**[Chris Finch]:** Finally, the plurilingual strategies strand is new. And so you need to examine how you might build those plurilingual strategies into your existing teaching practice. So there is on that FUSE site, there are resources specifically around plurilingual strategies. There is going to be a webinar in this series about plurilingualism, and the elaborations provide quite a lot of ideas and information. You can see some examples of the elaborations there. I think the other thing to be aware of in terms of your colleagues is that, you know, teachers who are not trained in EAL, this could be quite a shift in thinking for them about the use of other languages in their classroom. And we know there's always contention around, you know, "Should I let the kids speak English or not?" But we're really promoting this as latest research that indicates that using all your linguistic resources helps your learning in any language.

So ...I think...In the FUSE package, you can see a few resources, and I would also for those of you who know LMERC, look up LMERC, the Languages and Multicultural Education Resource Centre. They've got a strong collection of resources about plurilingualism. But those of you who don't know it, I would look it up as well. It's a really great resource centre to support you. Within the department, we've engaged Monash University to work with primary schools, a few primary schools, to develop some multilingual resources and professional learning around the plurilingual strand. Now, unfortunately, because of COVID-19,there's no research going on in schools, so we've had to delay that project. I hope it will start again next year. But if you are interested in being part of that project, when we've got some finalised dates, you could email us at [EAL@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:EAL@education.vic.gov.au),which will be up at the end of the session, and we can keep your name on that list and get in touch with you next year. So, I'm coming back to this slide that I had at the start, and, like, I really want to reiterate that, you know, I've been talking about the curriculum and how you use it to plan an appropriate teaching and learning program. And we know that reporting on student progress and the progression profiles in the continuum have been front of mind for many teachers. Will we still have them? So a key message regards that, and this applies to government and Catholic school teachers, is that you use the curriculum for your planning document and you aim to assist students against its achievement standards. Where the students are making progress towards the achievement standards but have not yet reached them, we will provide a tool to support you to monitor and report on the progress they have made. And as I said at the start, I think this will be based on the developmental continue and allow you to report, progress as beginning, consolidated, achieved, just like the current progression profiles do. Again, because of the COVID-19 situation and the learning-from-home arrangements, we haven't been able to put that draft document out for consultation. We're hoping we'll be able to do that in term four. Again, if you are interested in having a look at that and consulting on it, providing some information or feedback, we'd advise you to email us again at [EAL@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:EAL@education.vic.gov.au).

So I think it's time for questions and answers.

There's the contact details there for the sectors, which means if you have more questions, you can contact one of those people. But I think I should hand back now to Craig, is it, for question-and-answer session?

**[Craig Smith]:** Thanks, Chris. I'd invite people to start putting in any questions or points you'd like clarified. I say that in the full knowledge that there's been a vigorous conversation going on the whole time through your presentation as well, Chris. And most of the questions or concerns have been answered. As I say, the microphone's now open. I would invite you to please write your question in the Q&A session...Oh, sorry, in the Q&A section. And I'll throw it over to Chris.

Antoinette has raised concern around the timing of the reporting advice and makes the very reasonable observation that in order to plan a program well, it's actually really important to know well in advance issues to do with reporting, reporting requirements and so on. So even though we've answered some of Antoinette's question, I was wondering if you wouldn't mind talking a bit further, Chris. So the question is.....we've acknowledged that there are various reporting tools and support that will be available.....but what do teachers do in terms of preparing for a semester in 2021 now?

**[Chris Finch]:** Preparing for what? Can you repeat the question again, sorry?

**[Craig Smith]:** Their teaching and learning program whilst we're still waiting for the various reporting tools to be developed and released.

**[Chris Finch]:** Well, I don't know that you need the reporting tool in order to plan your teaching and learning program because you need to be doing that against the curriculum. So I'm not sure how the reporting tool would impact on your capacity to plan a curriculum. Maybe, I'm happy if the person wants to ask that a little bit...you know, clarify a bit more.

**[Craig Smith]:** Yep, sure. And now I'll throw that over to you to contact Chris directly, and perhaps take that up offline.

**[Chris Finch]:** You've got my email address there in front of you.

**[Craig Smith]:** A quick question from Britney. Britney writes, "Is there going to be a reporting and assessment tool that clearly links the achievement standards but accounts for progression points? How different is this going to be from the current 2020 reporting tool?"

**[Chris Finch]:** Yeah, so, that is what I was talking about - what we will be developing. And, you know, in normal circumstances, we would have been consulting with people about it. It will be very similar, but improved based on feedback that we are able to get to what the 2020 reporting tool is. So it will be fairly straightforward. It will have the same achievement standards, of course, as the curriculum. What we need to be careful that we don't do is sort of replicate the achievement standards so that people are looking in two places. And that's just a little challenge we have. It will be, we hope, illustrated by work samples, and we will be realigning the work samples that are currently in the continuum and on the TEAL website, which people should be familiar with, in order to make sure...so how they are aligned to the Victorian curriculum.

**[Craig Smith]:** OK. Thanks for that, Chris. And I guess that answers, in part, your concern, Jennifer, that you raised round the need to...if one is doing the backward planning by design, to know what teachers need to be aiming for in the end. I mean, just to reiterate Chris's point, the achievement standards are there, that is what ultimately students' progression of learning is assessed and reported on. The progression points and everything else are really tools to assist you to get to that end point of the achievement standard. I'll keep going on because we've got quite a few.

Megan writes, "Is there a proforma or any examples of how you would approach working with staff in a school to show what level an EAL student is at and the sub-strands they should be working toward?"

**[Chris Finch]:** A proforma?

**[Craig Smith]:** Or any examples of how you would approach working with staff in a school?

**[Chris Finch]:** I think that you would probably, I suppose, in terms of advice to department schools about how you set up your EAL program, how you look at student information, develop things like sociolinguistic profiling and so on, there is information on the DET website. It was in the EAL handbook, it's now being transferred to the Policy Advisory Library. If one of my colleagues could either put the link up on the question-and-answer site or you can email us at [EAL@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:EAL@education.vic.gov.au). So that's, broadly speaking, about, you know, how a whole school approaches in setting up programs. In terms of determining children's placements, the VCAA with the curriculum has published the Language and Learning Interview, and that's a really useful way to commence or build on any sociolinguistic profiling you might do. If a student has been to an English language school or centre, there is likely to be a transition report which gives you significant information about them. So both of those pieces of information can help you to place a child, you know, what level they're at. You can also look at our assessment resources - so in the TEAL Assessment Resource Centre. And, again, these things are available to all schools, not just government schools - the TEAL Assessment Resource Centre has a range of assessment tools and tasks that you can undertake. You can use the RVEAL tool, which is part of the Insight Platform linked to from TEAL. That's a reading and vocabulary online assessment. It is only relevant or suitable for kids who have some literacy and are from Year 3 to 10. But it will provide some information about their reading and vocabulary. If the student speaks as a first language one of what we currently have six languages as a first language assessment materials, you can do a first language literacy assessment to find out, you know, if they are already literate in Arabic and to what extent. So the languages we have for those at the moment are Arabic, Chinese, Turkish, Vietnamese, Somali and...I was gonna say Khmer. I could be corrected in the chat or question-and-answers, please, if that's wrong. And we are looking at developing some new and emerging languages with those in the next year. So there are a lot of resources around to support and.....again, contact myself, contact your Catholic or independent representative, or contact your regional project officer to get some more support if you need it.

**[Craig Smith]:** Two interrelated questions to do with.....the curriculum being inclusive. The first one is...Sorry, this is just jumping around a little. Bear with me. Oh, yes, for deaf, hard-of-hearing students, are there any specific accommodations made in the context of plurilingualism, given that full signers...Sorry, lost it again...given that full signers can only experience this between language modes?

**[Chris Finch]:** I see the question. Dominic, that's a really interesting question, and I don't know the answer. I think that it's something that we would be interested to perhaps explore with you what the implications are for that. Because we, you know, it's... as I say, it's a new construct for a lot of people. Academics have worked on this. I don't know of any academic work that has been done in regards Auslan and other.....and using Auslan. So I'll ask one of my team to put that down as a question of interest that we should follow up and see what we can find out about. I hope that's OK, Dominic.

**[Craig Smith]:** Chris, from Lauren, "A lot of EAL students..." Sorry, as soon as someone puts another question in, it all jumps. Just bear with me. I've lost my question. OK, "A lot of EAL students in a mainstream classroom... A lot of EAL students ARE in a mainstream classroom. Are there any documents, ideas and examples of how you would implement the EAL curriculum in the mainstream classroom? What would this look like?"

**[Chris Finch]:** So, I don't know in terms of documents, and I think we've had the question before about, you know, does this mean you have to teach two curriculums? It's very similar to what I was saying before about, you know, your design and technologies class, you're teaching food and you're having to learn about different ways of doing things with food, and then you write an explanation about what happens to rice when you boil it, what happens to rice when you steam it, what happens to rice when you fry it, whatever. Whose responsibility is it to make sure those kids can access the content? So, your design and technologies teacher has that content and needs to support those students to be able to access that content. So, in a mainstream classroom, you're not implementing in a subject-specific area, you're not implementing the EAL curriculum in and of itself, but you're helping the students to learn and you're using that curriculum to understand their language needs. So, if you're teaching English and you've got a class which has both EAL and English students in it, it's really differentiation in much the same way as you're differentiating for other needs in the classroom. So if the class is reading a set novel, you may, you know, differentiate the activities that you do with or tasks you ask EAL students to perform in order to meet, you know, other aspects of the curriculum, other content descriptions of the EAL curriculum as opposed to the content descriptions of what the students in the English classroom are doing. Does that help? Is there anyone there?

**[Craig Smith]:** Yes, we are. I'm busy just looking through. A number of the questions have either been answered or might need to be taken offline. I'm not sure if this is within your remit, Chris, and if not please feel free to bat it back. But a question from Karen - "Hello. I've been told there are substantial changes to VCE EAL in progress. Can you confirm this?" And is this connected to the move to distinguish it further from the mainstream English course?"

**[Chris Finch]:** Yeah, I think this is Kellie's area of expertise. She is responsible for that, and she was unable to join us today. I'd suggest we might give that question to Kellie in writing because I could very well be ill-informed.

**[Craig Smith]:** Yes. And, Karen, if you need, I did put up Kellie's email address a number of questions ago. If you need it again, please just pop your question again in the chat box and I'll send you her email address. My understanding is that, yes, they are looking.....there is work being undertaken at a VCE level, but, again, Kellie Heintz, the VCAA's curriculum manager for EAL, is the specialist and person that question should be addressed to.

Sarah asks, "Can you please talk a little to how best to implement the EAL curriculum in a primary mainstream classroom when the majority of students are EAL or EAL learners?"

**[Chris Finch]:** Yep. So, Sarah, I'm assuming that you have been teaching the man EAL curriculum, or towards the EAL companion at the moment, and this is where we don't envisage there's a huge amount of change. So you currently plan, you currently assess, you currently evaluate, monitor and review, and.....it's simply a different framework. It's simply looking at the content descriptions which you have in every curriculum area and ensuring that you can cover them and where... And evaluate and work out where, you know, where your students needs are and what you do next in order to move them along that continuum towards the achievement standards. So I...I invite my primary colleague, Yan Yeo, if she wishes to say something, because I'm...I'm not a primary teacher.....Sarah, and I do know that Yan Yeo presented on the... (INDISTINCT AUDIO).. so that there may be some more information in the recording of the second webinar. Yan Yeo, do you want to add anything? You can unmute yourself if you...if you do. No. Perhaps, Sarah, you can indicate if that sort of has answered your question or not in the Q and A. Thank you. OK. Next question, Craig, if you like. How's our time going?

**[Craig Smith]:** We've still got ten minutes, so we've got plenty of time to take more questions. Pauline has just popped one through. What about students from European -, Russian-speaking backgrounds?

**[Chris Finch]:** I wouldn't envisage that there would be any difference for students in relationship to their background, so the EAL curriculum doesn't...doesn't differentiate according to language background.

**[Craig Smith]:** Yeah. And we've had a couple of questions in regard to the rainbow diagram also. And one of them was just simply, "Are we still going to be using it?" No, it's going be archived. But the follow-up from Jeanette is, "Unlike the rainbow diagram, which clearly... shows the exit point for students to transition from... to the Victorian curriculum, where is the exit point for students on the pathway if they move from A to B or B to C?"

**[Chris Finch]:** Yep. Thanks, Jeanette. And so this is actually a deliberate.....deliberate part of the design of the curriculum. I think Kellie covered this in her first presentation. EAL is not a pathway to English anymore, alright? It's its own curriculum. So, you know, we have to acknowledge that there will be students who don't ever stop being EAL learners, particularly those of you who are secondary teachers, students who arrive in Year 8, 9, 10 are never going to transition out of EAL, so the pathways have not.....deliberately not got exit points. In terms of making that decision about where they...when they move from A to B or B to C, or when they move from EAL to English, we are working on a resource at the moment, which we hope... A lot of things depend on COVID-19 because we are not allowed to go out there and do public consultation, but a resource that will support people to make those decisions. If you look at the FUSE package that I gave the link to before, there are six different diagrams there, illustrating pathways and talking...They're very... They're infographic-type diagrams. So they're not detailed. But talking about where students...kind of things impact on students and where and at what point in their journey, I suppose, they might transition from one to another. Now, we'll be using those diagrams to build a resource which links from those stories of individual children to, you know, work samples that show what their work was like at the transition point and aims to support teachers in making those decisions.

**[Craig Smith]:** Very good. Plenty more questions. Quick one from Pauline. "Will EAL student reports also display English or just EAL?"

**[Chris Finch]:** So, you can only be on the English curriculum or the EAL curriculum. So you'll have an EAL report or an English report. The two...It's not complementary to be able to assess students against both of them at the same time. We also advise that if you are on the EAL continuum, you must be assessed against all three modes and you should not be moved to English until you have reached standard in all three modes.

**[Craig Smith]:** Different question from Emma. "Will the...will this..." I imagine she's referring to the new curriculum. "Will this impact the seven-year for VCE rule if EAL is not a companion to English?"-

**[Chris Finch]:** I do know that one. No. It will not.- (LAUGHS) So it will still be seven years eligibility to enrol in VCE EAL.

**[Craig Smith]:** Follow up question from Lauren. "Do you recommend having all EAL students in one class at primary school, or is it better to have them across multiple classrooms? Just thinking about having the same... of having students with the same language in the same class."

**[Chris Finch]:** Well, Lauren, it's actually really hard to make a recommendation from our perspective because, you know, we see the data for schools across.....the government schools across the state. And you've got 1,100 schools that have EAL students, some who have 1 and some who have 400. So it really is about your context and knowing who your students are that helps you determine what kind of program you want to run. In terms of making that decision at the local level, I would be looking at, you know, who are my teachers, how comfortable are they with teaching EAL students, how...what's sort of the school … inclusivity and equity and... you know, not isolating groups of kids, I suppose. It's... There's so many factors that are involved. If you're in a government school, you know... This is something you could discuss with your RPO, your regional program officer, in terms of, you know, your specific context and what would work best. I'm done.-

(CRAIG LAUGHS)-

I'm sorry.

**[Craig Smith]:** That's alright.

Sorry, just following through. Pauline writes, "With students that begin in prep, were born in a second-language home and come with virtually no English, I'm assuming they would be started on an EAL program."

**[Chris Finch]:** Yeah, so in terms of defining EAL students, our definition.....in Victoria, we sometimes get a bit caught up in the definition of funding and the definition of EAL. We do define EAL students as being ones who have a need to learn English, and that aligns with the ACARA definition at the Australian level. So, students who start in prep and they have come from a home where English is not their main language and their language background is not English, they are defined as EAL students if they need help to learn English. And if you've never spoken English for five years, I can't see why you wouldn't. They are also funded for English. So, in actual fact, in the government school system, about 17% of the kids who are defined as EAL for funding are in that situation, they're in prep. And they've been...many of them born in Australia.

**[Craig Smith]:** Sorry. I'm just going back over...We've got two more questions there that need to be answered. This is very specific from Amanda - "In regards to...in regard to 'at standard' and almost, does 'at standard' mean a six-month range? ie, that's to say, even Grade 3.....2.5 and 3.0 in the curriculum, is that standard? Is this the same as EAL at standard? "

**[Chris Finch]:** So, in terms of EAL, there's no time frame around progression. And that's one of the reasons why we can't say your achievement standard is 6 months or 12 months progression because, as you well all know, you've taught children who've made progress quickly. You've taught children who have made progress slowly. And it's a result of their, you know, background and experience and current... (INDISTINCT AUDIO) So 'at standard' means that they have, on balance judgement, achieved the standard as described in the curriculum. The numbers.....2.5, 3.0.....they're not really relevant in terms of EAL at this point in time.

**[Craig Smith]:** OK. Thank you. We are coming close to the end of time, so I'll be quick. Got two questions to do with relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Question from Deborah. "Will the idea that they are EAL students be reinforced?"

**[Chris Finch]:** Can you say that again, sorry, Craig?

**[Craig Smith]:** Sure. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Will the idea that they are EAL - English as additional language - be reinforced?

**[Chris Finch]:** So, in Victoria, we have a very strong Koori education stream, I suppose. And while those students are EAL, we also need to work with our Koori colleagues, who have developed quite a lot of resources about Koori English and about working with students who speak Koori English. So, in terms of sort of our unit going and promoting and saying these are EAL learners, it's not a piece of work that we are intending to do. We would work with our...They are real EAL learners. They are funded as EAL learners. But they are also, I guess, supported through the work of the Koori Outcomes Division, the Koori workforce that's in our schools, and those approaches that they are putting in...I'm trying to think of the name of the plan. I should be able to. I apologise.-

**[Craig Smith]:** Ah, the Marrung plan.- Yes.

**[Chris Finch]:** Yes. Sorry.

**[Craig Smith]:** No, that's quite alright. We're nearly at the end of time. You're doing really well. Sorry, I'm not going to get through all the questions. There is one very quick one. Where's it gone? Oh. Lena. "You mentioned..." Lena writes, "You mentioned the independent schools not mandated to implement the new EAL pathway. Will these schools ever be mandated to implement? If not, how do we ensure quality education in independent schools?" Lena, that sort of a question is beyond Chris's brief, I'd suggest .As we indicated earlier, it's actually the sectors that mandate the curriculum, which is to say for government schools with education and training, for Catholic schools, it's the CECV. And for independent schools, being independent, it goes back to their own school boards. I do know that ACARA will also...You know, they've got advice. If people are taking the Australian curriculum in regard to EAL, the curriculum that VCAA provides, modelled on the Australian curriculum, is the Victorian curriculum, and, as we've been in a way celebrating today that we have a new curriculum, the English as additional language curriculum, that takes its place up in amongst all the other curriculum areas. We are out of time. My apologies if we didn't get to your questions.

First of all, I'd really like to thank Chris Finch for giving us such an engaging and illuminating presentation. So, thank you, Chris.

**[Chris Finch]:** Thank you. Thank you.

**[Craig Smith]:** And thank you for our support staff. Peter Fisher from VCAA, who is in the background running this, Anna-Lise, Mollie and Yan Yeo, my colleagues from the government and the Catholic sectors respectively, but most of all I'd like to thank everyone for attending today, for your questions, your comments. We will take them on board and think carefully about them in terms of responding with our resources. We are doing a joint response across the different sectors and the VCAA to support this very important curriculum. So we're out of time. As we've said, a recording of this webinar will be released. The turnaround time I'd suggest is about two weeks. They have to be transcribed and put up. And they will be available on the VCAA's F-10 curriculum resources pages. So thank you very much for your attendance, your great questions and comments .And hopefully we'll see you at one of our next EAL webinars. Thank you and good afternoon.

[Copyright Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Footer/Pages/Copyright.aspx) 2020