision Making.

☐   **4.1**   The school has a process for collecting data about student performance.

☐   **4.2**   The school's assessment practices take account of individual student needs.

☐   **4.3**   The school has a process for reviewing data about student performance.

☐   **4.4**   The school has in place strategies to celebrate and reward student achievement.

☐   **4.5**   Planning for continuous improvement is built on available evidence within the school.

☐   **4.6**   The school has established processes for communicating assessment information to students, parents/caregivers and other key stakeholders.

5. Teaching Effectively.

☐ **5.1** Teachers communicate clear expectations about the standards and outcomes they expect for students.

☐ **5.2** Teachers plan their lessons based on an understanding of their students' learning needs and abilities.

☐ **5.3** Teachers employ a range of teaching practices to engage and meet the needs of a range of students.

☐ **5.4** Teachers regularly provide feedback on student performance.

☐ **5.5** Teachers collaborate with colleagues and share ideas to improve practice.

☐ **5.6** Teachers ensure that lessons are organised and structured.

☐ **5.7** Teachers use effective classroom management techniques.

☐ **5.8** Teachers consider professional development to be integral to professional improvement.

☐ **5.9** Teachers use approaches that reflect known best practice in second language acquisition.

6. Engaging Students in Purposeful Learning.

☐ **6.1** Students have a clear understanding of the goals for their learning.

☐ **6.2** Students are provided with opportunities to manage their learning.

☐ **6.3** Students are given the opportunity to apply their learning in the real-life contexts.

☐ **6.4** Student learning provides opportunity to demonstrate values such as caring, citizenship and fairness.
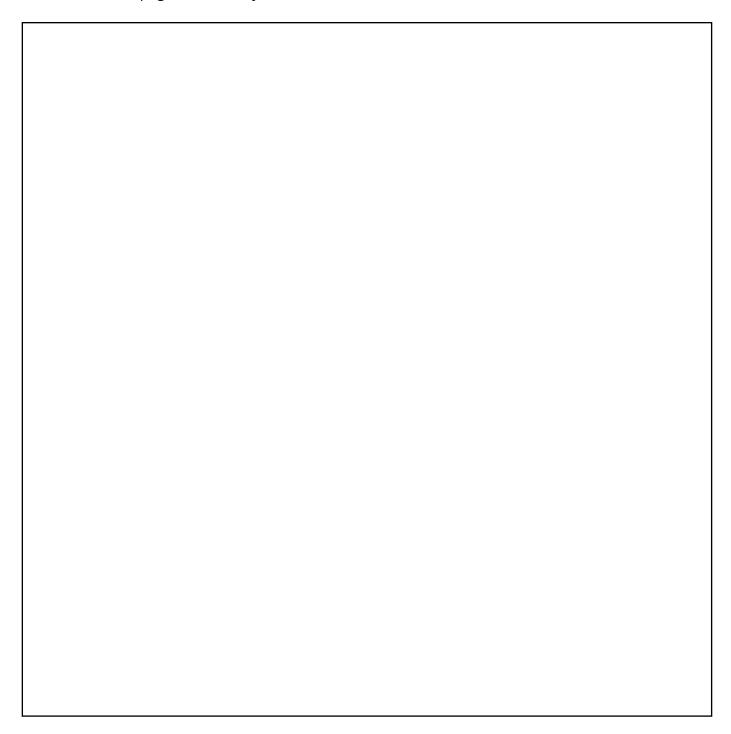
7. Ensuring Student Wellbeing.

☐ **7.1** The school recognises, values and supports student diversity.

☐ **7.2** The school's teaching and learning practices meet the interests, needs and abilities of all students.

☐ **7.3** The culture of the school promotes improved student learning outcomes.

☐ **7.4** The school identifies the concern for individual students as a priority.

☐ **7.5** The school provides a safe and secure learning environment for students.

8. Promoting Family Participation.

☐   8.1   Family participation contributes to an authentic context for language learning in this school.

☐   8.2   Family participation enhances continuation of language learning beyond the classroom context.

☐   8.3   Families share common aspirations and expectations about student learning with the school's staff.

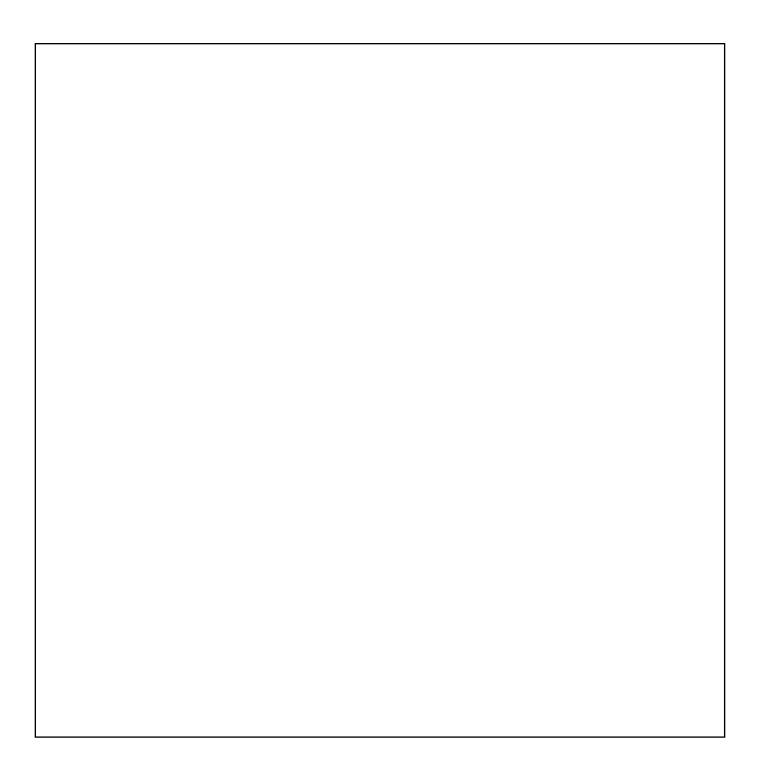☐   8.4   Families are actively involved in school life.

Notes.

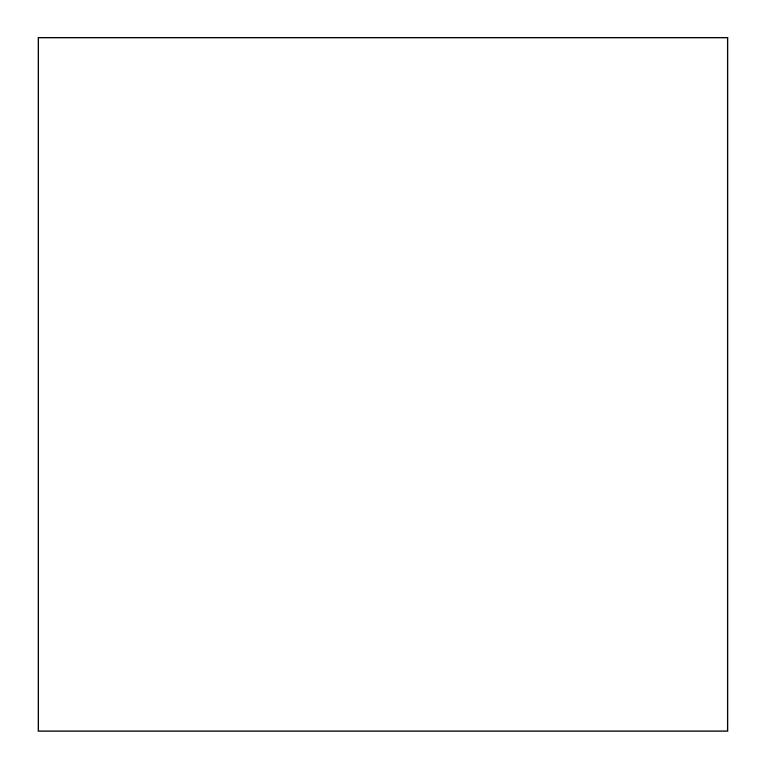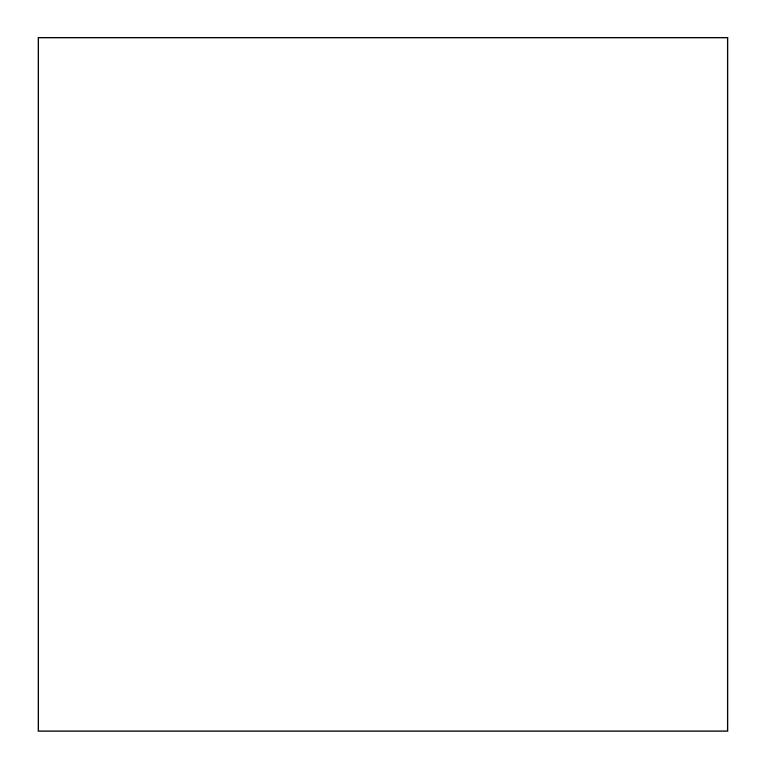Use the next few pages to take any relevant notes:

Notes.

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Your School's Action Plan.

Take some time to jot down on this page the Dimensions your school plans to work through first in order of priority.

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2.

3.

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5.

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