

Curriculum

The program supports the ongoing development and renewal of curriculum that is relevant to learners' present and future needs, is based on principles of second language acquisition and adult learning, and provides a flexible framework to guide the teaching/learning process.

37. The curriculum is clearly articulated and provides a flexible and accessible guide to the teaching/learning process.

- The curriculum articulates
 - Purpose/mandate/goals
 - Learning objectives
 - Suggested approaches and methods
 - Sample tasks and teaching/learning activities
 - Recommended resources (materials, textbooks, technology)
 - Measurable outcomes
 - Assessment strategies and sample assessment tools
- The curriculum is readily available.
- The curriculum is easy to use.
- The curriculum allows for differences in teaching styles.
- The approaches, methods, and resources appeal to a variety of learning styles.
- Flexibility is built into the curriculum, allowing instructors to adapt the content, approaches, methods, activities and tasks to the needs and interests of the learners in each class.

38. The curriculum reflects the mission of the program, current principles of adult language learning and teaching, and best practices in TESL methodology.³³

- The curriculum is appropriate for the mission of the program, and clearly linked to program goals.
- The curriculum is spiraled rather than linear, both within particular course offerings and across levels (i.e., what is taught at one time or at one level is reviewed and reinforced at different times or levels).
- The curriculum reflects the needs, interests, and prior knowledge and experience of **adult** learners.
- The curriculum specifies what the learners need to be able to **do** with language (competency based).
- The curriculum specifies authentic, communicative tasks:³⁴
 - Tasks are authentic (i.e., they reflect the present/future real-world needs of the learners).
 - Tasks integrate language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing).
 - The language necessary for the successful completion of tasks is supported (skills, content).

39. Curriculum development and renewal is responsive to learner needs, based on input from the learner population as well as community, educational, and/or workplace stakeholders.³⁵

- Curriculum development and renewal considers input from the learner population:
 - Present and future needs and goals of the current learner population (as individuals, and as members of families, communities, and workplaces).
 - Learner feedback.
 - Course evaluations.
 - Follow-up feedback with graduates of the program.

³³ Informed by TESOL (2003), Standard 2B

³⁴ Ellis (2009) p.818; Nunan (2004); Manitoba (2009); Pawlikowska-Smith (2005)

³⁵ See TESOL (2003), Standard 2A

- Learner success rates.
- Curriculum development and renewal considers the changing needs of learners and their communities through input from a selection of the following:
 - Feedback from instructors and administrators.
 - Enrolment patterns.
 - Professional associations.
 - Social service agencies.
 - Cultural/religious organizations.
 - Educational institutions that receive graduates of the program.
 - Workplace needs assessments (with feedback from co-workers, supervisors, or employers).
 - Essential Skill Profiles.
 - Canadian Language Benchmarks.
 - Other.
- There is a transparent connection between the curriculum and the present/future needs and goals of the learners, as demonstrated by a selection of the following:
 - Curriculum goals and objectives reflect the present and future needs/goals of the learner population.
 - Specified approaches and methods are demonstrably appropriate for the learner population.
 - Specified tasks are authentic and reflect the present or future needs of the learners.
 - Depending on the goals of the learner population, the curriculum prepares learners for success in post-secondary classes, in the workplace, and/or in the community.
 - The curriculum is culturally sensitive.
 - The curriculum includes local content.
 - Essential Skills inform curriculum development and materials selection/development to ensure a transparent connection between the curriculum and the present and future workplace needs of the learners.

40. The program ensures regular review and renewal of the curriculum and supporting materials.

- Curriculum renewal is informed by any of the following:
 - The needs/interests of the learner population.
 - Current research in adult second language acquisition and teaching.
 - Professional development.³⁶
- The program has a plan for regular curriculum review.
- The program supports regular meetings of instructors/coordinators to review curriculum, materials, and textbooks.
- Instructors/staff are encouraged to contribute and share new materials that support the curriculum.
- Specified persons are given the responsibility to update curriculum, materials, and textbooks.
- The program secures funding for curriculum development and renewal.

³⁶ Those involved in curriculum development (instructors, curriculum developers) should be accessing ongoing professional development that reflects current research and meets the needs/mandate of the program and learner population (see BP #25). They should be encouraged to incorporate what is learned in the curricula they develop (see BP #26). For instance, curriculum developers may attend a seminar on the use of Essential Skills and may then decide to incorporate Essential Skills into a curriculum they are developing.

References and Further Reading: Curriculum

- Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
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- White, R., Martin, M., Stimson, M., & Hodge, R. (1998). *Management in English language teaching (Chapter 6: Managing curriculum development and innovation)*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

