

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM



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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACARA	Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AGD	Attorney-General's Department
AHRC	Australian Human Rights Commission
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
ANTaR	Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
EDC/HRE	Education for democratic citizenship and human rights education
ESA	Educational Services Australia
EU	European Union
HRE	Human Rights Education
HSIE	Human Society and its Environment (known as SOSE in some states/territories)
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PETAA	Primary English Teaching Association Australia
PDHPE	Personal Development Health Physical Education
PIAC	Public Interest Advocacy Centre
QLD	Queensland
RT	Roundtable
SA	South Australia
SBS	Special Broadcasting Service
TAS	Tasmania
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UTS	University of Technology, Sydney
VELS	Victorian Essential Learning Standards
VIC	Victoria
WA	Western Australia

Executive Summary

This report documents the first national Australian investigation of the place of human rights education in the school curriculum in each state and territory and the extent of the opportunities for teaching and learning about human rights across the school years. It details what is contained in each state and territory curriculum and the available technologies and materials to support teaching about human rights.

PART 1. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Aim and approach

The aim of this study was to analyse the current school curriculum opportunities available in each Australian state and territory for students to learn about human rights. The main questions this study sought to answer were:

- What are the main opportunities provided in the current school curriculum for students to learn about human rights issues?
- What are the main gaps in the current curriculum provision, bearing in mind the proposals being developed by Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)'s National Curriculum initiatives?
- What are the main kinds of teaching resources and technologies available to support students to better learn about human rights?

The legislative and policy context and recent human rights and school education literature were assessed and reported on. State and Territory and Australian Curriculum documents were analysed, using a conceptual framework that focused on the extent to which human rights issues and topics were *explicitly* or *implicitly* addressed in these curriculum documents. Qualitative feedback was obtained from key education stakeholders – curriculum bodies, education authorities, teacher associations and community organisations - who participated in roundtable discussions organised in each state and territory. This analysis provides valuable information on the extent to which Australian schools are engaging with human rights education.

Legislative and Policy Framework

Recent decades have witnessed major developments in human rights education at the international level, culminating in the United Nations (UN) *Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training* in December 2011. At the national level a new *Human Rights Framework and Human Rights Action Plan* have been developed and implemented in response to the 2009 *National Consultation on Human Rights* process. The complexities involved in implementing Australia's international human rights obligations in a federal system are evident and require specific Australian legislation to enact these commitments in Australian law.

In addition there is a complex set of federal and state anti-discrimination legislation currently in place, creating a degree of confusion about which rights are protected under which legislation and in which jurisdiction. The *Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Bill 2012*, which was in draft form at the time of this study, aims to simplify a number of existing pieces of federal legislation into a single act, and when passed will add a number of new grounds of discrimination to Australian law. At a state and territory level, only the ACT and Victoria have enacted specific human rights legislation.

Human rights and school education literature

Research on human rights education can be broadly categorised into three main areas – studies related to theory, to implementation, and to assessing learning or program outcomes. There is a paucity of academic literature focusing specifically on the issue of human rights education in the school curriculum. The need for improved human rights education in schools was a key finding of the *National Consultation on Human Rights* undertaken in Australia in 2009. However, studies of the implementation of human rights education in Australian schools indicate that Australia has still not achieved a systematic and integrated approach to human rights education. Whole school approaches to human rights remain the exception, and the implementation of human rights education initiatives is largely dependent on the interest and goodwill of individual teachers.

The transformative potential of human rights education to challenge existing systems and pedagogical practices remains largely untapped in the school environment. The important issue of children's rights remains contentious, with some schools seemingly reluctant to teach students about their rights. Strategies to measure the effectiveness of human rights education initiatives are also required, as are strategies to improve professional development and training for teachers in the area of human rights.

In the absence of an effective integration of human rights education into the new national curriculum, Australian schools are likely to continue to find it difficult to prioritise human rights issues to the extent necessary to have a sustained impact on student learning.

PART 2. CURRICULUM OPPORTUNITIES: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Analysing the curriculum opportunities for the teaching of human rights across Australian state and territories remains a complex and multi-dimensional task that has not been attempted in any previous Australian study. This study approached all relevant state and territory curriculum authorities and involved representatives from each of the three main school sectors, searched and analysed available syllabus and curriculum documents, and took into account the changing curriculum landscape resulting from the staged implementation of the Australian Curriculum process. An over-arching finding before setting out any learning opportunities is to consider the need for strengthening a culture of human rights in Australia, including that of students over their years at school.

1. Developing a culture of rights

Recommendation: There is a need for greater recognition of the role of human rights education in improving student understanding of human rights and building civic values. In order to build a human rights culture the position of human rights education within the curriculum must be strengthened.

Another important starting point involves defining human rights for school education purposes, setting out which human rights students are expected to learn about across their school learning stages, and the level of understanding that is expected of students across their school years. Considering the *UN Declaration on Human Rights* (1948), subsequent UN human rights conventions and treaties, and recent Australian human rights legislation in the ACT and Victoria, suggests students should over the course of their schooling learn about civil and political rights; economic, social and cultural rights; humanitarian rights, and various group rights (workers, women, children, minority groups, refugees, Indigenous people and people with a disability).

2. Defining human rights

Recommendation: That a Curriculum Discussion paper be developed from a Roundtable discussion process involving curriculum specialists, teacher associations and community representatives to clearly define human rights for school education purposes and outline a set of human rights issues which should be studied by students across each of three main school Learning Stages – Years F/K to 6; Years 7 to 10; and Years 11 to 12.

In addition there is a need to support teachers with strategies in how best to address controversial human rights issues, and what are considered to be the most effective pedagogical approaches to achieve the learning outcomes.

3. Addressing and dealing with controversial issues

Recommendation: That a set of case studies be developed of good practice in the teaching of controversial human rights issues in different schools settings. That these resources be disseminated to teachers in schools with the aim of building their confidence in tackling such issues in their own classrooms.

4. Pedagogical approaches to human rights education

Recommendation: That a number of pedagogical best practice models of human rights education be developed and disseminated to teachers with the assistance of relevant Teacher Associations.

What are the main opportunities for human rights education in the school curriculum?

In assessing the main opportunities for human rights education in the school curriculum it is important to consider a number of key curriculum dimensions across each of three key stages of learning (Senior Years 11-12; Secondary Years 7 to 10; and Primary Years F/K- 6). They include whether human rights issues are addressed *explicitly* or *implicitly*; whether topics are compulsory or elective; the availability and range of sector specific initiatives; the impact of state and territory human rights legislation; and other curricular learning opportunities.

Curricular opportunities

An analysis of the opportunities for human rights education in the school curriculum show that:

- the Senior Years 11-12 provide the most *explicit* and *implicit* learning opportunities to study topics that are clearly related to human rights issues.
- among these opportunities there are a mix of mandatory and elective topics.
- only a small number and proportion of students are likely to study human rights issues to any significant extent across their school years.
- the study of human rights issues takes place without any clear overall definition of rights and mostly without any overarching context or link back to UN declarations, treaties, conventions or recent Australian rights legislation.

In the Senior Years:

- the main *explicit* opportunities found as a result of this study are in *History, Geography, Legal Studies* subjects and in *Civics and Citizenship* units of study.
- a number of subjects with small enrolments and not widely available also provide *explicit* opportunities for teaching about human rights. These subjects are in a few learning areas: *Politics; Society and Culture; Aboriginal Studies; Women's Studies; and Religious Studies*.
- *implicit* opportunities were found in the subjects *English; Science; Economics & Business*.
- only a few subjects, specific to a few states and territories - namely *History, Australian & Global Politics, Australian & International Politics, and Aboriginal Studies* - specifically mentioned any UN human rights declarations, treaties or conventions or Australian rights legislation.

In the Secondary Years:

- across the Secondary Years 7 to 10, it was mostly the Year 9 and 10 curriculum that offered the main *explicit* opportunities for human rights teaching - in *History, Geography, Aboriginal Studies* subjects and *Civics and Citizenship* units.
- the main *implicit* opportunities across Years 7 to 10 were in *English, Science, and Economics*.

In the Primary Years:

- human rights issues did not appear to be *explicitly* mentioned across the Primary school years. *Implicit* opportunities were found mostly in the *Human Society and its Environment (HSIE)* or its equivalent Learning Area.
- the subjects where opportunities were in place were in *History; Geography, English, Physical Development Health & Physical Education (PDHPE); and Civics and Citizenship* units.

5. Curriculum opportunities

Recommendation: The Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) establish state and territory-level human rights education stakeholder networks to meet on an annual basis. This could be undertaken in partnership with state-level Attorney's-General Departments.

Impact of state and territory human rights legislation

Despite the ACT in 2004 and Victoria in 2007 enacting important state based human rights legislation, these legislative steps have generally had little impact on their schools – although Victoria has provided some links to a number of syllabus documents and a set of teacher support documents related to the Act.

Importantly, while the curriculum opportunities summarised above represent a set of fragmented and somewhat limited opportunities concentrated in the last few years of schooling and studied by a relatively small number of students overall, what is already in place does provide a basis for building a more detailed and comprehensive approach to human rights education in the Australian school curriculum. Any new human rights education initiatives will need to be led by a number of key staff with a knowledge of the curriculum development process, an understanding of the complexity of Australian school sector, and awareness of the valuable role of government agencies and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) in providing a range of valuable other learning opportunities to schools.

6. Addressing the fragmented learning opportunities within the curriculum

Recommendation: That a dedicated school curriculum officer to be located in the AHRC to work with State and Territories to support curriculum change and support work with schools in the introduction of programs on human rights, both within the curriculum and as whole-school activities.

Other learning opportunities

Valuable, interesting and wide ranging human rights education work is being undertaken in schools by a number of government agencies and key Non-Government Organisations (NGOs).

- the types of activities they provide include community-school initiatives (projects, programs and campaigns); special events and festivals; and school excursions and camps.
- the human rights issues addressed by key NGOs can be categorised as being broadly rights based; addressing civil and political rights; children's rights; economic rights; humanitarian and Indigenous rights.

While individual Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) are undertaking valuable work in promoting human rights in schools, this tends to happen on an ad hoc basis, and it is difficult for sustained relationships to be developed between NGOs and schools.

7. Role of Non Government Organisations

Recommendation: The important role of key NGOs in human rights education needs to be recognised and opportunities created for increased collaborations with schools to extend their programs and project work around key human rights issues with young people and teachers in schools.

What are the main gaps in current human rights education provision in schools?

Among the main gaps identified in the current human rights education provision in schools were those related to the fragmented learning opportunities, aspects of the Australian Curriculum across the school learning stages, teacher professional development and teacher education, school leadership and the role of parents

A major aspect is the lack of national coordination and leadership to ensure that human rights education and key rights issues are appropriately integrated and embedded into the school curriculum. Also, one concern is that explicit and mandatory opportunities for students to study human rights issues exist in only a handful of subjects, and these are primarily available in the senior secondary years. This means that changes are needed in the Australian Curriculum learning areas and subjects to embed more explicitly, opportunities for students to learn about human rights issues.

8. Australian Curriculum - Mandatory explicit content

Recommendation: That the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) be approached to facilitate more explicit curriculum content on human rights to be included in syllabus and curriculum support documents across key school learning stages and subject areas.

9. Importance of the primary school years and child rights

Recommendation: That the newly-appointed AHRC Children's Commissioner be tasked to work with Save the Children and other relevant NGOs to promote the inclusion of teaching about children's rights in schools in the primary years.

10. Australian Curriculum - Embed human rights issues in primary school curriculum

Recommendation: That ACARA be approached to ensure explicit opportunities to address human rights issues are embedded within appropriate subjects such as HSIE in the primary school years, and that opportunities are provided in particular in the early primary years for exposure to relevant and age-appropriate human rights education issues and themes.

11. Australian Curriculum - Curriculum statements and priorities

Recommendation: Australian Curriculum support documents need to embed human rights issues as explicit topics in the General Capabilities Statements for Ethical Behaviour and Cultural Understanding and similarly in the relevant Cross-Curriculum Priorities.

12. Australian Curriculum - Auditing

Recommendation: Once the new national Australian Curriculum is fully developed and implemented, Australian Curriculum subjects need to be audited to determine the extent to which human rights issues have been effectively integrated into the curriculum.

A major gap was identified in teacher professional development and teacher education, in particular the lack of opportunities for teachers to learn about human rights issues, in either teacher education programs or through teacher professional development opportunities. Also for school executives to learn about the whole-school approach to human rights education and ensure the role of parents are included.

13. Teacher professional development for pre-service and practicing teachers

Recommendation: That a set of professional development modules relating to human rights education across each school learning stage and subject areas be developed for all teachers in partnership with the relevant Professional Teachers' Associations in each state and territory.

14. School executive leadership and a whole-school approach to human rights education

Recommendation: That a conference be organised for school principals or their representative in each state and territory at which education materials and case studies of good practice in human rights education involving the whole school community are showcased and discussed.

15. Whole-school approach - Role of parents in human rights education

Recommendation: As part of the effort to promote a whole-school approach to the implementation of human rights education, school programs, parents and members of the school community need to be included in school human rights projects and activities.

What are the available technologies and resources?

Communication technologies and social media can be highly effective mechanisms to educate students about human rights issues, particularly as these technologies lend themselves to the interactive and experiential approaches that have been identified as highly effective pedagogical approaches to human rights education. Among those identified were email, video and audio conferencing through applications such as Skype, social networking applications such as Facebook and Twitter, and Wiki spaces and Dropbox. These technologies and applications provide potential opportunities for students to engage in national and international exchanges, and a variety of learning partnerships dealing with human rights issues.

16. Technologies

Recommendation: Schools require adequate access to and resourcing of Internet facilities to provide for various online applications, global connections, including online international cultural exchanges as ways of supporting learning about human rights issues.

Also highlighted was the importance of social networking by teachers, the impact of the National Broadband Network roll out, local school networks, issues with regional and remote connections and a range of international connections being used for learning about human rights issues.

A vital feature when using communication technologies and learning materials was to ensure they are designed to optimise student engagement. This is achieved through the use of resources that have a high level of interactivity and are visually appealing.

17. Design for engagement – teacher workshop

Recommendation: A professional development workshop for teachers is needed to assist teachers to better use communication technologies, social media and educational resources in an engaging way with students.

A number of valuable educational resources available from government agencies and NGOs were located and have been listed in within this report. While many excellent resources have been developed to support particular human rights campaigns and address human rights education issues it is evident that many high quality resources do not reach the key people in the school sector, such as librarians and teachers. This points to the need for a national repository of human rights education resources to be established and promoted to ensure that human rights education resources are available and widely accessible to all Australian schools.

18. Resources – National repository

Recommendation: That Education Services Australia establish a national repository of human rights education learning materials, making it easier to disseminate educational resources and enabling librarians and teachers to access this material in a timely and effective manner. A link to this site could also hold case studies of projects undertaken in schools that advance human rights and social justice.

PART 1. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1. Introduction

This report documents the first national Australian investigation of the place of human rights education in the school curriculum of the new national curriculum and that of each state and territory, and the extent of current opportunities for teaching and learning about human rights. It has taken place at a time of an increased focus on human rights education, which is part of an effort led by the United Nations (UN) over the last two decades.

Recently both the UN and the European Union (EU) have given strong support to human rights education. In 2010 the UN Human Rights Council, through its Advisory committee, produced a draft *Declaration On Human Rights Education And Training* and the General Assembly of United Nations adopted the declaration in December 2011. This means that access to human rights education and training is considered as a fundamental right and will apply to all levels and forms of education, from preschool to university.

1.1 Human Rights Education in Australian Schools

In Australia a number of recent initiatives - the *National Consultation on Human Rights* (NHRCCC, 2009) and the *Australian Human Rights Framework* (2010) - have acknowledged the importance of supporting education about human rights in schools. The Framework:

encompasses a comprehensive suite of education initiatives to ensure all Australians are able to access information on human rights. This includes the development of human rights education programs for primary and secondary schools, the community and for the Commonwealth public sector (Commonwealth of Australia, 2010: 7).

In an address to NSW teachers in 2009, prominent human rights barrister Geoffrey Robertson argued strongly for the importance of human rights education:

... they [human rights] serve to show that privilege is an anachronism, that dogma is destructive, that freedom is a birthright and discrimination is a wrong that should never be suffered. (Robertson, 2009)

The AHRC in its own position paper noted that the goals of human rights education should include the acquisition of knowledge and skills about human rights; the development of respectful attitudes and changed behaviour that reflects human rights values; and the motivation of social action and empowerment of active citizenship to advance respect for the rights of all (AHRC, 2010). Given the national and international developments in Human Rights Education, there is an opportunity to meet Australia's international obligations under the UN *Declaration of Human Rights and Training* to build a culture of rights in our schools as well as in the wider community, engendering respect for individual and collective rights and encouraging collaborations between schools and civic bodies that enhance social cohesion in our neighbourhoods.

Now is a timely opportunity to expand our teaching and teacher training efforts to establish human rights education as an integral part of school curriculum programs across the nation. What has been lacking is a comprehensive overview of what is contained in the curriculum in each state and territory and in the available national technologies and materials to support teaching about human rights.

1.2 This study

This study is seen as an important step in this process of establishing a place for human rights education in schools. The aim of the research project on which this report is based was to analyse the current curriculum opportunities and gaps in the primary and secondary school curriculum in each Australian state and territory, and identify the kinds of resources and technologies required to support students to learn about human rights issues.

The research reported here was conducted in each Australian state and territory. Representatives from various educational institutions and curriculum bodies, including professional teachers associations in the public and private school sectors, and non-government organisations working in the area of human rights in schools were invited to participate. In addition, representatives of national government bodies such as the ACARA and the AHRC attended sessions in the state in which their head office was located.

This report forms the first part of the process of investigating in detail what is being offered in each state and territory's curriculum that can be linked to education *about, for and through human rights*. We sought to identify the *explicit* content in syllabus documents as well as where human rights education was *implied* as part of the work to be covered in the classroom. Using the same criteria, our task was to also investigate what opportunities existed for human rights education under the new Australian school curriculum.

As a research based report Part 1 sets out the aims and research methods used are outlined below, followed by two other background chapters, the first of which outlines the legislative framework for human rights and human rights education in the Australian and global context (Chapter 2). There is also discussion of the literature surrounding the issues of human rights education, citizenship education and the various interpretations of a rights based approach to education (Chapter 3).

The remainder of the report Part 2 is focused on the findings and recommendations and what is happening in the Australian school sectors in relation to human rights education. Chapter 4 deals specifically with the school curriculum and other learning opportunities. This information is largely gleaned firstly from the perspective of those who participated in the Roundtable discussions conducted in each state and territory; secondly from a detailed analysis of curriculum documents in each state and territory and also from relevant ACARA's Australian curriculum documents which are in their various phases of implementation in each state and territory. Chapter 5 is an important chapter outlining the main gaps identified through this research in achieving a more consistent approach to human rights education. The relevant technologies and resources available to support teaching about human rights are outlined in Chapter 6, and Chapter 7 provides an analysis and an overview of these findings with recommendations for future action.

It must be noted that at the time of writing of this report, the curriculum in all Australian schools – in all systems whether it be the public or private (Catholic or Independent) – are in a state of transition as syllabus and curriculum support documents are being redesigned to cater for the new nationally based curriculum subjects. This has added further complexity to an already multi-layered and multi-sectoral educational system that exists in each state and territory as a historical legacy of our federated political system. A further point of caution relates to the fact that the scope of this report did not extend to school-based research with teachers or in-class observations of best practice in action. The organisations involved in the roundtable discussions in each state and territory are listed in Appendix 2. They included members of professional teachers associations, policy makers from curriculum bodies, community based organisations involved in defending human rights as well as government institutions such as the AHRC and the state based equivalents. While members of these bodies are often experienced teachers or have close connections with schools and their views provide important insights into what is in the curriculum, the perspectives and findings of this report are not those of classroom teachers engaging directly with students in the classroom. Such detailed investigations of good pedagogical practices in the teaching of human rights education in schools should be the subject of further research.

The report sets out a number of recommendations largely framed from the themes that emerged from the roundtable discussions and curriculum analysis. These discussions amongst experts in the field were often lively, infused with enthusiasm and passion and resulted in knowledgeable and creative suggestions for the future of human rights education in schools. The recommendations in this report are grounded in a view that human rights education is vital to producing rights conscious Australian and global citizens, who not only understand the challenges facing 21st Century societies, but also have the skills, commitment and motivation to tackle these problems to the benefit of all humanity.

Main aim, questions and methods

The aim of this study was to analyse the current curriculum opportunities and gaps in the primary and secondary school curriculum in each Australian state and territory and identify the available resources and technologies to support students to learn about human rights issues. So the three research questions addressed in the study were:

- What are the main opportunities provided in the current school curriculum for students to learn about human rights issues?
- What are the main gaps in the current curriculum provision, bearing in mind the proposals being developed by ACARA's National Curriculum initiatives?

- What are the main kinds of teaching resources and technologies available to support students to better learn about human rights?

In analysing the opportunities for human rights education across all Australian states and territories, the national Australian Curriculum developments being undertaken by ACARA were included. Qualitative data were collected in the following ways:

- A series of Roundtable discussions were conducted in each state and territory to gain the perspectives of school education sector representatives, including from curriculum agencies; government and independent school sectors; key teacher associations; and a number of the main non-government community groups working on human rights issues within schools.
- Follow up interviews were conducted in cases where key education representatives were unable to attend the Roundtable meetings or where additional information was required.
- An analysis of available primary, secondary and senior secondary school curriculum materials in each state and territory was conducted to identify the curriculum subject areas that provide opportunities for students to learn about human rights issues.

UTS Human Research Ethics Committee approval to undertake this project was obtained on 15 June 2012. A Background briefing paper, a set of questions for discussion, and consent forms were distributed to all Roundtable participants.

1.3 Conclusion

The research methods used in this project generated a rich set of qualitative data on the diverse opportunities, resources and gaps in the teaching of human rights in Australian schools. A particular strength of the research design was the inclusion of the perspectives of key stakeholders from a range of sectors and community organisations as well as the extensive curriculum documentation search conducted. The analysis undertaken of both current curriculum opportunities and of gaps in the primary and secondary school curriculum in the national curriculum and in each Australian state and territory provides valuable information on the extent to which Australian schools are engaging with human rights education. These issues will be explored in detail in the following chapters.

2. Legislative and policy framework

Education about human rights in schools is shaped by international and Australian legislative and policy frameworks that link back to the adoption of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* in 1948. Since then the United Nations has urged countries to disseminate the Declaration and to educate people about its contents, as well as the subsequent UN human rights conventions, treaties and charters, which have all included a role for school education (OHCHR, 2004:15).

In order to more effectively support education about human rights in schools, it is important to understand some of these international and Australian initiatives. This chapter provides an overview of the key legislative human rights instruments, developments relating to human rights education at the international level, the implementation of the new national Australian *Human Rights Framework*, and a discussion of human rights in an Australian context.

2.1 Key International instruments

The UN's *International Bill of Human Rights* includes the following Conventions:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966
- Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (OHCHR (c), undated).

Australia is either a signatory to or has made a commitment to be legally bound by the commitments outlined in the conventions that make up the *International Bill of Human Rights*.

The UN defines ten *core* human rights treaties, as follows:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- Convention on the Rights of the Child
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
- International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (OHCHR 2007).

Australia is a signatory to all but two of these treaties: the *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families*, and the *International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance*. More detailed information about both UN treaties and Australia's legislative response is presented in Appendix 3.

2.2 Role of the United Nations in human rights education

The focus on human rights education (HRE) has emerged more strongly over the past two decades at an international level. Led by the United Nations, the UN *Decade of Human Rights Education* from 1995-2004 and the *World Programme for Human Rights Education* (2005-2014) provided the first concerted efforts to support human rights education across UN member states.

One of the main objectives of the *World Programme for Human Rights Education* was to promote "a common understanding of basic principles and methodologies of human rights education, to provide a concrete framework for action and to strengthen partnerships and cooperation from the international level down to the grass roots" (OHCHR (b), undated).

The *World Programme* was structured for implementation in consecutive phases. During the first phase (2005-2009), human rights education in the primary and secondary school systems was addressed. The second phase (2010-2014) moved onto the promotion of human rights education in higher education and human rights training for teachers, educators, civil servants, law enforcement officials and military personnel (OHCHR (b), undated).

In December 2011 the UN General Assembly adopted the *Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training*. This declaration defined human rights education as comprising:

all educational, training, information, awareness-raising and learning activities aimed at promoting universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and thus contributing... to the prevention of human rights violations and abuses by providing persons with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviours, to empower them to contribute to the building and promotion of a universal culture of human rights (Article 1).

The Declaration highlighted three key dimensions of human rights education:

- education **about** human rights, which includes providing knowledge and understanding of human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them and the mechanisms of their protection;
- education **through** human rights, which includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners;
- education **for** human rights, which includes empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect the rights of others (Article 2).

The training of teachers and others involved in education in human rights principles was identified as a key strategy (Article 3). The Declaration stated that human rights education needed to be based on the principles of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and other relevant international treaties and instruments as well as relevant regional and national standards and principles (Article 4). States were identified as having the primary responsibility for promoting human rights education and training (Article 7).

2.3 Recent Initiatives in Human Rights Education in Australia

In response to the increased emphasis on human rights education in the international community, and local demands for enhanced protection for and promotion of human rights in Australian law, the Australian Government has undertaken a number of initiatives over recent years to develop a human rights education framework in Australia, including:

- a major national round of consultations undertaken in 2009 to determine how Australia could better protect and promote human rights. The final report on the national consultations found a lack of awareness about human rights in Australia and identified the need for human rights education and for the development of a national human rights education plan; (Commonwealth of Australia, 2009, Chapter 6)
- the release of Australia's *Human Rights Framework* by the Federal Attorney-General's Department in April 2010. (AGD (a), undated). The importance of human rights education is one of the five key principles of the Framework. The Framework outlines the government's commitment to "investing in a comprehensive suite of education initiatives to promote a greater understanding of human rights across the community".
- the new national *Human Rights Action Plan* released in December 2012 (Commonwealth of Australia, 2012). The Plan maps out the government's commitment to prioritising human rights education through the granting of funds to NGOs to deliver community education and engagement programs; develop an education and training package for the public sector; increase funding to the AHRC for its community education program; and continue to work with schools, states, territories and ACARA to ensure that human rights and principles are included in the national curriculum.

Australia's Human Rights Framework

Some of the key aspects of the new Australian *Human Rights Framework* are:

- the establishment of a new Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights to provide greater scrutiny of legislation for compliance with our international human rights obligations.

- the introduction of the requirement that each new Bill introduced into Parliament is accompanied by a Statement of Compatibility with our international human rights obligations. (AGD (a), undated).

Human rights education is also seen as a major focus of the new Framework, with education programs being developed for public servants to assist them to understand human rights obligations, and with the establishment of the Human Rights Framework Education Grants Program, which provides funding to non-government organisations to prepare and deliver human rights education programs to the Australian community.¹

2.4 Implementing Human Rights in a federal system

Implementing international agreements on human rights in a federal system such as Australia's does involve a more complicated process than under a unitary system of government. The Australian Government has the primary responsibility for ensuring Australia's observance of internationally recognised human rights. It decides whether or not to take on the obligations to observe international human rights standards. However, being a signatory to an international human rights convention does not make the standards within those conventions legally enforceable within Australia. This requires specific Australian legislation. Without such legislation there is no possibility within the Australian court system to ensure that the rights in any international human rights treaty will take precedence over any state or territory legislation that is inconsistent with the treaty. It is the responsibility of state governments to make and administer many of the laws that are relevant to human rights observance. These include laws relating to the administration of justice, land matters, health and education, among others.

Important Australian Government rights legislation can be found in four key anti-discrimination pieces of legislation – the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*; *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*; *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, and *Age Discrimination Act 2004*. Each of these Acts deals with a set of protected rights:

- race and immigrant status (*Racial Discrimination Act*);
- sex, marital status, pregnancy, potential pregnancy, breastfeeding and family responsibilities (*Sex Discrimination Act*);
- disability (*Disability Discrimination Act*); and
- age (*Age Discrimination Act*) (Commonwealth of Australia, 2013: 3).

Provisions related to discrimination in employment are included in the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Australian Government Attorney-General's Department, 2011: 5). Also relevant here is the *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986*, which established the AHRC and regulates the processes for making and resolving complaints under these Acts.

Disability Standards for Education 2005

National Disability Standards for Education came into effect in 2005. The Standards clarified the obligations of education and training providers to ensure that students with disabilities were able to access and participate in education and training on the same basis as those without disability. The standards apply to all education providers, including the Australian Government; all states and territories; Australian Government, state and territory public authorities; and private sector organisations. Under the Standards, an education provider must make reasonable adjustments to accommodate a student with a disability (AGD (b), undated).

Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Bill 2012

In 2012 the Australian Government drafted the *Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Bill*, with the aim of consolidating the five existing Commonwealth anti-discrimination Acts into a single piece of legislation. One of the stated objects of the new draft legislation was "to give effect to Australia's Obligations under the human rights instruments" (Australian Government Attorney-General's Department, 2012: 3).

Despite being primarily a consolidation exercise, the Draft Bill contains several changes from existing Commonwealth anti-discrimination law, including:

- a single, simplified test for discrimination applying to all attributes;

¹ This project was funded through the Human Rights Education Framework Grants program.

- the introduction of new protected attributes of sexual orientation and gender identity, and recognition of discrimination on the basis of a combination of attributes;
- a streamlined approach to exceptions, including a new general exception for justifiable conduct and the preservation of religious exceptions (with some limitations applying to Commonwealth-funded aged care services provided by religious organisations) (Commonwealth of Australia, 2013: 4).

The Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee reported on the draft Bill in February 2013 (Commonwealth of Australia, 2013) and among its key recommendations were that:

- *gender identity* and *intersex status* be included as protected attributes in the new legislation;
- *status as a victim of domestic violence* be included as a protected attribute;
- *irrelevant criminal record* be included as a protected attribute;
- the removal of exceptions allowing religious organisations to discriminate against individuals in the provision of services, where that discrimination would otherwise be unlawful (Commonwealth of Australia, 2013: ix).

State Legislation

Each state and territory in Australia also has legislation in place which addresses a number of the rights protected by UN treaties. The legislation includes: the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (NSW); *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* (SA); *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* (WA); *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (QLD); *Discrimination Act 1991* (ACT); *Anti-Discrimination Act 1996* (NT); *Anti-Discrimination Act 1998* (TAS); and *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (VIC). In addition to this anti-discrimination legislation, Victoria and the ACT have enacted specific **human rights** legislation:

- *Human Rights Act 2004* (ACT).
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (Victoria).

The ACT *Human Rights Act 2004* enumerated a number of civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights that were to be “respected, protected and promoted” in the ACT. The specific human rights covered are:

Civil and Political Rights

- Recognition and equality before the law
- Right to life, protection from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment etc.
- Protection of the family and children
- Privacy and reputation, freedom of movement, freedom of thought, conscience, religion & belief
- Peaceful assembly and freedom of association, freedom of expression, taking part in public life
- Right to liberty and security of person, humane treatment when deprived of liberty
- Children in the criminal process
- Fair trial, Rights in criminal proceedings, compensation for wrongful conviction, right not to be tried or punished more than once, retrospective criminal laws
- Freedom from forced work
- Rights of minorities.

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

- Right to education.

The Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2007* outlined a set of 20 rights that can be grouped into:

Civil and Political Rights

- Right to life, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of thought, freedom of assembly and association, the right to take part in public life (right to vote), freedom of movement.

Legal Rights

- Right to liberty and security, privacy, equality before the law, humane treatment, protection from torture, property rights, rights in criminal proceedings, right to a fair hearing, right not to be tried or punished more than once, retrospective criminal laws.

Economic, Social and Cultural rights

- Freedom from forced work (slavery), protection of families and children, rights of children, cultural rights.

2.5 Conclusion

As can be seen from this brief overview of Australia's international human rights commitments and the legislative framework for human rights in Australia, there are particular challenges within a federal system to ensure that international human rights obligations entered into by the Commonwealth Government are enforceable under Australian law. The legislative framework for human rights at the federal level is currently under review, with the most likely outcome to be a new overarching Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Act that is likely to consolidate five pieces of Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation.

Whilst the *National Consultation On Human Rights* undertaken in 2009 revealed a lack of consensus on the necessity for formal recognition of human rights in the Australian constitution, there was a strong sense by many respondents to the consultation that more needed to be done to educate Australians about their rights, and their responsibilities to respect the rights of others. This project provides an important starting point for a consideration of human rights education at the school level, by mapping the extent to which human rights content and issues are currently addressed within the school curriculum in each Australian state and territory. The next chapter will provide an overview of the recent academic literature in relation to human rights education, and identify key themes emerging from the literature relating to the effective incorporation of human rights within school curricula.

3. Human rights and school education literature

3.1 Overview

This chapter provides a review of recent key publications relating to human rights education (HRE), both in Australia and overseas, highlighting studies that relate to education in schools. This review has identified a number of key themes from the recent literature that are relevant to the research aims of this project, and draws on an analysis by Tibbits and Kirchsclaeger (2010) suggesting research into human rights education can be categorised into three areas: studies related to theory, implementation and to assessing learning or program outcomes. We have broadly followed this categorization in the following overview of recent research about HRE.

Theory

The theory of HRE, according to Tibbits and Kirchsclaeger (2010), covers the goals, concepts, definitions, pedagogies and approaches to HRE and a number of studies addressing the theory of human rights education have set out varying theoretical models and pedagogical approaches.

Implementation

The implementation of HRE includes policies, methodologies, curriculum initiatives, teacher training, professional development programs and the conditions for promoting HRE practice (Tibbits & Kirchsclaeger, 2010). Among the studies undertaken, a few have reported on the curriculum, the role of NGOs and the importance of professional development and training of teachers.

Outcomes

Assessing the outcomes of any HRE initiative or program involves evaluating the outcomes achieved by students and educators, institutions and the wider community (Tibbits & Kirchsclaeger, 2010: 2). To date there have only been a few evaluative studies undertaken on the effectiveness of human rights education programs. It is important to note that within this field there have been few studies that focus specifically on human rights education in schools or in the curriculum.

3.2 Need for human rights education in schools

The need for better human rights education in schools was highlighted in the findings of the *National Consultation on Human Rights* (NHRCCC, 2009). The report listed a significant number of submissions that were critical of the extent of human rights education available in the Australian community and there was strong support for better human rights education in schools (NHRCC, 2009: 136), which was seen as an essential component of creating a broader human rights culture in the wider community (NHRCC, 2009: 137). According to one participant reported in the study:

I've spent 12 years, like most people, in schools, then university...and not once did I see the promotion of human rights during my education, as is required by the UN Declaration (NHRCC, 2009: 134).

A submission by the Human Rights Law Resource Centre argued that recent research on human rights education in Australian schools 'has found it to be ad hoc' and 'well short of what is mandated by Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.' More than 80% of students surveyed by one researcher did not receive any human rights education during their formal schooling. The Human Rights Law Resource Centre also argued that the available evidence indicated that "Australia has not achieved a systematic and integrated approach to human rights education", attributing this to issues such as an overcrowded curriculum, the lack of a government mandate and corresponding resources, and a lack of training (NHRCC, 2009: 137).

The importance of embedding human rights education within the school curriculum and of undertaking professional development for teachers related to HRE was noted:

A number of submissions emphasised the importance of making human rights education part of the curriculum for all primary and secondary school students and of ensuring that all pre-service and in-service teachers receive human rights education and training (NHRCC, 2009: 137-8).

3.3 What human rights issues should students learn about?

Most studies have referred to the importance of having UN Declarations and Conventions as the basis for any school based human rights education programs. However, few single out any specific set of human rights issues that should be studied at school. A few recent studies have focused on a number of emerging rights areas/issues, such as civics and citizenship, Australian values, child rights and the right to education, and they are discussed below.

Civic and Citizenship rights and human rights education

The importance of having a policy priority combining education for democratic citizenship and human rights education (EDC/HRE) was a feature of a recent European study, *Strategic Support for Decision Makers: Policy tool for Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights* (Kerr et al., 2010). It emphasised the need for clear regulations to underline the importance of EDC/HRE within education policies, and the allocation of resources to close the gap between policy development and implementation.

The role of human rights education in underpinning democracy was also highlighted in *Changing Citizenship: Democracy and Participation in Education* (Osler & Starkey, 2005). Osler and Starkey emphasised the important role of education in strengthening democracy and providing young people:

'...with appropriate experiences which allow them to make sense of international politics and interdependence while at the same time enabling them to feel that they can make a difference and participate in shaping our common future' (Osler & Starkey, 2005: 12).

Based on a critical analysis of the citizenship education program in the UK, they argued for the need to educate young people as cosmopolitan citizens:

...formal education systems should promote the kind of learning for cosmopolitan citizenship that helps young citizens to recognize their common humanity, make connections between their own lives and those of others and operate effectively in contexts of cultural diversity and change (Osler & Starkey, 2005: 78).

This would require changes in our approaches to teaching. Osler and Starkey argued that schools remained 'essentially authoritarian in their structures and organization' (Osler & Starkey 2005: 137). Their analysis of citizenship education programs in the UK found that there tends to be an emphasis on the *responsibilities* of young people rather than their rights. They point out that such responsibilities are not codified in the international instruments in the same way as rights were, and that despite the rhetoric to the contrary, 'entitlement to rights is never conditional on acceptance of responsibilities' (Osler & Starkey, 2005: 156).

The Council of Europe's 2010 *Charter for Education on Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education* delineated the differences between citizenship education and human rights education, and highlighted the much broader focus of HRE:

Education for democratic citizenship focuses primarily on democratic rights and responsibilities and active participation, in relation to the civic, political, social, economic, legal and cultural spheres of society, while human rights education is concerned with the broader spectrum of human rights and fundamental freedoms in every aspect of people's lives (Council of Europe, 2010: 8).

'Australian Values' and human rights

A focus on teaching of 'Australian values' was discussed in an AHRC paper (2011) that linked human rights and 'Australian values'. Australian values were defined as "the core values and principles that underpin an Australian ethos – values such as fairness, equity, justice and democracy are all close equivalents of human rights" (AHRC, 2011: 11). However no attempt was made to justify why these particular values are 'Australian' or to consider other aspects of 'Australian values' that may not align so neatly with human rights principles.

Some theorists have highlighted a danger within the use of values as synonyms for human rights. For example, McCrudden (2006) has suggested that such values are not in fact specifically defined or protected by international human rights conventions, and can mean 'radically different' things to different people (McCrudden, 2006: 3). McCrudden argues that the meaning of terms such as dignity are highly context specific, and that there is little common understanding of the term, leaving it open to significant personal and judicial interpretation. Burrige and Chodkiewicz (2008) have also contrasted the philosophical

difference between teaching “a narrow set of Australian values, and... teaching about universal values, multiple heritages and global perspectives” (Burridge & Chodkiewicz, 2008: 35).

Finding an appropriate balance between the international, national and local dimensions of human rights reflects wider academic debates about perceived tensions between the principle of the universality of human rights and opposing arguments about the need for cultural relevance. There is a challenge to design HRE programming in educational systems in a way that is beyond “symbolic politics” and that can be relevant and meaningful to both national and local situations (Tibbits & Kirchchlaeger, 2010: 8).

Child rights

There has been a growing interest in teaching children about their rights, and a belief that children should start learning about their rights in the early school years. The National Child Rights Taskforce report *Listen to Children* (NCRT, 2011) found that the UN *Convention on the Right of the Child* (CRC) has still not been comprehensively implemented into Australian law and that there remain no enforceable remedies in the event of a violation of many of the rights in the Convention (NCRT, 2011: 1). The Report also noted the lack of reference to child rights or the CRC in the Australian Curriculum (NCRT, 2011: 28).

A UNICEF report *The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: a study of legal implementation in 12 countries* (Lundy et al., 2012) compares approaches in a range of countries to determine the most effective ways of embedding children’s rights into domestic law. In the examination of Australia as one case study it found:

the current [Australian] national school curriculum contains no mention of child rights or the CRC, although it does include reference to human rights in the general capability of ethical behaviour. It has been suggested, however, that human rights education in Australian schools remains limited in the absence of a legislative mandate (Lundy et al., 2012: 33-34).

In its concluding comments about children’s rights in Australia, the report said:

.... that there is not yet a culture of children’s rights. Those working with and for children choose language such as “child-centred” in preference to the language of rights, and there is still public anxiety surrounding human rights. Children’s rights can be a stigmatizing concept, and the CRC is used as an afterthought rather than as an explicit framing for law and policy... it remains to be seen whether children’s rights will be promoted more effectively through integration into a broader human rights framework and culture, or whether the distinctive nature of children’s rights will be lost in the general mix (Lundy et al., 2012: 35).

However, where children have learnt about children’s rights in school they do show more respect of the rights of others in their attitudes toward other children and toward adults. Also, students who learn about children’s rights have more positive attitudes toward minority children (Tibbits & Fernekes, 2011).

In addition, a study in Victoria found that in schools where values were embedded in the content and pedagogy of the classroom, children exhibited “increased empathy, tolerance, understanding and respect; increased sharing and team work; and greater willingness to tell the truth and accept responsibility for their actions...[and] decreased playground fighting” (AHRC, 2011: 4).

Right to education

Another emerging rights area has been the right to an education. It has been argued that the right to education provides “an entry point to the enjoyment of all other human rights” (ODIHR, 2009: 7). In 1999, the UN Special Rapporteur on Education, Katarina Tomasevski, reported to the Economic and Social Council of the UN on the right to education. This highly influential report outlined what subsequently became known as the 4 As Framework, fleshing out the right to education in greater detail. Tomasevski argued that states have an obligation to ensure that education is available, accessible, affordable and adaptable (Tomasevski, 1999). In relation to human rights education, Tomasevski commented in her 2004 report on “...the difference that education would make if people stopped education *for* human rights (which is a considerable accomplishment in its own right) and children started to be educated *as* people with rights” (Tomasevski, 2004: 20). She also emphasised that:

...the right to education requires enforceable individual entitlements to education, safeguards for human rights in education and instrumentalization of education to the enjoyment of all human rights through education (Tomasevski, 2004: 22).

A UNICEF / UNESCO report *A Human Rights-Based Approach to Education for All* (2007) outlined a conceptual framework for a human rights-based approach to the right to education, made up of three interlinked and interdependent dimensions:

- the right of access to education - the right of every child to education on the basis of equality of opportunity and without discrimination on any grounds. To achieve this goal, education must be available for, accessible to and inclusive of all children.
- the right to quality education - the right of every child to a quality education that enables him or her to fulfil his or her potential, realize opportunities for employment and develop life skills. To achieve this goal, education needs to be child-centred, relevant and embrace a broad curriculum, and be appropriately resourced and monitored.
- the right to respect within the learning environment - the right of every child to respect for her or his inherent dignity and to have her or his universal human rights respected within the education system. To achieve this goal, education must be provided in a way that is consistent with human rights, including equal respect for every child, opportunities for meaningful participation, freedom from all forms of violence, and respect for language, culture and religion (UNICEF & UNESCO, 2007: 4).

Reflecting on the global implementation of the *Education for All Strategy*, the report suggested that:

There has been a failure to acknowledge the complexity of the barriers impeding children's access to school, to listen to the concerns expressed by children themselves concerning their education, to build a culture of education in which all children are equally respected and valued, to engage parents and local communities in supporting education, to embrace a holistic approach to education, to address children's rights in education or to embed schools as vibrant centres for community action and social development. Energy has been focused too narrowly on enrolment, without sufficient attention to attendance, completion and attainment, or to the processes through which those outcomes can be achieved. (UNICEF & UNESCO 2007: 2).

3.4 Theory, models and approaches to human rights education

Human rights education is seen as 'an emergent field of educational theory and practice' (Tibbits & Kirchsclaeger, 2010: 1) where there are intersections between HRE and other fields of educational study, including citizenship education, peace education, anti-racism education, Holocaust / genocide education, education for sustainable development, and intercultural education.

Theoretical models

A number of theoretical models of HRE have been identified by Ang (2010), including:

- the Transformational model which has a focus on empowerment through the recognition and prevention of human rights abuses;
- the Accountability model which focuses on training professionals to protect human rights via monitoring and advocacy;
- the Values and Awareness model which emphasises transmitting basic knowledge of human rights issues; and
- the Participatory model that focuses on students taking action in support of human rights.

Transformative learning model

Many theorists have argued that HRE should work to achieve transformation of learners rather than being used simply to support the current political and social status quo. Ang (2010) argues that transformative learning opportunities are critical for effective HRE. Transformative learning involved learners developing autonomous thinking, critically reflecting on their own experiences and changing their specific beliefs, attitudes and emotional reactions. Whilst acknowledging that transformative learning is an ambitious goal in a school context, particularly as there is limited space in the curriculum to devote to HRE, Ang believes that cumulative transformative learning experiences could have a significant impact on student learning (Ang, 2010: 12-13).

Burridge and Chodkiewicz (2010) also suggest that the guiding principles for HRE should be ‘transformative and reformist’ and HRE programs ‘should challenge current thinking on such issues as cultural diversity and emphasise the rights of all peoples, including those who are marginalised or seeking refuge’ (Burridge & Chodkiewicz, 2010: 25). Tibbits and Kirchsclaeger argue that inherent within the concept of human rights education are the components of the ‘knowledge, skills and attitudes consistent with human rights principles that empower individual and groups to address oppression and injustice’ (Tibbits & Kirchsclaeger, 2010: 4).

Participatory model

Ang proposed a new model of HRE, the “participatory model”, as being the most appropriate for HRE in secondary school settings. This approach focuses on transmitting basic technical knowledge of human rights issues, but also involves students working through an in-depth case study of a human rights violation (Ang, 2010: 8).

Pedagogical approaches

Pedagogical approaches commonly promoted by HRE advocates could be categorised as:

- experiential and activity centred learning, that involve the solicitation of learners’ prior knowledge and offering activities that draw out learners’ experiences and knowledge;
- problem-posing, that challenges the learners’ prior knowledge;
- participative, that encourage collective efforts in clarifying concepts, analysing themes and undertaking activities;
- dialectical, that requires learners to compare their knowledge with those from other sources;
- analytical, that asks learners to think about why things are and how they came to be;
- healing that promotes human rights in intra-personal and inter-personal relations;
- strategic thinking-oriented that directs learners to set their own goals and to think of strategic ways of achieving them;
- goal- and action-oriented that allow learners to plan and organise actions in relation to their goals (Tibbits & Kirchsclaeger, 2010: 5-6).

There are a set of important capacities that HRE programs need to foster, and they relate to students’ growth of responsibility and caring, particularly in response to human rights violations. The following five capacities were identified:

- critical analysis of social conditions fostering human rights violations and those that impede such violations;
- identifying social conditions that make the realization of human rights guarantees difficult to attain;
- identifying and publicising human rights violations or assaults on human rights;
- proposing actions to redress human rights violations and protect against future violations;
- organising and acting on behalf of human rights as individuals and within groups (Tibbits & Kirchsclaeger, 2010: 6).

Many human rights educators also focus on the need to develop a “critical human rights consciousness” in students. This means developing the ability to recognise the human rights aspects of a conflict and to have awareness and concern about their own role in protecting and promoting rights (Tibbits & Kirchsclaeger, 2010: 6).

Whole-school approaches

A whole-school approach to human rights education has been defined as:

Adopting a whole school approach goes beyond teaching human rights as a separate lesson in the classroom. It means creating an environment where everyone understands, values and protects human rights (Amnesty International, 2012a: 1).

A whole-school approach involves integrating human rights values and principles into all key areas of school life, including:

- governance – the way the school is run, incorporating school values, policies, leadership, participation, accountability and transparency;

- relationships – how members of the school community interact with each other, including student, staff, parent and community-wide relationships and the building of local and global partnerships;
- curriculum and extra-curricular activities – the teaching of human rights, both content and methodology, and the opportunity to participate in extra-curricular activities;
- school environment – the environment in which learning takes place, ranging from the classroom to the physical school environment itself (Amnesty International, 2012: 9 and Chapter 4).

In relation to the curriculum, this whole-school approach focused on the following aspects:

- curriculum policy and practice - identify different ways in which human rights education can be integrated into the curriculum.
- teaching materials – identify teaching materials that will support teachers in incorporating human rights issues into their teaching practice.
- teacher training - provide training and support for teachers to incorporate human rights values and principles into their work (Amnesty International, 2012 (a): 6).

The term ‘human rights friendly school’ was also coined to refer to schools where ‘human rights values and principles are at the heart of the learning experience and present in all major areas of school life.’ (Amnesty International, 2012: 3) The key characteristics of a human rights friendly school are:

- an overall school-wide atmosphere of equality, non-discrimination, inclusion, respect, dignity and participation;
- a fully democratic, participatory approach to school governance where all members of the school community are involved in decisions that affect them;
- the empowerment of students, teachers and staff to meaningfully and equally participate in the creation and implementation of school policies and practices;
- an increased sense of inclusion and interconnectedness that fosters mutual responsibility and local and global solidarity;
- the promotion of students’ critical thinking and involvement in debates about human rights and social change;
- rich learning experiences about human rights, inside and outside of the classroom (Amnesty International, 2012: 4).

3.5 Implementation – human rights education and the curriculum

One of the difficulties identified by researchers in the implementation of human rights education programs was the difficulty in categorising HRE because of its diverse learning goals, diverse content and range of topics to be taught, and the many ways it could be introduced into schools (e.g. through informal activities, such as a cross-curricular theme or in specific subject areas) (Tibbits & Kirchsclaeger, 2010: 15).

Implementation and curriculum strategies

Three distinct approaches have been identified to integrating human rights into the school curriculum:

- offering a stand-alone human rights elective course;
- integrating human rights themes, issues, perspectives and approaches into a small number of existing subjects/units; or
- integrating human rights themes, issues, perspectives and approaches more broadly throughout the curriculum. (Amnesty International, 2012: 52-53)

Making human rights explicit in curriculum

A feature of the European Union (EU) experience has been the significant impact made by including EDC/HRE **explicitly** within the primary and secondary school curriculum (Kerr et al 2010). Human rights themes and content have been included in EU countries as either thematic areas within educational policies or integrated into existing subjects, such as history, civics / citizenship, social studies and the humanities (Tibbits & Kirchsclaeger, 2010). HRE content was also found in Arts subjects, in non-formal school clubs and in special events that took place within schools (Tibbits & Kirchsclaeger, 2010: 10).

The development of robust review and measurement frameworks was also seen as an essential way of ensuring there was a strong evidence base and sustainability built into education for democratic citizenship and human rights programs (Kerr et al., 2010).

Impact of the national Australian Curriculum

The development of a national Australian Curriculum has provided opportunities to include human rights issues and topics in a number of key learning areas and subjects. In response to draft school curriculum documents released by ACARA, the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC, 2011) released a position paper on *Human Rights Education in the national school curriculum*.

The AHRC identified that *at a minimum*, a focus on human rights and Australian values needed to be integrated into existing general capabilities statements, cross-curriculum priorities and across all learning areas (AHRC, 2011: 6). It argued that the new National Australian Curriculum documents needed to ensure:

- the inclusion of a specific general capability or cross-curriculum priority focused on human rights and Australian values;
- the integration of human rights principles and values in the descriptions of relevant existing general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities; and
- the inclusion of relevant human rights issues and examples in *each* learning area (AHRC, 2011: 6-7).

In this way HRE in schools would help contribute to the fulfilment of Australia's international human rights commitments (AHRC, 2011: 5).

NSW curriculum

A recent study by Burrige and Chodkiewicz (2010) of secondary school curriculum documents in NSW found only limited references to human rights concepts, human rights issues or to the UN and its various human rights conventions. Follow-up discussions with teachers from key professional teacher associations and a survey of community groups active in the field in NSW schools confirmed that even in the subjects where the syllabus documents mentioned specific human rights issues, whether human rights issues were taught remained largely at the discretion of each individual subject teacher at each school. Generally it was only a small minority of teachers with an interest in human rights who were addressing human rights issues in particular subjects.

Role of NGOs in human rights education

NGOs have been playing an active and valuable role in supporting HRE in schools. Although there have been many positives for schools from the active role of NGOs in HRE, in Europe this greater role has been attributed largely to the failure of educators, the inadequate level of government financial allocations for HRE and the decentralized systems of education (Tibbits & Kirchsclaeger, 2010: 7).

The significant growth in the number of NGOs taking up HRE in Europe happened between 1980 and 1995, with the number of organisations dedicated to human rights education having quadrupled (Tibbits & Kirchsclaeger, 2010: 7). NGOs were impacting on HRE at a grass roots level, through relationships developed with individual schools, and some were also making an impact at a national policy level (Tibbits & Kirchsclaeger, 2010: 7). Further discussion of the involvement of Australian NGOs in HRE in schools can be found in the Findings below.

Professional development and training for teachers

Ensuring teachers were aware of and able to teach about human rights issues has emerged as a major issue. A number of European studies indicated that teachers were not familiar with HRE content and could not answer knowledge-based questions about human rights (Tibbits & Kirchsclaeger, 2010: 10). They also found that there was a lack of professional development for teachers to develop their knowledge about human rights issues (Tibbits & Kirchsclaeger, 2010: 11).

A major gap in the professional development of teachers about human rights has also been identified in Australia:

Implementing a human rights education program needs a specific focus on and support for a nation wide professional teacher development effort (Burrige & Chodkiewicz, 2008: 34).

Despite the fact that national legislation provides a basis for human rights education in many countries, researchers have found that this legislation is usually not specific and there is little guidance at the formal policy level for HRE and initial teacher training (Tibbits & Kirchsclaeger, 2010: 7).

3.6 Outcomes - Evaluating the effectiveness of human rights education

There has been some interest in assessing the outcomes of human rights education programs. In Europe a recent study suggested that 'A human rights-based approach to human rights education means that outcomes are explicitly linked with improvements in the enjoyment of human rights, as articulated in human rights standards' (OSCE/ODIHR, 2012: 19)

The importance of emotional engagement as a key factor in the effectiveness of HRE programs was found in a study of 43 schools in Germany. Tackling subjects from an affective angle means enhancing the possibility of an effect on students' behaviour and of effective human rights education (Tibbits & Kirchsclaeger, 2010: 10). Four dimensions of student responses to human rights, which could potentially be used as a measure of the effectiveness of HRE programs, were also identified in a South American study of HRE with young people. They were:

- knowledge of human rights issues;
- perceptions of personal abilities and preferences;
- commitment to non-violent conflict resolution; and
- willingness to intervene in situations of abuse and solidarity with victims (Tibbits & Kirchsclaeger, 2010: 12).

In a review of literature about what makes for an effective HRE program, Ang (2010) identified the following characteristics:

- lessons should be frequent – three or more sessions are required to produce significant changes in student attitudes;
- if possible, students should engage first-hand with victims of human rights abuses;
- teaching methods should be participatory – dramatizations, role-plays, problem solving, and simulations are more effective in creating positive change than more passive teaching methods;
- teaching methods should employ problem-posing education;
- a mix of local, national and international human rights issues should be covered; and
- teachers should be knowledgeable and inspiring (Ang, 2010: 11, 17-18).

3.7 Conclusion

Despite widespread community support for human rights education in schools, efforts to implement HRE in Australian schools have been described as 'largely fragmented and ad hoc in nature', and mainly reliant on the interest and good will of individual teachers (Burrige & Chodkiewicz, 2010). This review of the recent research on HRE highlights the potential positive impact of educating children and young people about human rights and children's rights.

However, to achieve such an impact, the approach to HRE in Australian schools will need to move beyond the current ad hoc model and become a more coordinated program, with designated staff, resources, teacher training and professional development to support implementation. The research points to the need for the strengthening of partnerships with human rights NGOs, a number of which are already doing valuable work in Australian schools.

Most important were the strategic opportunities offered by the current development of the new national Australian Curriculum which should be utilised to ensure appropriate representation of human rights issues in all relevant learning areas, subjects and cross-curriculum priorities. In the absence of an effective integration of human rights education into the new National Curriculum, Australian schools are likely to continue to find it difficult to prioritise human rights issues to the extent necessary to have a sustained impact on student learning.

Many of the issues relating to HRE highlighted in this literature review are reflected in the comments and concerns raised by participants in the roundtable discussions, which are elaborated in further detail in the chapters below and the main gaps identified in current human rights education provision have been highlighted in Chapter 5.

PART 2. CURRICULUM OPPORTUNITIES: FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

4. Human Rights Education in the school curriculum

4.1 Australia's school education context

A feature of Australia's education system is its complexity, involving separate national, state and territory educational systems, each with their own distinct administrative departments and curriculum authorities. The Northern Territory draws on the South Australian syllabus documents for its Senior Secondary Years curriculum.

At the state and territory level three distinct and separate school sectors - Government, Catholic and Independent - operate their own separate teaching and administrative systems. Nationally across the 9,468 schools, among the 3.5 million students, 66% attend Government schools, 20% Catholic schools and 14% Independent schools (Gonski et al., 2011:3-4).

The role of the Australian Government in schooling has increased over time, taking on a greater funding and overseeing role, including in the curriculum. In 2009, the Australian Government provided an average of 15% of the Recurrent funding to Government schools, 57% to Catholic schools, and 33% to Independent schools. Of Capital funding the Australian Government provided 46% of the funding to Government schools, 49% to Catholic schools and 34% to Independent Schools (Gonski et al., 2011:15-16).

Curriculum - National agreement

The Australian Government has also taken the lead on standardising the curriculum, with its Australian Curriculum initiative. Through a national education ministerial forum, the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), the Australian Government gained the agreement of all states and territories to develop a nationally agreed Australian Curriculum across eight main learning areas, as agreed in the Melbourne Declaration in 2008 (MCEETYA, 2008:13). Note that from 2012 MCEETYA was known as the COAG Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC).

Australian School Curriculum

As mentioned earlier this study has been undertaken at an important transitional time when all states and territories are involved with the Australian Government in a staged process of developing and implementing a common national Australian Curriculum. At the start of 2013 some key Subjects had been fully developed and implemented, with a number of Foundation to Year 10 Subjects in place. They included the Stage 1 subjects English, History, Mathematics, and Science that had been developed by ACARA and endorsed, with agreements in place for their implementation across all states and territories by the end of 2013.

The senior secondary curriculum for each of these four Subjects for Years 11 and 12 has been endorsed, and ACARA has been working with the states and territories to integrate the content and agree on a timeline for their implementation (ACARA 2013). However *no* Stage 1 Senior Years 11 and 12 subjects had been implemented and so separate state and territory subject curricula remained in place.

General Capabilities statements

Part of the development of the Australian Curriculum included a set of agreed General Capabilities statements that were to be applied in the drafting of the curriculum for all Learning Areas/ Subjects. They included a specific focus on students learning about:

- literacy, numeracy, ICT, critical and creative thinking, personal and social, *ethical understanding* and *intercultural understanding*.
-

Although there was no specific statement related to human rights, the term was *explicitly* mentioned in the statement referring to *Ethical understanding* and human rights were *implicit* in the *Intercultural understanding* statement:

- *Ethical understanding* – takes account of values, human rights and responsibilities, animal rights, and global justice, and mentions the first three as an organising element.
- *Intercultural understanding* - includes opportunities implicitly in the study of different cultural perceptions and practice and explicitly in the element of Recognising culture and developing respect, and Reflecting on intercultural experiences and taking responsibility.

Cross-Curriculum priorities

The Australian Curriculum also outlined three cross-curriculum priorities related to what it called important issues in contemporary society that would help equip young Australians with skills, knowledge and understanding to engage in a globalised world and they are to be embedded across all learning areas (ACARA 2011). These cross-curriculum priorities are:

- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures;*
- *Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia; and*
- *Sustainability.*

According to a number of roundtable participants the first two priorities were important - *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures*, and *Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia*. Neither priority contained an *explicit* mention of human rights, but both did have some *implicit* opportunities for addressing a number of specific human rights issues. The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures* priority, in its second key concept, highlighted examining experiences through 'historical, social and political lenses'. The *Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia* priority mentions study of the 'social, cultural, political and economic links with Asia'.

4.2 Learning about which human rights?

An important aspect in identifying curriculum opportunities is to consider which human rights students should be learning about across their school years. The starting point needs to be consideration of the UN *Declaration on Human Rights* (1948) and subsequent UN human rights conventions and treaties and recent Australian human rights legislation. This suggests a focus on a set of specific human rights issues related to both individual and group rights that have been historically at the centre of human rights discussions as well as newer contemporary and emerging issues. Drawing on the Victorian Charter and the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) document they could include:

- civil and political rights - rights to life, liberty, free speech, movement, political thought, religious practice, a fair trial, privacy, the right to found a family, to vote;
- economic, social and cultural rights - such rights to adequate food and water, health care, education, a clean environment, respect for cultural practices, welfare assistance;
- humanitarian rights - rights of those who are involved in, or affected by, armed conflict; the treatment of prisoners of war; of the wounded, sick or shipwrecked; of civilians; and of women and children in particular
- various group rights - the rights of workers, women, children, minority groups, refugees, Indigenous peoples, people with a disability (VELS, 2009).

These set of rights are a starting point only. A curriculum paper would need to be drafted as a result of Australia wide - state and territory – roundtable discussions involving curriculum authorities, teacher associations, and community and NGO representatives to help set out which specific set of rights would be addressed across each of the key school Learning Stages and apply to which subject Learning Areas.

4.3 Key Curriculum dimensions

Given this set of human rights issues, it is important to analyse the extent of the school curriculum opportunities for students to learn about these issues. In doing so there are a number of key curriculum dimensions that also need to be considered. They include:

- Stages of learning – which school years, from Foundation / Kindergarten to Year 12
- Explicit or implicit topics - are human rights issues named *explicitly* and can they be specifically identified in the curriculum or are they *implicit* opportunities, where human rights issues can be implied from the curriculum documents?
- Compulsory or optional - are topics mandatory /compulsory or optional, and are they available as a subject elective?
- Curricular or Other learning opportunities (extra-curricular) – while the primary focus of this study is on the curricular aspects (what the curriculum documents reveal), what are the important learnings taking place through other kinds of learning opportunities that may be subject and curriculum related or may be extra-curricular learning activities?
- School Sector variations - what are the variations in subject offerings across school sectors (a few were highlighted in a number of Roundtable discussions)?

We have reported on these curriculum dimensions, where appropriate, in the sections below.

4.4 Human rights in the curriculum and school stages of learning

Curriculum opportunities in School learning stages

This part of our analysis considered the opportunities available in the curriculum by school years. The analysis drew on state and territory roundtable discussions and relevant curriculum and syllabus documents and was greatly assisted by a few key staff from NSW, Victorian and South Australian curriculum authorities.

The opportunities noted have been categorised as:

- either explicit or implicit.
- by Subject and/or School Year/Unit.
- human rights issue/topic.
- the State or Territory where they are offered.

The rights issues or topics listed below were mandatory, except where a topic was optional or part of an elective and in that case we have noted the entry with an (E). While many states and territories are moving to an F-10 and 11-12 year syllabus grouping, in line with Australian Curriculum documents, this analysis has focussed on the following *three* school learning stages:

- Senior Secondary - Years 11 and 12.
- Secondary - Years 7 to 10.
- Primary - Years F/K to 6.

Senior Secondary (Years 11 and 12)

Explicit

The Senior Secondary Subjects that *explicitly* addressed human rights issues in almost all states and territories were: *History*; *Geography* and *Legal Studies*. A Senior Years 11 and 12 *Civics and Citizenship* Australian Curriculum unit that will be optional is still in development and it is not clear how each state and territory will implement the unit for the study of civic and citizenship rights.

Table 1. Senior Years 11-12 Explicit topics

Subject	Year / Unit	HR Topic / issue	State/Territory
History	Year 12	UN Declaration of Human Rights, Apartheid, Refugees (SIVEX) Civil rights. National Studies & International Studies in Peace & Conflict topics.	Victoria, NSW
	Year 11 Options Unit 2	Oppression and struggle for human rights, slave trade, suffragette movement, US civil rights movement, struggle for Indigenous rights, Burma, Tibet, Tiananmen Square.	Tasmania,
	Unit 1 (E) Unit 2 (E)	Experiences of Indigenous people, Ideas of race, Changes in values. Forced & free migration, Slaves & forced labour, History of women, Power & powerlessness- rights and freedom of oppressed.	SA/NT ACT, WA
Modern World History	Year 11/12	Civil rights; Apartheid; Suffragist struggle; 2 nd wave feminism.	Queensland
Geography	Unit 1 Unit 2	Movement of people, Issues for geographers. Migration of people, Case study – water. Globalisation- movement of refugees (E), global phenomena and evaluation of responses.	SA/ NT Tasmania, Victoria
Legal Studies	Unit 6	Human rights- nature & development of human rights, Promoting & enforcing human rights, Contemporary issue. (Core Part 2- 20% of NSW course).	NSW
	Year 11 Unit 2	Case studies – Australian rights issue – e.g. Mabo, gay rights, International law –Treaties, Commonwealth powers.	Victoria, SA/NT
	Year 12 Units 3,4	Young people & the law- rights of young people, child (E).	Tasmania, ACT, QLD
Civics & Citizenship	Years 11 & 12 (20 hr. unit)	Civic and political rights.	NSW

There was a further set of subjects that had relatively small enrolments and were not offered widely or were available in only one or a few states and territories:

- Politics - *Australian & Global Politics* (Victoria); *Australian & International Politics* (SA/NT); *Politics & the Law* (WA).
- Society and Culture – *Sociology* (Victoria, Tasmania, ACT); *Society & Culture* (NSW, SA/NT); *Study of Society* (QLD).
- *Aboriginal Studies*; *Women’s Studies*; and *Religion or Religious Studies*; *Philosophy*.

Table 2. Senior Years 11-12 Explicit topics - Smaller Enrolments

Subject	Year/Unit	HR Topic / issue	State/Territory
Australian & Global Politics	Year 12 Units 1 to 4	Respect for human rights, rights of child, refugees, gay rights, feminism, Indigenous rights, Democratic rights and freedoms. Individual & minority rights, Australian Bill or Charter of rights, Human rights organisations, Global issues – human rights, people movement.	Victoria ONLY
Australian & International Politics	Year 11 Year 12 (E)	Power, Community Politics, Government. Australian Constitution, Voting, Parties. International: UN & Human rights; UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.	SA/ NT
Politics & the Law	Unit 1 Unit 3	Civil and political rights, Rights and governance, Types of rights-civil, political, economic, social, cultural, Protection of human rights- covenants, treaties.	WA ONLY For 2012
Sociology	Year 11-12 Units 1-4	Ethnicity, Indigenous – Inequality, age, gender, ethnicity. Indigenous culture. Social movements and social change.	Victoria Tasmania, ACT
Society and Culture	Year 11 Year 12 Year 12	Power & authority, ATSI societies, Refugee & migrant experiences, Australia as global citizens. Global issues – A question of rights. Equality & difference - human rights, discrimination, race.	SA/NT NSW
Study of Society	Year 11/12	Examining inequality.	Queensland
Aboriginal Studies	HSC-Part 1 Part 2	Social Justice & Human rights issues: Global understanding of human rights & social justice. Land rights movement.	NSW
Aboriginal Studies	Year 12	Aboriginal land rights – land & sea rights. Citizenship – Struggle for rights, UN Declaration, Rights of Indigenous people in a global context.	SA/NT
Women’s Studies	Year 12 Topic 4 (E)	Women & the law – women’s human rights.	SA/NT
Religious Studies	Year 12	Religion & belief system/Religion & non-religion.	NSW
Religion Studies	Year 11	Work- rights, impact on social justice & human rights. Ethical or social justice issue (E).	SA/NT
Religion and society	Year 11 Unit 2	Ethics and morality.	Victoria
*Philosophy	Year 12 Unit 2	Ethical problems and political philosophy.	Victoria

* Note: Unit 2 of the course replaced in 2013 by ‘On foundations of morality’ & ‘On rights and justice’.

Implicit

There were a number of Senior Years Subjects where there were *implicit* opportunities for students to learn about human rights issues. They included: *English*; *Science*; and *Economics & Business Management*. Of these *English* was the most significant as it remains the subject across Senior and Secondary Stages of Learning with by far the largest numbers of student enrolments.

English: The *English* curriculum did not explicitly include a discussion of any human rights issues, but rights could be addressed through the texts that students chose for study. For example in NSW the HSC English course texts were prescribed for Year 12 Stage 6 only and not for Year 11. Among these texts students are encouraged to read widely and can choose various electives and related texts drawn from fiction, drama, poetry, nonfiction film, media or multimedia. For example texts like the film *Ten Canoes* or the novel *Swallow the Air* could be related to Indigenous rights. Further in one elective Module C - *Texts and Society - Global Village* and *Into the World* Electives there were opportunities for students to learn about specific human rights issues, depending on the texts chosen. Also depending on which Area of Study, such as *Belonging* nominated for study in 2009-2014 Electives by all students, there was 'the potential to explore human rights issues' (Board of Studies NSW).

Science: The *Science* curriculum did not name any specific human rights issues. One topic, such as *Water for Living* or *Humans at Work* in the NSW HSC syllabus students could explore current issues and implications for society. One roundtable participant felt that the new Australian Science curriculum offered one strand focussing on 'Science as a human endeavour [and] it actually looks at social and political and economic connections to science' (ACT RT).

Economics and Business Management: The *Economics* curriculum did not mention human rights, but a number of topics such as *Government in the Economy* in the NSW Preliminary Course and each of the 4 topics in their HSC course could provide opportunities. The SA/NT Stage 1 Economics Syllabus mentioned 'economic, social and political rights in industrial relations' as part of its capability statement, but did not specify them further in the content. Implied rights issues featured in *Globalisation and Poverty and Inequality* topics (Stage 1) and key areas (Stage 2).

Economics in Victoria did have a 'part of the curriculum [that] refers to income distribution, questions of equity, resource allocation with that migration of population' and in Business management they cover the issue of corporate social responsibility - especially for big business in Year 12 (Victorian RT).

Table 3. Senior Years 11-12 Implicit topics

Subject	Year/Unit	HR topic/ issue	State/Territory
English	Year 11 & 12	Texts and society.	NSW, Victoria, SA/NT, QLD, ACT, WA, Tasmania
Science	Year 11 & 12	Water for living, Humans at work. Science as a human endeavour.	NSW, ACT
Economics	Year 12 Year 12 Year 11 Year 11	Government in the Economy. Globalisation. Poverty & inequality. Poverty & inequality. Economic choices and consequences and Economic change: issues and challenges.	NSW SA/NT SA/NT Victoria
Business Management	Year 12	Economic activity, economic management, Corporate social responsibility.	Victoria

Numbers studying subjects in Year 12

It is important to determine how many students are able to take up particular Subject opportunities. Yet the available data on the numbers of students studying across each state and territory, by each Subject, and Stage of learning is limited. It has been possible to draw on an ACER study (Wilkinson & Milgate, 2009) that compiled Year 12 study data for a few key subjects, *English*, *History*, *Geography*, and a number of *Other state specific subjects*, as well showing the total number of Year 12 students. While only partial, the data does provide a useful indication of the relative opportunities available for students of the Subjects we have reported on in this section, particularly the percentages.

Table 4. Student numbers studying selected Subjects & Year 12 total (2007)

	NSW	Victoria	Queensland	WA	Tasmani a	SA	NT	ACT
English	59,621	40,735	34,262	9,108	2,105	9,044	916	3,746
History	9,769 Modern 2,278 Extensio n	4,543 Revolution 1,304 Australian	5,121	2,758	495 Modern	1594 Modern 205 Australian	83 Modern 26 Australian	629
Geography	4,561	2,416	4,364	2,973	208	1,223	80	164
Other		1,765 Int'Studies 591 National Politics				123 Aust & Int Politics	33 Aust & Int Politics	
Total Year 12 students	67,189	47,069	41,599	11,765	4,947	12,056	985	3,998

Secondary (Years 7 to 10)

Explicit

During the Secondary Years 7 to 10 our analysis showed that Years 9 and 10 offered a set of *explicit* opportunities for students to study a range of human rights issues. The main Subjects and unit were: *History*; *Geography*; *Aboriginal Studies*; and the *Civics and Citizenship* unit. It is worth noting here that *Civics and Citizenship* is a key human rights Learning Area across Years 3 to 10 that does include *explicit* study of civic and political rights as part of a mandatory 20 hour learning unit.

History: The *History* Syllabus in NSW for Year 10 covered such topics as Rights and freedoms human rights and the UN declaration of human rights, Australia's civil rights, Aboriginal rights including the citizenship rights referendum 1967, the Stolen generations, and Decolonisation. Also in Year 9 there were topics dealing with the Movements of people, Slavery, and Progressive ideas and movements addressing democratic rights.

Geography: The *Geography* Syllabus Year 10 in NSW had as one of its mandatory focus area – *Australia and its Regional and Global Contexts* - which specifically included a topic on Human rights and Reconciliation. There was also a set of important electives. *Oceanography* included a focus on Indigenous rights to the oceans. *Development Geography* looked at patterns of global inequality including an optional development issues of political and human rights, refugees, role and status of women. *Global Change* also covered fundamental human rights to food, shelter, water, clean air, health, education, global human inequalities, and how citizenship protects fundamental human rights. *Political Geography* included topics referring to social justice, and humanitarian aid.

In Year 9 the *Global Change* included Globalisation, Global inequalities and Global organisations topics. Global inequalities specifically referred to extremes of poverty & wealth, variations in access to education, food, health, shelter and water. The *Global Geographical Issues* area had among its optional issues of study that included human rights, Indigenous people and self determination topics. There was also a *Geography Life Skills* course that included topics such as Global Change covering the Fundamental human rights to food, shelter, water, clean air, health, education; and Global human inequalities; and How citizenship protects fundamental human rights.

Civics and Citizenship: The *Civics and Citizenship* unit in Year 10 included important topics on the United Nations and Australia as a Global Citizen where various human rights issues were addressed. The Community Engagement topic included a study of rights 'where students look at United Nations and the United Nations agreements and Australia as a global citizen, so that brings in the consideration of ethical global issues that are very much human rights related' (Victoria RT). Although the major focus of *Civics and Citizenship* was on civic rights, it was still seen as a vital unit for all students. One roundtable participant said that 'one of the key areas would be in the Civics and Citizenship type subject. I think that basically should be compulsory for

all students...I think it's so important for young people to learn about their rights and the responsibilities within our society' (ACT RT).

Table 5. Secondary Years 9 and 10 Explicit topics

Subject	Year / Unit	HR Topic / Issue	State/ Territory
History- Aboriginal & Indigenous History – Civics & Citizenship (C&C)	Year 10	Struggle For Rights & Freedom - Terra nullius, Land rights, Native title	NSW
	Year 10	Changing rights & freedom of groups, Active & informed citizens. Crime punishment, slaves, women (E).	
	Year 10	Struggle for rights & freedom of marginalised groups.	
	Year 10	Gender discrimination, Rights & freedom of women in 20 th century Australia.	
History- Difference & diversity History- Gender History – Civics & Citizenship (C&C)	Year 9	Cultures of people-rights & responsibilities.	NSW
History	Year 10	Rights & freedom- UN HR declaration, & Australia's role, civil rights. Aboriginal rights, US civil rights movement. Movement of people: Slavery, Progressive ideas: democratic rights, UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous People. Globalised world: Migration: refugees.	Victoria, SA ACT, WA, NT
	Year 9	Australia & Asia: Making a nation: women's rights. Making a better world: movement of people (E).	
Geography	Year 10 (E) Elective	Australia and its Regional & Global Contexts: Human rights & reconciliation Oceanography: Indigenous rights. Development Geography: Patterns of global inequality, political & human rights, refugees, role and status of women. Political Geography: social justice, humanitarian aid.	NSW
	Year 9	Life Skills course: Global Change: Fundamental human rights to: food, shelter, water, clean air, health, education, Global human inequalities, How citizenship protects fundamental human rights. Global Change: Globalisation, Global inequalities, Global organisations. Global Geographical Issues: human rights, Indigenous people and self determination.	Victoria
	Years 9 & 10	Development Geography: development issues & formulation and evaluation of policies.	
Civics & Citizenship - Community Engagement	Year 10	United Nations agreements, Australia as a global citizen.	Victoria, NSW, SA, Tasmania ACT, WA

We need to mention two further Subjects or units of study: *Aboriginal Studies*; and the *Personal Learning Plan*.

Aboriginal Studies: In Years 7 to 10 in NSW the Aboriginal Studies Syllabus had an elective that focused on students gaining knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal people and includes among the Course Options a topic - Aboriginal Interaction with Legal and Political Systems - where students learn about key Australian institutions impacting on the rights and freedoms of Aboriginal people.

Personal Learning Plans (PLP): There was also one standalone unit in both the South Australian and Northern Territory Curriculum - *Personal Learning Plans (PLP)* - that was compulsory for all students and was normally studied in Year 10. The syllabus contained one topic – Work skills – with a specific focus on the rights and obligations of workers (SA & NT RT).

Implicit

Roundtable participants and curriculum specialists helped by making suggestions about the existence of *implicit* opportunities available in following Subjects – *English; Science; Economics*.

English: The *English Years 7-10* curriculum did provide a range of *implicit* opportunities to link the study of texts that could be potentially related to human rights issues. In the NSW and Victorian English Syllabus there were *implicit* opportunities to address rights issues through the choice among the Suggested texts in NSW and VELS Syllabus in Victoria (NSW, Victoria RT). The newly developed English K-10 curriculum did include texts that related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, intercultural and migrant experiences, insights into peoples and countries of Asia that could be potentially be related to rights issues (Board of Studies NSW, Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority).

Science: The *Science Years 7- 10 Syllabus* in NSW included 3 areas among its Prescribed Focus Areas – *Applications and uses of science; Implications for society and the environment; and Current issues, research and development* - where there was potential to study human rights issues (NSW). One roundtable participant felt the new Australian Curriculum ‘provides a positive opportunity for the integration of issues relating to human rights...science as a human endeavour and the relationship between science and society ... provide openings’ (ACT RT).

Economics: The *Economics* course in Year 9 and 10 in Victoria addressed Consumerism and ethical consumption and this was considered to be a big rights issue (Victoria RT).

Table 6. Secondary Years 7 - 10 Implicit topics

Subject	Year / Unit	HR Topic/Issue	State/ Territory
English	Years 10	Aboriginal and multicultural experiences in Australia Aboriginal Australians in texts	NSW
	Year 9		ACT
Science	Years 9 & 10	Applications and uses of science, Implications for society and the environment, Current issues, research and development Science as human endeavour, Science & society	NSW
			ACT
Economics	Levels 9 & 10	Consumerism – ethical consumerism and the ways values can affect the economic decision making of consumers, producers and governments	Victoria

Primary (Years F/K to 6)

A feature of the debate about the place of human rights education in the school curriculum has been the call to include teaching about human rights from the early school years – i.e. from Foundation/ Kindergarten through to Year 6 (AHRC 2011; 2010).

A number of participants at the roundtable discussions said that human rights education needed to start in the early school years, as they saw it as a ‘life long process’ (Victoria, Tasmania RT). Roundtable discussions also suggested that during Years K to 4 rights issues were not explicitly named or addressed in any subject areas across this stage, and there were more *implicit* opportunities in Subjects in Years 5 to 6.

A number of participants also highlighted the need for students to be introduced specifically to the issue of *child rights*, during these years and for child rights to feature as the main human rights issue that students learnt about during their Primary school years.

There were a number of Subjects that *implicitly* addressed human rights issues in the Primary school years. As a Learning Area – *Human Society and Its Environment* – was identified as the main one to focus on. Within this area the Subjects considered relevant were: *History; Geography; Civics and Citizenship*; and *PDHPE*:

- *History:* Aboriginal culture & histories from Year 3 to 6 (NSW, ACT); Year 5 Colonial history – Eureka Stockade (Victoria).

- *Geography*: the Social Systems and Structures area – in Stage 2 investigate rights, responsibilities in school & community - and Stage 3 includes rights and responsibilities within social systems and structures (NSW).
- *Civics and Citizenship* (Years 3 to 6).
- *Physical Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE)* K- 6: respecting diversity (Victoria), human sexuality, and values (NSW).

As mentioned above, a feature of the new Australian curriculum was that the *English* (F/K- 6) years curriculum also provided *implicit* opportunities, as a result of the General Capability statements and the recommended texts to support the teaching. The study of particular texts could involve a focus on a specific human rights issue, but these opportunities were never *explicitly* stated as human rights issues in any of the curriculum, syllabus or support documents.

4.5 Catholic and Independent schools

Catholic schools - Social Justice and Social Responsibility

A feature of the Catholic Education system was its focus on aspects of Social Justice and Social Responsibility. Roundtable participants highlighted the fact that the ways in which each state and diocese across each state and territory applied these principles varied considerably and it was difficult to generalise. Therefore we have only been able to highlight a few examples that we were made aware during this study.

In NSW in 2002 the Catholic Education Commission issued a *Social Responsibility* document – one for Years K- 6 and another for Years 7 to 12 - that was described as a resource to assist schools to promote a sense of social responsibility. In Years K-6 among the four main themes set out was one focussing specifically on *Rights and Responsibilities* and it suggested these issues could be explored in English, Human Society and its Environment (HSIE), and Personal Development, Health Physical Education (PDHPE) subjects.

In Years 7 to 10 *Rights and Responsibilities* also applied to English, Geography, History, Commerce, Studies in Society, Community and Family Studies and PDHPE subjects. In Years 11 and 12 they were suggested as relevant to English, Legal Studies, Society and Culture, and PDHPE.

Significantly, neither document specified particular human rights issues that could or should be addressed. This meant that it remained up to individual teachers and schools to see how and what they addressed social responsibility or social justice rights issues.

Social Justice – Community projects

Women's refuge - In the ACT one participant suggested that 'social justice was very well developed in Catholic high schools'. One example of the kind of Community Projects that students had taken part in over a number of years was visiting a women's refuge for young women. The practical involvement helped raise a range of issues and made a real impact 'Like, they don't just take the money there. They actually work there and see how it operates. It's quite powerful' (ACT RT).

Restorative justice

A further example was the way one Catholic primary school in the ACT had involved its students in a restorative justice project. The project had served as a 'really powerful tool for talking to students about human rights' (ACT RT).

Catholic Social Justice agencies

Another important feature of Catholic schools was their ability to engage in social justice activities through a number of Catholic organisations in each state, linking students to the work of Catholic agencies such as Caritas and the St Vincent de Paul Society (WA RT).

Studies of Religion

A feature of most non-government schools (both Catholic and Independent) was that they required students to study religion, as a result a subject like *Studies of Religion* was seen as important. It provided 'a number of opportunities where human rights could be embedded in some of the key topics, such as, religion, state relations, ethics and spirit learning' (QLD RT).

4.6 Impact of human rights legislation

An important development at both a state and territory level has been the passing of the ACT *Bill of Rights* (2004), and the Victoria's *Charter of Human Rights* (2007). Importantly both pieces of legislation have outlined a set of human rights that now have statutory protection in their state or territory. Unfortunately to date there appears to have been little impact of the legislation on their respective school sectors or on student learning, with most of the rights education efforts taking place across the public sector or the wider community.

ACT Bill of Rights (2004)

The importance of the ACT *Bill of Rights* (2004) was noted by ACT roundtable participants and they felt that passing the legislation had helped to raise the profile of human rights in schools. However no specific ACT curriculum initiatives were mentioned. Instead it was suggested that students needed to have human rights issues integrated formally into the school curriculum, together with informal opportunities for students to engage with human rights issues while they attended school (ACT RT).

Victorian Charter of Human Rights (2007)

There was strong state government support for the role of education about the *Charter of Human Rights* during the period 2008 to 2011 (Victoria RT). However few resources have been devoted to educating teachers and students about the rights covered by the Charter and bringing about changes to the Victorian school curriculum: "After the Victorian Charter was passed there was significant activity within government, including training of public servants, training school leavers, ensuring that the Victorian Charter was taken account of in school policy documents and the like." (VEOC Interview).

One roundtable participant and a representative from the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority suggested there were a few places in Victoria's Australian Curriculum syllabus documents that are located under the *Victorian Essential Learning Standards (AusVELS) F to 10 Curriculum*. The documents had specific references to the rights set out under the Charter. As part of its Teacher Support documents, the *Human Rights in the Victorian Essential Learning Standards* section refers to the Victorian Charter, a set of key human rights to address and provides examples of elements across a few selected subjects across school Levels 1 to 6. Significantly, rights feature most specifically at the higher levels, in Levels 4, 5 and 6, and across the *Civics and Citizenship* units.

4.7 Other learning opportunities

Although the main focus of this study is on the opportunities available in the School Curriculum, participants at the roundtable discussions also highlighted a range of other important learning opportunities that were occurring in schools. These opportunities were not specifically mentioned in any curriculum or syllabus documents, but arose out individual school, teacher or student interest and often involved school involvement with their local community and various community based organisations. This part of the analysis has been assisted greatly by the presence of representatives from a range of NGOs at the roundtable discussions. Their input, together with a search of their websites has helped outline some of these opportunities. We have classified the activities noted into the following categories:

- Community-school initiatives;
- Special events and festivals;
- School excursions and camps.

Community-school initiatives - projects, programs, campaigns

A number of government human rights agencies such as the AHRC and NGOs play an important role in schools, helping to raise awareness of rights issues and assisting students and teachers to take action on specific human rights issues.

The work of a number of prominent NGOs is important because they do provide opportunities to address a range of rights issues. Here we have categorised the main activities of the NGOs we have become aware of as being:

- Broadly based rights
- Civil, political, humanitarian rights and/or Refugee rights
- Children's rights
- Economic rights
- Humanitarian rights
- Indigenous rights.

Within these categories the human rights issues that have the highest profile in schools relate to - Indigenous rights, asylum seekers and refugees, famine, poverty, the rights of children, and prisoners of conscience and torture. In most cases these issues are addressed through NGOs being invited into a school for a class presentation or workshop to talk about their projects or campaigns, or raise awareness about specific rights issues. In a number of cases longer term projects or schools groups have been established, involving students and staff over a longer period. Among the most active and involved NGOs working with schools in various states and territories are:

Broadly based rights

- UN Youth Australia

Civil, Political, Humanitarian rights and/or Refugee rights

- Amnesty International Australia
- Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (Melbourne)

Children's rights

- Save the Children Australia

Economic rights

- Global Education Project (AUS AID)
- World Vision
- Oxfam Australia
- Caritas

Humanitarian rights

- Red Cross Australia
- CARE Australia
- Engineers Without Borders (Victoria, ACT)

Indigenous rights

- Reconciliation Australia
- ANTaR
- Fred Hollows Foundation.

Information gained from roundtable discussions and website searches has helped in outlining below some of the human rights activities being carried out by these NGOs that are specifically relevant to schools, teachers and students.

Broadly based rights

UN Youth Australia

UN Youth Australia is a national youth led charity focusing on students aged 15 to 19 years. The program aims to educate Years 10-12 students about the UN and international relations, inspire them to take action on rights issues about which they are passionate and equip them with the skills they need to take effective actions. They organise the Australian Youth Forum, nominate each year an Australian Youth Representative to attend the UN General Assembly, hold a National Youth Conference and the Evatt Competition (a national Model UN debating competition for students in Years 9 to 12 which runs in all states and territories).

Civil, Political, Humanitarian rights and/or Refugees

Amnesty International Australia

Amnesty International began in the UK in the 1960s focusing on the plight of prisoners of conscience around the world. Among its current campaigns in Australia are those on refugees' human rights, Indigenous People's rights, Individuals at risk of detention and torture, violence against women, ending the death penalty, and ending the Arms Trade. With offices in most states, mostly run by volunteers, part of its work focuses on involving young people and working with schools. For example in NSW it visits almost 25 high schools each year giving talks or presentations on specific human rights issues. Almost 60 high schools have

an ongoing Amnesty group in the school, linked to Amnesty's NSW Schools Network and 80 students from 7 high schools attend Amnesty's annual schools conference (NSW RT).

In Victoria Amnesty's Schools Network operates mainly in Independent and Catholic schools involving few government schools. Although a recent ban on Amnesty by Catholic schools in Victoria over Amnesty's stand on abortion rights has limited its work with Catholic school students in Victoria (Victoria RT). Amnesty offices in smaller states like South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia are less able to work directly with schools, due to a smaller level of staffing and volunteer pool (Amnesty International).

Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (Melbourne)

The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC) in Melbourne focuses on the rights issues of asylum seekers and refugees and responds to requests from a school or a teacher to visit their school and give a presentation about the issues associated with asylum seekers. Most requests come from independent secondary schools. The presentations generally last from one to one and half hours and while most of the students are in secondary school, there have also been visits to primary schools – classes upwards from Year 3. Generally the ASRC receives requests from Civics & Citizenship and History classes, as well as some English classes that are studying texts such as *The Rugmaker of Mazar-e-sharif* in Year 11 or 12 (Victoria RT).

Children's rights

Save the Children Australia

Save the Children Australia is a 'leading independent emergency relief and development organisation for children' that also works internationally in over 120 countries. A major part of its work is on children's rights. Led by its Victorian office Save the Children has been working to ensure school students learn about children's rights and human rights from their early school years, by trying to embed a study of child rights issues into all school learning. The main Save the Children office in Melbourne office does not have a person dedicated to working with schools, although staff in both NSW and South Australia do have a role in working directly with schools (Save the Children).

The South Australian office of Save the Children has led a number of school initiatives, such as the *Speaking Out* program exploring child rights, child labour, and child soldiers; the *Global Peace* program for secondary schools, taking a whole-schools approach to peace. Their most recent program is a children's rights education resource *Finding My Magic*, released in 2011 that targeted K-6 primary school children. In South Australia Save the Children distributed almost 1,000 copies of the DVD and print resource to SA schools during Children's Week (SA RT).

Economic rights

Global Education project (AusAID)

The Global Education project (GE) is funded by the Australian Government's AusAID and works with the support of Education Services Australia. Centres in the major states work to address a range of global development issues such as food security, water security, and the rights for women. Their materials and programs do help address human rights issues in *History* and *Geography* subjects (SA RT). The project provides school teachers with a range of resources to address global issues and the emerging field of global education across the school curriculum. Most of its activities are focused on teacher professional development and providing teaching resources.

The Global Education Centre in South Australia focuses on assisting teachers to address development issues, by developing teaching resources, organising seminars and teacher professional learning sessions, generally for one hour after school, whole days at school or through annual teacher association conferences, SOCE, English and History (SA RT). According to the Centre about 2,000 South Australian teachers take part in their sessions each year. Human rights and social justice are covered as one of five main areas addressed by GE centres. Among a number of school case studies, one that focused on human rights was a Year 5/6 class at Beachlands Primary School in Western Australia (Global Education).

World Vision

World Vision is a Christian voluntary organisation working to improve 'the lives of disadvantaged and at-risk children and communities' through Child Sponsorships, the *40 Hour Famine*, other campaigns and advocacy and its *Global Leadership Convention*. Students and young people are encouraged from an early age to make a commitment to financially sponsor a child in a developing country to help meet their basic needs.

The *40 Hour Famine* organised each year by World Vision in each Australian state and territory was mentioned as an exemplar for involving school students in actively learning about a human rights issue such as hunger (ACT p12). In NSW more than 550 schools, mostly high schools, are involved each year in the *40 Hour Famine*. The *Global Leadership Convention* involves students in Years 10 to 12 in an annual event held in 6 states and territories focussing on specific issues like child labour in India and developing and inspiring students to work for justice in the world. World Vision also involves young people aged 15 to 25 years through its *VGen* youth movement that works actively against social injustice and poverty. A few *VGen* groups have been set up in NSW schools. Young people and students have also taken up ongoing rights issues through recent World Vision campaigns such as *Don't Trade Lives* - a campaign against human trafficking and slavery or *Child Health Now* - a campaign to reduce child and maternal mortality (World Vision).

Oxfam Australia

Oxfam Australia has been working to fight poverty and injustice through campaigns and responding to emergencies in third world/developing countries around the world for more than 50 years. Based in Melbourne, it has offices in NSW, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia. Among its current campaigns are those focussed on addressing poverty (Make Poverty History), addressing famine and hunger, growing food sustainably, climate change, fair trade (GROW, Climate Change, Make Trade Fair), Indigenous health (Closing the Gap). The *3 things Oxfam youth movement* 'offers opportunities for secondary students to think and behave as ethical global citizens', engaging young people to ask questions, support actions, and spread the word among their peers. It also organises the annual *Walk Against Want* that attracts many high schools and school students, and Oxfam's *International Youth Partnerships*. Oxfam also provides a number of education resources for teachers to involve students in Oxfam projects (Oxfam).

Caritas Australia

Caritas Australia is the Catholic Church's international aid and development organisation that works in over 30 developing countries. Grounded in the Catholic Social Justice Teaching tradition it supports long term development programs in impoverished communities in Africa, Asia, East Timor, the Pacific, Latin America and Australian Indigenous communities. Among Caritas' school resources are curriculum and topic specific resources for primary and secondary schools, including for its annual fund raising and community engagement project - *Project Compassion* (Caritas).

Humanitarian rights

Red Cross Australia

Red Cross Australia, which celebrates its centenary in Australia in 2014, and says it is the largest humanitarian organisation in the world. Red Cross works as an impartial, neutral and independent charity helping out in natural disasters, crises and emergencies, acting to uphold the Geneva Conventions or 'rules of war', collects blood through its Blood Service, and trains and provides first aid. The only program aimed at young people is the Red Cross Young Humanitarian group where young people can join on Facebook and participate through donations, volunteering, or getting involved in their national youth leadership networks (Red Cross).

CARE Australia

CARE Australia is an Australian non-denominational charity, part of a network of 12 national CARE organisations providing humanitarian aid, emergency relief, development assistance and fighting poverty. Among its long term projects are helping families produce food, improve health of communities especially mothers and children, clean water, sanitation and environmental health. A special focus is on women's empowerment – educating women and helping women out of poverty. One of its fundraisers is the *Walk in Her Shoes* Challenge (CARE Australia). It provides CARE speakers for talks in schools focussing on aspects of global poverty and CARE Australia's *Global Poverty: Teacher's Toolkit* is a resource to help teach students about poverty, through case studies and planned lesson activities (Care Australia).

Engineers Without Borders Australia

Engineers Without Borders Australia (EWB) is a not-for profit organisation focussed on involving young people in practical hands on actions bringing about change through 'humanitarian' engineering. Based in Melbourne Engineers Without Borders operates a *High Schools Outreach Program* where its members, mostly in major capital cities, lead a science education program for secondary school students. The focus is on addressing real humanitarian engineering issues in developing country communities, such as the need for 'clean water, sanitation and hygiene, energy, basic infrastructure, waste systems'. They apply engineering knowledge and work on projects with other NGOs in South Asia, South East Asia and Australian Aboriginal

communities. In 2011, EWB volunteers delivered 80 workshops at 35 schools and engaged with over 2,100 students and in 2012 its schools program won 'Science Engagement Initiative of the Year' in the 2012 Western Australian Science Awards.

One example mentioned in the ACT roundtable was the organisation of workshops involving students tackling a real life engineering project for a developing country. In this case the project had students investigate and come up with a way of making water filters for a village. According to one roundtable participant the students were looking at how they could apply the local technologies and the local knowledge to build up something that was sustainable. He felt this approach worked because for students “that’s where you could make connections between technology and science content, and understand science as a human endeavour, and [go] back to human rights” (ACT RT).

Indigenous Rights

Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia is a national organisation promoting reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the Australian community. RA organises Reconciliation events across Australia, Closing the Gap Conversations, celebrations during National Reconciliation Week, and a schools Reconciliation Action Plan program. In NSW it also stages a *Schools Reconciliation Challenge* that showcases a school’s commitment to reconciliation, focusing on children aged 10 to 16 years. A major recent campaign is their *You Me Unity* campaign, which is working to support the recognition of Indigenous Australians in the Constitution.

ANTaR ((Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation)

ANTaR is a national advocacy community based organisation dedicated to working to achieve justice, rights and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. One of the activities organised by ANTaR that has involved school students is the *Sea of Hands* and has produced a schools kit to help students create their own *Sea of Hands* installation. More recently ANTaR has been organising Constitutional Recognition presentations as part of a national effort to have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples recognised in the Australian Constitution.

Fred Hollows Foundation- Diplomacy training Program (NSW/NT)

The Fred Hollows Foundation works to end avoidable blindness, restore sight in Aboriginal communities in Australia, and developing countries in Africa, South Asia, South East Asia and the Pacific. Young people are able to get involved in various fundraising activities and volunteering. The Foundation celebrates the UN’s *International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples* and as part of its work to empower Indigenous advocates organises a Diplomacy Training Program in remote parts of NSW and the Northern Territory to advocate for the rights of their people in health, education and social justice issues (Fred Hollows Foundation, Darwin RT).

Special events and festivals

Another important way school students are able to learn about a range of social issues is through class involvement in local or national community based special events or festivals. Schools are able to choose from a number of special events and festivals that take place over the school year and focus on particular rights and social justice issues. We have listed a number of the most prominent events that do involve schools.

Human Rights Day (December 10)

Human Rights Day is the day that marks the adoption in December 1948 when the United Nations adopted the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. In Australia the AHRC encourages the commemoration and celebration of the day. AHRC has also produced a set of resources aimed at Year 9 and above classes in subjects such as Civics and Citizenship, Society and Environment, Design and Technology, English, Legal Studies, and International Studies (AHRC).

National Reconciliation Week (27 May to 3 June)

National Reconciliation Week is an annual week of celebrations to recognise the place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within Australia and marks two important events in Australia’s Indigenous history – the 1967 Referendum and the 1992 *Mabo* decision in the High Court. Celebrations are organised in schools and across the Australian community.

NAIDOC Week (7- 14 July)

NAIDOC Week is a national event in July that celebrates the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Islander peoples. Schools celebrate aspects of Aboriginal history and culture and cover the history of reconciliation (ACT RT).

Refugee Week (16 to 22 June)

The Refugee Council of Australia organises *Refugee Week* events and celebrations nationally for a week in mid June as a way of raising public awareness about refugees and celebrating their positive contributions to Australian Society. The week always includes World Refugee Day (June 20) and a *Refugee Week Resource Kit* is produced to help organisers including teachers to prepare for the week.

Harmony Day (March 21)

Harmony Day is part of an Australian Government funded initiative to promote community harmony and address racism and involves schools across the country as a day to celebrate cultural diversity. The day coincides with the UN's *International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination*.

Fairer World Festival (Hobart)

An example of an annual festival that involves school aged children is the *Fairer World Festival* in Hobart that specifically involves children aged 9 to 11 years (NSW RT).

School excursions or camps

An important and continuing form of other learning opportunities outside the classroom is school excursions or school camps. A few examples have been listed below.

Parliament House Canberra visits

One of the excursions that involve many primary school students in NSW and Victoria during their upper primary years is visiting Parliament House in Canberra and the Democracy Museum in Old Parliament House as part of their learning about civic and political rights.

Melbourne school visits

In Victoria schools, especially those outside Melbourne, arrange school excursions that last a week in Melbourne, enabling students to visit places like the Immigration Museum, the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, and Courage to Care (an exhibition on Holocaust Awareness and bystanders coordinated by the Jewish community). Also as the Eureka Stockade rebellion of 1854 is an important part of Victoria's colonial history and Australia's struggle for democracy, many schools also organise an excursion to Ballarat to visit the *Eureka Centre's* Museum of Australian Democracy at Eureka and learn about the struggle for rights in the 19th Century (Victoria RT).

The Big Issue visits

School students in Melbourne and Sydney are able to learn about issues related to homelessness through a schools program run by *The Big Issue*, which involves homeless people talking about their experiences of homelessness with school children (NSW & Victoria RT).

4.8 Conclusion

Analysing the curriculum opportunities for the teaching of human rights across Australian state and territories remains a complex and multi-dimensional task that has not been attempted in any previous study, prior to this one. Given the difficulties of engaging with all curriculum authorities, syllabus and curriculum documents across each school sector, and taking into account the changing landscape of the Australian Curriculum process, a number of insights can be drawn from our analysis.

Before setting out any learning opportunities it is important to consider which human rights students are expected to learn about across their school learning stages. Among the key curriculum dimensions to consider are across each of three key stages of learning whether: human rights topics are explicit or implicit, compulsory or optional elective, sector specific initiatives and the range of other curricular learning opportunities. The main findings are:

- the Senior Years 11-12 provide the most *explicit* and *implicit* learning opportunities to study topics that are clearly related to human rights issues.

- only a small number and proportion of students are likely to study human rights issues to any significant extent across their school years
- study of human rights issues takes place without any clear overall definition of rights, and mostly without any overarching context or link back to UN declarations, treaties, conventions or recent Australian rights legislation.

Senior Years

- the main *explicit* opportunities found in this study are in *History, Geography, Legal Studies* subjects and the *Civics and Citizenship* unit.
- a number of subjects with small enrolments, and not widely available, also provide explicit opportunities. The subjects are in a few learning areas – Politics; Society and Culture; Aboriginal Studies; Women’s Studies; and Religious Studies.
- *implicit* opportunities were found in *English; Science; Economics & Business*.
- only a few Subjects – *History, Australian & Global Politics, Australian & International Politics, Aboriginal Studies* - specifically mention any UN human rights declarations, treaties or conventions or Australian legislation.

Secondary Years

- across the Secondary Years 7 to 10, it was mainly Years 9 and 10 that offered the main explicit opportunities – in *History, Geography, Aboriginal Studies* and *Civics and Citizenship* units.
- the main *implicit* opportunities across Years 7 to 10 were in *English, Science, and Economics* subjects.

Primary Years

- human rights did not appear to be *explicitly* mentioned across the Primary school years. Implicit opportunities were found mostly in the *Human Society and its Environment* (HSIE or its equivalent) Learning Area.
- the main relevant subjects included *History; Geography, English, Physical Development Health & Physical Education* (PDHPE); and *Civics and Citizenship* units.

Impact of state and territory human rights legislation

Despite the ACT in 2004 and Victoria in 2007 enacting important state based human rights legislation, these legislative steps have generally had little impact on their schools – although Victoria has provided some links to a number of syllabus documents and a set of teacher support documents.

Other learning opportunities

Valuable, interesting and wide-ranging human rights education work is being undertaken in schools by a number of government agencies and key NGOs.

- the types of activities they provide include community-school initiatives (projects, programs and campaigns); special events and festivals; and school excursions and camps.
- the human rights issues addressed by key NGOs can be categorised as being broadly rights-based; addressing civil and political rights; children’s rights; economic rights; humanitarian and Indigenous rights.

Whilst it is recognised that individual NGOs are undertaking valuable work in promoting human rights in schools, this tends to happen on an ad hoc basis, and it is difficult for sustained relationships to be developed between NGOs and schools.

Importantly, while all together these findings show a set of fragmented and somewhat limited opportunities that are concentrated in the last few years of schooling and studied by a only a relatively small number of students overall, what is already in place does provide a basis for building up a more detailed and comprehensive approach to human rights education in the Australian school curriculum.

Any initiatives will need to be led by a number of key staff with a knowledge of the curriculum development process, have an understanding of the complexity of Australian school sector and be aware of the valuable role of government agencies and NGOs in providing a range of key other learning opportunities to schools.

5. Gaps in the current curriculum

This chapter sets out to describe the main gaps identified by the research in the curriculum offerings throughout Australia in terms of references to and coverage of human rights issues. In citing these gaps or omissions it also highlights the opportunities that exist for future action on human rights education.

In facilitating the roundtable discussions the researchers asked participants: 'What subjects provide the opportunities for education about human rights in Senior Years / 7-10 / Upper Primary 5-6?'; 'Are there any major gaps in curriculum?'; and 'Are there key subject areas or key topics that need to be included?'. Their responses have been summarized below under different categories that point to the need for a much more focused approach to human rights education in several areas, not just in terms of curriculum opportunities, but also in terms of legislative frameworks, support for the advocacy of human rights education in schools, as well as professional development support for teachers in gaining the skills to facilitate student learning about human rights.

5.1 Curriculum opportunities

Defining rights and the rights students learn about

A major gap in the literature, statements by key agencies, roundtable discussions and curriculum documents is the lack of any clear articulation of what educators *specifically mean* by 'human rights' and *which rights* are considered to be those that students need to learn about across their school years. Drawing on UN declarations and conventions and the existing Australian legislative framework (the specific human rights identified in AHRC responsibilities, *ACT Bill of Rights*, *Victorian Charter of Human Rights*) suggests some of the key rights issues that should feature prominently include: civil and political rights; economic, social and cultural rights; humanitarian rights, and various group rights (workers, women, children, minority groups, refugees, Indigenous people and people with a disability).

Fragmented and limited opportunities

The fragmented nature of the curriculum opportunities identified in this study highlight a major deficiency in efforts to ensure school students learn about human rights across their school years. They suggest:

- *Explicit* and mandatory opportunities exist in only a few subjects and the opportunities are mostly in the Senior Years 11 and 12, to a lesser extent in Secondary Years 9 -10, with fewer opportunities across Secondary Years 7- 8.
- Relatively few human rights issues are *explicitly* taught across a small range of subjects and apart from Senior Years *Legal Studies*, *History* and small enrolment subjects in *Politics*, *Society and Culture*, and *Aboriginal Studies*, *Women's Studies* and *Religion*, the topics studied are often one-offs or single issues that are not linked back to a broader understanding of human rights.
- Relatively small numbers of students in a few subjects are provided with *explicit* opportunities to study human rights issues/topics.
- *Implicit* and optional opportunities are evident in a key subject such as *English*, but any take-up is reliant on the recommendations of teachers and student selection of texts that are or can be related to specific human rights issues.
- *Implicit* opportunities are more evident in Primary schools years across *HSIE* learning area subjects, mainly in Years 3-6.

Lack of a focused support for human rights education

There is a lack of focused support for teaching about human rights in schools. There is not a single educator employed at a national, state or territory level, across any school system with an explicit role to argue for, articulate, or support the teaching of human rights issues or having these issues included across the Curriculum and taken up by teachers and students.

Controversial and contested human rights issues

Roundtable discussions highlighted a number of controversial human rights issues, especially those related to sexual orientation and women's rights (to an abortion). These issues were not being addressed in some school sectors and school, especially in some Catholic and Independent schools, who were actively stopping discussion of these issues in their schools and not granting access to particular NGOs like Amnesty.

One participant suggested that teachers get very nervous and find it difficult to deal with contentious issues, such as some human rights issues, and 'unless they are embedded in the curriculum they will not be taught' (Melbourne RT).

Implementation gap - curriculum and teaching

One important finding of this research is that there is a disparity between what is explicitly defined as human rights based course content and what actually exists within curriculum documents. Educators from all organisations at the roundtable conferences would often mention possibilities in the curriculum for the implementation of teaching and learning strategies centring on human rights, however there is a disparity between these observational comments and the reality of existing subject content.

When the research team conducted its document analysis and attempted to delineate specifically where in the syllabus or support documentation content directed teachers to focus on human rights in various syllabus documents, it was often found that such content did not exist. One possible explanation for this disparity is that the members of the roundtable discussions are experts interested in the field of human rights and human rights education. They have as such accumulated knowledge and expertise of how human rights could be linked to already existing content in the curriculum, despite the fact that it is not specifically cited in such documents.

Measuring outcomes and effectiveness

Participants at a number of roundtables (NSW and Victoria RT) expressed concern about the need for measurement of student learning outcomes of any teaching about human rights. A model of how it could be done was mentioned in the Victorian Roundtable by a community representative, who said the *Civics and Citizenship* unit was a good example of where a measurement tool had been developed to assess what students had learnt, and results were now being regularly reported on.

Legislative gap - lack of an Australian Bill of Rights

A legislative gap was noted. Apart from the ACT and Victorian legislation, the lack of an Australian Bill of Rights meant that there was little effective legislative support or focus for the teaching of human rights in schools. It was suggested that until a national legislative step was taken, educational efforts across Australia would remain marginal.

Although the impact of the legislation such as the *ACT Bill of Rights* and the *Victorian Charter* provides a mixed picture and suggests that legislation on its own will not ensure that students will learn more about human rights issues at school. Having human rights legislation in place helped provide a more supportive framework for student learning about human rights, but it still required additional linking action across all school sectors, on the curriculum and on teaching practice before educational opportunities were implemented through specific learning activities.

5.2 Other learning opportunities

Acknowledgement, linking to curricula and improving access for NGOs

Given the valuable, interesting, and wide ranging human rights education work being undertaken by a number of key NGOs, a major gap was acknowledging this work, informing schools more widely about the range of organisations and their work, and assisting schools to access NGOs programs and educational resources.

Limitations of NGOs

At the same time it was important for educators to understand the limitations on NGO school programs and their involvement with teachers and school students. Limited funding and limited staffing impacted on the ability of NGOs to be involved with schools. Many of the other NGOs, while seeking to involve students and young people in their campaigns, projects or events, were unable to deploy staff whose role was to focus on involving schools.

For example *Amnesty International* employed a schools coordinator in their Sydney office who oversaw school activities across Australia, but not all Amnesty state and territory offices were able to offer schools programs. And *Save the Children* had a staff member in only two states (NSW and South Australia) that were able to include a focus on involvement with schools, despite the organisation having as one of its main objectives a focus on education and involvement around child rights.

Also, while NGOs were doing valuable work producing various educational resources that could be used by schools and young people, and they were making the resources available through their websites, in most cases their links into and across the school system were patchy. In many cases once an educational resource was produced and made available electronically, there was little or no support available to promote and support its educational use.

5.3 Teacher education and professional development

Teacher education programs – new teachers

Concern was expressed about the gaps in teacher education programs and how new teachers were not being taught the skills to teach about human rights topics.

Teacher professional development

As teacher professional development was identified as a key factor - there were gaps in teacher professional development programs. Few programs were available or had been offered to enable and support teachers to implement the various curriculum opportunities that were already in place.

Role of teacher associations

Teacher associations were best placed to play a central role in addressing the gaps in learning about human rights, especially those related to particular subject opportunities and the use of any new educational resources. Although the ability of each teacher association to take up that role varied considerably among the states and territories.

While all states and territories were experiencing significant education funding pressures, many Victorian teacher associations were better placed to take up a staff development role. Historically they had the largest and best funded teacher associations across Australia. Because a number of key associations were funded centrally, able to maintain an office and employ a number of paid administrative staff, they were able to organise regular teacher education workshops and annual conferences - all vital parts of an effective professional teacher development program. Associations in smaller states and territories often relied on volunteers, maintained no central office, and struggled to maintain any consistent professional development activities, especially associations apart from the largest teaching areas like English, History or Geography.

Even so, across teacher associations in all states and territories remained central to any efforts to overcome the gaps in teacher knowledge and expertise about human rights issues, and a great deal of support could be provided to teachers through teacher association led workshops, annual conferences, and the application of various communication technologies.

Librarians

School librarians were mentioned as another valuable resource in helping teachers overcome the gaps in knowledge of recent and relevant educational resources related to teaching about human rights issues. Librarians remained key personnel and they could play a key role in alerting teachers to newly available and relevant resources (NSW RT).

5.4 Conclusion

There is comprehensive evidence from this research project that if governments at all levels of the Australian political structure are serious about implementing the findings of the *National Consultation on Human Rights* and the subsequent *Australian Human Rights Framework*, a concentrated effort must be made to work with educational bodies such as ACARA, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), teacher associations and state and territory educational authorities to give a much greater profile to human rights education within each school system and across the school education sector.

This means that content emphasizing human rights needs to be explicitly embedded within a much wider variety of curriculum subjects. Further, direct connections need to be made between curriculum content

and the support documents that need to contain case studies of good practice to assist teachers to engage with the teaching of a more comprehensive range of human rights issues , including those rights that might cause debates and contestation in some parts of the community.

Governments must also commit to provide adequate support for professional development for both pre-service teachers and teachers in the classroom to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills to facilitate the teaching of human rights in all contexts.

6. Technologies and resources

6.1 Communication technologies

There are a number of communication technologies, social media, school networks involving local, regional, remote and international connections that can be applied to support teaching and learning about human rights topics and issues.

Communication technologies were seen as important in overcoming the challenges of distance and remoteness, especially in Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Tasmania. The importance of applying communication technologies effectively in supporting human rights education was highlighted, as part of a wider educational effort by schools and educational authorities.

Communication technologies, school networks and social media were seen as highly effective mechanisms to educate people about human rights issues, particularly as these technologies lend themselves to the interactive and experiential approaches that have been identified as highly effective pedagogical approaches to human rights education. Increasingly schools across Australia are using a range of communication technologies to connect students and support their learning. This can involve connecting locally as part of a schools network to other regional and remote schools or making international contacts.

Applications

A number of communication technologies were identified as able to support a range of human rights learning opportunities. Among the main internet communication applications being used in schools were email, video and audio conferencing through applications such as Skype or desk top conferencing, social networking applications such as Facebook and Twitter, and shared digital spaces such as wiki spaces or Dropbox.

Specific examples of the use of communication technologies include a Catholic school in Sydney (Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College), which set up a wiki space for communication with sister schools in Korea, enabling students to work together on a study of the dispossession of Indigenous peoples in Australia and the Korean experience of Japanese occupation (NSW RT). In addition, the ACT Human Rights Commission was developing a human rights wiki, where key stakeholders could contribute and update information about human rights in a collaborative way.

Social networking by teachers

Teachers have been using social networking applications for their own professional development. They include setting up professional learning communities on Facebook, using Dropbox sites for sharing documents of common interest, or Twitter to share current information quickly (South Australia RT).

National Broadband Network

Schools are likely to benefit from the increased bandwidth and network speeds available through the roll out of the National Broadband Network. The network should provide a greater range of opportunities, as schools are able to access improved broadband connections.

Designing for engagement

A number of participants highlighted the need, when using communication technologies, to design spaces and materials in a way that would engage young people. These new communication media required human rights materials that were concise, had a high visual impact, and focused on interactivity to engage young people. But this kind of design was usually very resource-intensive and costly to develop. The *Tell me Something I Don't Know* campaign by the AHRC was seen as an exemplar of the use of social media for human rights education.

Local School networks

A feature across all three school sectors - Government, Catholic and Independent - has been efforts to use communications technologies to link schools together into local schools networks, as a way of facilitating improved administrative and learning activities.

One example of using this kind of local network was mentioned in Queensland where a number of groups of Independent schools in the junior secondary years were networking among themselves to take up human

rights projects that focused on issues such as refugees, and consumerism and human rights (Queensland RT).

Regional and remote connections

The many barriers faced by schools in rural and remote communities were highlighted in roundtable discussions and the value of communication technologies were seen as an important way to address these difficulties (Victoria, South Australia, Queensland).

Schools in a number of states and territories were using technologies to make connections between city schools and those in rural and remote communities to help overcome their geographic disadvantage, their limited access to programs, resources and learning opportunities. However few examples mentioned their use for teaching about human rights issues.

One example mentioned was a number of secondary schools in Adelaide have used communication technologies to connect with Aboriginal Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) schools in the remote north western region of South Australia, enabling students to learn about some of the issues impacting on Indigenous communities and Aboriginal students in those schools (South Australia RT).

International connections

The roundtable discussion and web searches pointed to a number of examples of schools using technologies to connect with other schools overseas around human rights issues.

Global Peace Schools – Child rights

A number of Australian Schools have taken part and gained accreditation under the UN Office for Children and Armed Conflict's *Global Peace Schools* project. Part of the project enables schools to use technologies to link up with other schools internationally to work on issues related to child rights, ending armed conflict and peace building, global awareness, and social inclusion concepts across the curriculum (Save the Children – Global Peace schools).

One Catholic College in Brisbane, St Patrick's at Shorncliffe, involved a whole school Global Peace activity for over 1,100 students in Years 5 to 12, supported by the Global Learning Centre (SA) and Save the Children (SA) in the UN *Global Peace Schools* program. In Adelaide eleven schools have been involved in the *Global Peace Schools* project and have worked with the support of Save the Children SA. Both examples have enabled students to learn more about child rights and the impact of armed conflict on children (South Australia RT).

Child rights – Linking primary schools

Another example of using technologies to connect schools internationally is a primary school in Perth addressing child rights and child labour issues. The school worked with the help of *World Vision* and one of its school projects in Colombia to link up with a primary school where children worked during the day and then attended school at night.

One World Vision organiser explained that after running a number of class sessions on child labour in a Perth primary school "we linked them with one of our [aid] projects in Colombia, where there was a night school for primary school kids, and they got to exchange their stories and understand, ask the kids the questions why were they going to school at night? The reason they were going to school at night is because they had to work during the day, they had to help their parents, and so if the school wasn't offered at night, they wouldn't be getting any education at all" (WA RT).

ChildFund Connect

A *ChildFund Connect* project has used video and Skype to link 60 students in Year 5/6 classes at the Point Clare Public School in NSW with a classroom in Timor-Leste and a children's club in Vietnam (*Global Education School Case Studies & ChildFund Australia*).

World Challenge

A project in Western Australian Catholic schools – working together with the *World Challenge* – has involved these schools in making connections, taking on projects and planning an overseas trip - with other Catholic sister schools in Kenya (WA RT & World Challenge).

6.2 Educational resources

An important way of supporting teachers and the curriculum opportunities for students to learn about human rights is through the production and distribution of educational resources that focus on specific human rights issues. Reported below are some of the main organisations and educational resources mentioned in roundtable discussions and located from our web searches of these organisation's web sites.

Australian Human Rights Commission

As the main national Australian Government funded agency charged with protecting a range of key human rights the AHRC has over a number of years made a significant contribution to supporting teaching about human rights and human rights issues. The AHRC has produced a range of high quality human rights education resources and human rights fact sheets for teachers. Its resources available on their website are organised by rights topic, name and key learning area or School Subject. Among their most recent and prominent *rightsED* resources are those on:

- Human rights: *Understanding human rights*; a kit for *Commemorating Human Rights Day*;
- Indigenous rights: *Bringing them home*;
- Race and diversity: *Face the Facts*; *Voice of Australia*;
- Child rights: *Child rights*; *Back Me Up* anti-bullying campaign resources;
- Disability rights: *What about Doug's rights?*;
- Rights at work: *Young people in the workplace*;
- Sexual harassment: *Tackling sexual harassment*.
- Human rights topics: *Tell me Something I Don't Know*.

Education Services Australia

As a national not-for-profit body Education Services Australia (ESA) supporting national initiatives in schools, and higher education, including the work of the SCSEEC and ACARA. ESA resources, information, activities and links can be used by both teachers and students. Among its projects that are relevant to the teaching of human rights are Civics & Citizenship Education, AusAID Global Education program (includes seeking to develop the concept of global citizenship with students in Years 3 to 10), a *National Digital Learning Resources* (a collection of over 15,000 resources free to all Australian schools), and a *Scoutle* site, *Teach Learn Share* and *Values Education* sections.

The ESA *Scoutle* site links to the *National Digital Learning Resources* that can be organised around Australian Curriculum subjects, learning sequences, topics or individualised student learning. ESA was mentioned a number of times in discussions as already having a number of human rights teaching and learning resources that can be accessed by schools across all states and territories and could be used in the future to further support the teaching of human rights through a dedicated human rights portal. This portal could better support the teaching about human rights issues through the distribution and sharing of educational resources and support of teacher professional development.

Amnesty International in Australia

Amnesty International has developed a range of school educational resources to support their actions and campaigns. Focusing on Individuals at risk of imprisonment and torture the *'Write for Rights 2012* resource for teachers is designed to address the new national *English*, *HSIE* and *Personal Development* learning area outcomes. Another major recent kit related to refugees and asylum seeker rights is the *Go Back to Where You Came From* SBS TV series resource. A comprehensive Indigenous rights resource is *Indigenous peoples' rights in Australia today: where do you stand?* In the Northern Territory Amnesty have worked in partnership with Aboriginal communities to report, campaign and produce a resource - *Aboriginal Peoples' right to homelands*. Also a resource, developed by Amnesty International UK in 2007, the *Human Rights in Focus* DVD, includes three short films about human rights, with accompanying curriculum resources and worksheets and a copy of these resources has been sent to every secondary school library in Australia.

Save the Children

Save the Children educational resources include its most recent major resource *Finding My Magic* DVD and a booklet *The rights and responsibilities of Children* that are both aimed at children 4 to 11 years to help develop their awareness of children's rights and responsibilities and the UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. They have also produced for teachers: *Children's Rights: A Teachers Guide*; *The Busy Teacher's guide to the world*; and a *Review: Teacher Support and Development Interventions*.

Refugee Council of Australia

The *Refugee Week Resource Kit* produced by the Refugee Council of Australia is a kit that contains a set of background information on refugees, addresses some of the myths and sets out key facts about refugees and asylum seekers, together with teacher resources that include a number of lesson plans.

Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia (RA) school education resources help address the rights struggle by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. They include the 1967 Referendum, the Apology to the Stolen Generations, National Reconciliation Week resources and a set of Q&A factsheets. RA are also developing an online hub of educational resources to support the teaching the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cross-curriculum priority in the new Australian curriculum subjects.

State Library of NSW – Hot Topics

The State Library of NSW produce a plain language series of booklets called *Hot Topics* that cover recent changes and debates in the law. Among recent issues addressing human rights issues are: *International Humanitarian Law* (2012); *Refugees* (2011); *Indigenous peoples* (2009); *Human Rights* (2008); and *Bill of Rights* (2005).

Museum of Australian Democracy (Canberra)

The Museum of Australian Democracy in the Old Parliament House in Canberra supports an onsite schools program of visits by Year 5 to 7 classes and has a set of teaching resources about the development of democracy in Australia, which have links to History and Civics and Citizenship subjects. Resources include: *Hands on Democracy: my place in my community*; *Hands on Democracy: I can make a difference*; *Our voices our choices*; *Decision 3sixty*; and *1975 Prime Minister dismissed!*

Global Education Project

The Global Education Project has produced an important booklet *Global Perspectives: A framework for global education in Australian schools* (2008) to support the teaching of issues around global citizenship. A number of the South Australian Global Education Centre's publications are: *Building Global Awareness*, *Where are we in the World*, and *Teaching About Other Countries*.

World Vision Australia - Global Words

Among its searchable database of educational resources World Vision Australia has a useful primary school and junior secondary school resource, *Global Words*, which can be used to integrate teaching about the topics of active citizenship and global citizenship into the teaching of English. The kit has been developed by World Vision Australia and the Primary English Teaching Association Australia (PETAA). Its twelve units are organised for junior primary, secondary primary and junior secondary English classes.

Oxfam

Among the Oxfam resources for teachers are the *Food 4 thought* resources; *Close the Gap* campaign resources for teachers and students; *Educators shaping change* (a resource for active citizenship and social justice in your classroom); the *3things* school program and a *Class of Change* resource.

Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission

The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission has a number of school-related project resources. One focuses on addressing racism through *The LEAD - Anti-Racism* project resources. Another teaches students about human rights by relating rights issues to Australian Rules, the main winter sport in Victoria through the *Human rights are Aussie Rules* project resources. Resources from an earlier campaign *Fair Go in Sport* that ran with the Australian Sport Commission in 2010 support work in schools for greater inclusiveness and tackling homophobia.

Human Rights Law Centre (Melbourne)

One of the prominent law centres based in Melbourne that is dedicated to promoting and protecting human rights in Australia is the Human Rights Law Centre. Among its collection of resources is an extensive list of materials organised around rights topics from access to justice through to women's rights.

Public Interest Advocacy Centre (Sydney)

PIAC is an independent non-profit law and policy centre in Sydney working on various rights issues including access to justice, Indigenous justice, homelessness, prisons and detention rights of disabled people. It also

works to improve community awareness of human rights and brings together a range of publications and submissions related to specific rights issue campaigns.

Other resource related issues

Among the other resource related issues noted was the issue of cost in developing and distributing resources. Given the growing concerns about limited resources for school education and that developing quality educational resources was expensive, a number of participants emphasized the need for and the value of having a centralized national repository for all available human rights education materials. One organisation that participants said could fulfill that role was Education Services Australia, as they were the designated national repository of educational resources for Australian schools.

Also of value were educational resources that included downloadable school lesson plans. Examples of these kinds of resources are available from the AHRC, Amnesty International Australia, the Curriculum Corporation and other organisations. For example *Human Rights today*, a curriculum resource which has been developed by the Curriculum Corporation for Amnesty International Australia assists teachers to teach students in Years 9 and 10. Other examples include *Hotel Rwanda* teachers' notes, *The Youth Challenge*, developed by AHRC, a UN model debate on the death penalty, a Lesson Plan on UDHR Article 16 *Right to Marry: Romeo Juliet*, a Lesson Plan on UDHR Article 18 *Religious Freedom, Exploring human rights of sexual minorities, A Long Way to Cherry Time* (A story dedicated to the hundreds of Moroccan and Sahrawi prisoners of conscience and victims of 'disappearance', imprisoned for years for their ideas at secret detention centres) and Amnesty's *Lift Off: Children's Rights and Convention on the Rights of the Child resource*.

As well as the development and effective distribution of resources, there was also a need for effective teacher education workshops to develop teacher skills to engage with human rights topics.

However the availability of resources for this kind of work remained a major concern. Some teachers were worried about the impact of the introduction of the national Australian Curriculum, and about how its implementation would be supported. They said that resources to assist teachers to meet these new curriculum requirements would be of great value and were needed, but would crowd out other efforts, like those related to human rights education.

7. Key themes and recommendations

This chapter provides an overview of the main themes that emerged from our analysis. It takes into account the context of the project, the complexity of the Australian education systems, the relevant literature in the field locally and internationally, curriculum and syllabus documents and the data gathered from stakeholders in each of the roundtable discussions and follow up interviews.

The key themes have been organised around three main aspects that rework the main questions posed in this study. They are:

- human rights perspectives, knowledge and understandings;
- human rights in the curriculum: opportunities and challenges; and
- human rights education: implementation and approach.

Where relevant each subsection contains a recommendation for future actions designed to sustain the momentum set out in the original action plan for the implementation of the findings from the *National Human Rights Consultation* report of 2009 and the Federal Government's Australian *Human Rights Framework* released in 2010.

7.1 Human rights perspectives, knowledge and understandings

Developing a Culture of Rights

The importance of developing a culture of rights across Australia was emphasised by Cathy Branson in 2009, the then head of the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) in a speech welcoming the National Human Rights consultation:

It should help build a human rights culture in Australia – a culture of rights-based thinking; one in which everyone understands their basic rights and respects the rights of others. I believe that we need cultural change of this kind in Australia (Branson 2009).

This view is reflected in the roundtable discussions of this report as this comment illustrates:

It's [human rights education] got to be fundamentally embedded in the centre of everything that is done.human rights should be a lived, felt, shared, fundamental practice that we do every day.

This point was noted in conjunction with discussion on children's rights and the endemic growth of cyber bullying that is impacting on student wellbeing in schools. For many participants a rights discourse has to be embedded in the curriculum. It needs to provide both explicit and implicit opportunities, offering both formal and informal learning approaches. An essential feature for the strengthening of a human rights culture was for *human rights to have a specific "home" in the curriculum*. Some participants went further and saw education about human rights as a vital instrument in achieving a broader goal - developing global citizens who would champion rights not just locally but globally:

...the more important step is that we actually want advocates. We want our kids to leave school working for human rights. We need to teach people to be advocates. I think that's absolutely crucial. That's a skill, a capability. It's not a knowledge thing. My opinion, as an educator, is that the content is only the start.

1. Developing a culture of rights

Recommendation: There is a need for greater recognition of the role of human rights education in improving student understanding of human rights and building civic values. In order to build a human rights culture the position of human rights education within the curriculum must be strengthened.

Defining Human Rights and dealing with controversial issues

Discussion of the differences between teaching about human rights, social justice, democratic citizenship and values education illustrated a degree of confusion and overlap in what constituted each term and the interrelationships between each of the terms. Participants noted that it was important to distinguish between these terms despite their inter-relationship. For example, participants felt that there are core rights, such as the rule of law, that needed to be taught as foundation stones for all human rights. While social justice was a more diffuse concept related to equity and fairness and was often linked specifically to a Christian ethos.

Further, in terms of engaging school students around the issue of human rights, it was noted that human rights could be quite controversial, and that alternative terminology such as 'social justice', 'fairness' or a focus on 'freedoms' were often used by schools (and indeed government and non-government agencies) in preference to the more contested term of 'human rights'. This was seen by some as problematic: *In some contexts a lot of human rights-related activities in schools aren't necessarily labeled as 'human rights' because human rights is a contested area and there is a danger in couching human rights only in less specific terms such as 'fairness' or 'social justice'.*

Interestingly, and perhaps unsurprisingly, it was reported that some teachers were reluctant to discuss such issues as children's rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as:

...some teachers are not so well informed and feel that by teachers coming in and trying to teach child rights, that it may cause an upheaval in the school. We're equipping children with rights for them to challenge the system, which is not at all correct.

This leads into another very important discussion about human rights education in schools. How can the curriculum (and teachers) deal with the contested notion of rights, particularly in the context of a religious school? Is it possible in these contexts to debate such issues as the sacredness of life versus the right to abortion in secular society? And should schools be encouraged to teach certain contentious texts?

Teachers were often reluctant to approach controversial issues ... *I think some teachers do feel that, that they can't be really true to themselves as to what they want to teach if they're in a school that has very strict rules ... there'll always be those sort of issues where even if the teacher wants to talk about it, it's like what is the wider community thinking about what's going on in my classroom?*

It is clear from roundtable discussions that the context of the school often determined what issues were discussed and what texts were taught. Also it appears that many teachers did not want to put themselves into a position where they had to contradict a school's approach or its policies.

Schools needed to be encouraged to engage in the debates that surround human rights issues, and consider the freedoms, responsibilities and limitations to personal rights that exist within civil societies governed by the rule of law. In order for teachers to deal with these issues effectively they need to possess the skills and knowledge, adequate resources and the confidence to tackle the complexity inherent in some rights based discourses.

2. Defining human rights

Recommendation: *That a Curriculum Discussion paper be developed from a Roundtable discussion involving curriculum specialists, teacher associations and community representatives to clearly define human rights for school education purposes and outline a set of human rights issues which should be studied by students across each of three main school Learning Stages – Years F/K to 6; 7 to 10; and 11 to 12.*

3. Addressing and dealing with controversial issues

Recommendation: *That a set of case studies be developed of good practice in the teaching of controversial human rights issues in different schools settings. That these resources be disseminated to*

teachers in schools with the aim of building their confidence in tackling such issues in their own classrooms.

The Cosmopolitan Citizens of Tomorrow

The 21st Century brings unprecedented change to our doorstep. The Global Trends 2030 Report (USNIC, 2012) notes that 'We are heading into uncharted waters':

We begin by identifying what we see as the most important megatrends of our transforming world— individual empowerment, the diffusion of power to multifaceted networks and from West to East and South, demographic patterns highlighted by aging populations and exploding middle classes, and natural resource challenges. These megatrends are knowable. By themselves they point to a transformed world, but the world could transform itself in radically different ways. We are heading into uncharted waters (USNIC, 2012 p.3).

How do we prepare our cosmopolitan citizens of tomorrow for the challenges they will face? What sort of education do our students need in this context? Martha Nussbaum answers this question by noting that we need to focus on *Education for human development*. In explaining this concept she provides two conceptual notions of development: the narrow economic concept of development (education for profit), and the richer more inclusive notion of education for human development. *That does not neglect the humanistic abilities of critical thinking and imagining and is inclusive of social justice and global citizenship*. She further notes that education for human development is a very broad idea, beyond citizenship.

...I shall focus on the goal of producing decent world citizens who can understand the global problemsand who have the practical competence and the motivational incentives to do something about these problems. How, then, would we produce such citizens?" (Nussbaum, 2009).

Given the national and international developments in Human Rights Education, there is an opportunity to meet our international obligations under the UN Declaration of Human Rights and Training to build a real culture of rights in our schools as well as the wider community, engendering respect for individual and collective rights and encouraging collaborations between schools and civic bodies that enhance social cohesion in our neighbourhoods.

Pedagogical practices - how we teach not just what we teach

One important point made by the participants was that pedagogical practices were important – i.e. how we teach was of equal importance to what we teach. In the classroom context where students needed constant engagement and where the technologies used were constantly being upgraded, teachers needed to be skilled in a variety of teaching and learning methods, as well as having an understanding of the cultural contexts in which they found themselves. These were all important prerequisites to effective implementation of any human rights issues in schools.

Also, teachers determined the level of detail in teaching about human rights. This was particularly so at the 'explicit level' and applied to the implicit aspects of the curriculum. A great deal still rested on teacher interests and commitment, as well as the kind of pedagogy and approach they used in their human rights teaching.

Participants emphasised that teachers needed to model human rights in order for a culture of rights to develop and for students to actively embrace new understandings about rights and bring about transformative learning.

A further challenge for teachers was to develop in students critical thinking skills that allowed them to evaluate evidence and to make judgments about issues of rights in the community. A further challenge that was widely contested was moving students towards becoming active citizens, drawing on the evidence and judgements to act for change. As one participant noted:

...the learner has to leave our schools with the capability to critique their experience - ask the question what are they being told here? Who's not included? Whose voice is unheard? ...This may motivate me to engage and act.

The importance of teacher professional learning in building quality teachers cannot be overstated in the development of critical thinkers.

The researchers have noted the potential and actual gap between opportunities provided for HRE in the curriculum and what actually gets taught in the classroom and more specifically how well it is taught. The researchers believe that further research with teachers in schools, would be effective in identifying good practice models in human rights education. These resources would then be readily available to teachers either online or as a resource kit.

4. Pedagogical approaches to human rights education

Recommendation: That a number of pedagogical best practice models of human rights education be developed and disseminated to teachers with the assistance of relevant Teacher Associations.

7.2 Human Rights in the Curriculum: Challenges and Opportunities

Curriculum and other learning opportunities

It must be reiterated that this study has been undertaken at a time when a set of curriculum learning areas and subjects across Australian schooling systems are in a state of transition, and when a number of national syllabus documents are in the process of being approved and implemented in all states and territories.

In addition, it is important to restate the complexity of the Australian Education system and that Education remains largely a state responsibility. These states and territories also have their own education systems, with their own government Departments of Education, Catholic and Independent School bodies, with their own funding structures and educational priorities.

Given that interactions across these systems can be difficult to achieve, one of the benefits of this study has been through the roundtables bringing together key stakeholders from each school system, from curriculum development areas and discipline-based professional teachers associations to discuss human rights education and engage with state-level human rights agencies and non-government community organisations whose business is to promote human rights to the wider community.

Participants in the roundtables noted that a benefit of the roundtables was the opportunity to meet with other members of their profession in their state or territory and with members of NGOs with an interest in human rights education. The continuation of gatherings would undoubtedly be a benefit in establishing a mechanism to allow key stakeholders to meet and exchange information about good practice in human rights education and maintain networks, to share information and resources and to discuss issues, approaches and concerns.

5. Curriculum opportunities

Recommendation: The AHRC establish state and territory level human rights education stakeholder networks to meet on an annual basis. This could be undertaken in partnership with state level Attorney's-General Departments.

Fragmented learning opportunities

One major issue with the Australian education system is its fragmented and multi-layered structure. We have alluded to this at the start of the research. This reality does make the implementation of change more difficult. Keeping track of each state and territory's developments is time consuming and labour-intensive and therefore not cost effective.

We have noted the diffuse nature and understanding of the term human rights. Also, the fragmented nature of the curriculum opportunities identified in this study highlight a major deficiency in efforts to ensure school students learn about human rights across their school years.

It appears that while participants perceived that rights issues and content were covered in their subject area this was not always the case – especially in rights being explicitly mentioned in the curriculum. As highlighted many of these opportunities were often limited to the humanities subjects in the senior secondary years – to subjects such as *History*, *Geography* and *Legal Studies*.

These opportunities were reduced in Years 9-10 with a number of elective offerings in *History* and *Geography* and more specific issues addressed in *Civics and Citizenship* units. Physical Education or the PDHPE subjects did offer units on student wellbeing, but these did not mention human rights.

The lack of support for human rights education is evidenced by a lack of dedicated human resource personnel on this issue in the education sector. The research team could not identify one educator employed at a national, state or territory level, across any school system with an explicit role to argue and provide support for having these issues included formally across the Curriculum or to encourage teachers to teach them.

Despite general support for human rights education amongst some leading educators at the roundtable discussions, there appears to be some reluctance or ambivalence among school educators and teachers about the teaching of human rights. Perhaps this is not surprising, given the lack of support by some political leaders, particularly at the national level, for the introduction of an Australian Human Rights Act.

It is not within the scope of this report to comment on the merits or otherwise of an Australian Human Rights Act, however the evidence from the research suggests that human rights educators strongly support improved funding for education officers to promote human rights education in schools.

6. Addressing the fragmented learning opportunities within the curriculum

Recommendation: That a dedicated school curriculum officer be located in the AHRC to work with State and Territories to support curriculum change and support work with schools in the introduction of programs on human rights, both within the curriculum and as whole-school activities.

Other learning opportunities and role of NGOs

The research project highlighted the important role NGOs in Australia have in human rights education as they are in constant contact with members of the community, including young people, teachers and staff in schools. The work of key organisations in human rights advocacy involving or relevant to young people has been noted in detail in Chapter 5 and a range of valuable educational resources is listed in Chapter 7 of this report.

Advocates from these organisations engage in visits to schools to give talks about human rights issues and to promote their programs, campaigns and special events. Many of their campaigns also utilise the most up to date online media. The human rights issues that have the highest profile in schools include Indigenous rights, plight of asylum seekers and refugees, famine, poverty, the rights of children, and prisoners of conscience and torture.

Resources produced by NGOs are a valuable source of information (and often the most up-to-date materials on specific human rights issues), and school visits are a good opportunity for the exploration of current human rights. However, some participants did note difficulties in maintaining sustainable relationships with NGOs and involvement by schools in these programs were often 'one off' events.

NGO representatives noted the importance of engagement with young people, teachers and schools, and spoke of the dangers of the "goldfish bowl" approach, where students participated in projects and services without fully engaging in a two-way exchange. They also commented that the need to arrange working with vulnerable people checks for their staff was an important constraint on arranging student involvement in some human rights projects.

7. Role of Non Government Organisations

Recommendation: The important role of key NGOs in human rights education needs to be recognised and opportunities created for increased collaborations with schools to extend their programs and project work around key human rights issues with young people and teachers in schools.

Overcrowded curriculum, explicit and mandatory content and support

Another widely-expressed view was that the curriculum in all states and territories suffered from overcrowding as educational policy makers tried to meet political and community based demands for additions to the curriculum that would address an ever increasing set of issues related to safety, health and wellbeing, emergence of social media.

As a result, the question arose - 'Will teachers engage with human rights if it is not a mandated part of the curriculum?' Most participants felt that for educators with an interest in strengthening the teaching of human rights, social justice and civics and citizenship, the answer was clear. *Unless these issues are part of the formal curriculum, and made mandatory, they are unlikely to be taught in the classroom.* The point was made strongly at most roundtable discussions.

Therefore, there is a real need to work with curriculum bodies such as ACARA and various state and territory bodies to ensure that human rights, as well as ethical behaviour, are included as an explicit part of the Australian school curriculum. And to ensure that teachers are supported in their teacher training, with adequate and effective teacher professional learning and access to quality resources and technologies to effectively implement the opportunities.

Explicit curriculum opportunities – Senior and Secondary Years

One important finding of the roundtable discussions and the document searches conducted by the research team was the difference between clear and explicit references to human rights terminology/ topics in these curriculum documents and the perceived observational (or anecdotal) references for the capacity to cover human rights issues within these documents as stated by the participants. That is to say, participants referred to specific subjects, without a clear understanding of the topics or issues addressed. For example one participant noted:

I think it's probably picked up in Business as well, don't you think? Business management and enterprise...It's not only the core human rights, but it's picking up issues like discrimination, and that's been picked up in the National Curriculum through economics and business as well.

As another example, human rights learning opportunities were mentioned in the English Syllabus, and it was seen as an excellent subject for the coverage of human rights issues, particularly as so much emphasis was given to narrative and story, which could be very engaging for students. Yet, comprehensive key word searches showed no clear evidence of the *explicit* coverage of human rights in the English curriculum in all states and territories. Such discussions were common to all the roundtables, where participants made references to subjects or learning areas, without clear or explicit evidence.

Senior years

The learning areas or subjects where clear and explicit content dealing with human rights was evident within the senior secondary years across most states and territories were in *History, Geography, and Legal Studies*. Examples of other subjects that had an explicit focus in certain units of work or electives included subjects in *Politics and International Studies; Aboriginal Studies and Society and the Environment* subjects.

Secondary years

In the Secondary years (7-10), there were explicit opportunities to study a diverse set of human rights issues in *History, Geography, Aboriginal Studies; and Civics and Citizenship* units. The topics within these syllabus documents were variously noted as core or elective and this varied from each state and territory. However even within core mandatory syllabus units there was no guarantee that a detailed human rights focus would be an essential theme of the unit of work covered by teachers.

8. Australian Curriculum - Mandatory explicit content

Recommendation: That the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority be approached to facilitate more explicit curriculum content on human rights to be included in syllabus and curriculum support documents across key school learning stages and subject areas.

Importance of the Primary Years and Child Rights

In the Primary school years participants stressed the importance of commencing the discussion about rights, respect and responsibility from the earliest years and that human rights education was a lifelong process.

"There isn't a subject you can't put it in... it has to start at prep. It has to start when they first start school."

This has been reinforced by national and international discussions in the literature about developing a culture of rights and responsibilities in schools. These discussions have emanated from bodies such as the Australian Human Rights Commission and the UN Human Rights Council and have been noted earlier in this report. One Aboriginal member of a roundtable noted:

I can't help thinking about the way I learned about how Aboriginal elders teach their kids. They give them a really basic story that sets out core values. As you get older the stories get more complex and you learn more of the law and more of the detail of the law. You start when you're on your mum's lap, basically, learning those underlying values. You might not call them human rights, but they've got those values entrenched.

A number of participants also highlighted the need for students to be introduced specifically to the issue of *child rights*, during these years and for child rights to feature as the main human rights issues those students learnt about during their primary school years. There was less clear direction on how these were to be addressed within the formal curriculum.

9. Importance of the primary school years and child rights

Recommendation: That the newly appointed AHRC Children's Commissioner be tasked to work with Save the Children and other relevant NGOs to promote the inclusion of teaching about children's rights in schools in the primary years.

Australian Curriculum and Primary years

A feature of the curriculum opportunities available in the primary years, particularly from years F/ K to Year 4, was that rights issues were not explicitly named or addressed in any subject areas across this stage. Rather there were more *implicit* opportunities in subjects in Years 5 to 6. As a Key Learning Area, *Human Society and Its Environment*, was identified as the main area to focus on with human rights topics covered in parts of the *History* and *Geography* syllabus and *Civics and Citizenship* and *Values education* units.

The *English* K-6 Syllabus also provided *implicit* opportunities that could involve a focus on a specific human rights issue. In addition, *Physical Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE)* K- 6 addressed respecting diversity (Victoria), human sexuality, and values (NSW). Overall the researchers noted a gap in the current curriculum of an explicit focus on human rights education in the primary years, and particularly in early childhood education K-2. There is a need to develop curriculum content relating to human rights education for the early primary years.

10. Australian Curriculum - Embed human rights issues in primary school curriculum

Recommendation: That ACARA be approached to ensure explicit opportunities to address human rights issues are embedded within appropriate subjects such as HSIE in the primary school years, and that opportunities are provided in particular in the early primary years for exposure to relevant and age-appropriate human rights education issues and themes.

The Australian Curriculum is in its first Stage of implementation in each state and territory and it is the courses in *English, History, Science, and Maths* disciplines that are the most advanced. At this stage the main contents that will deal with Human Rights are, *History 7-10* (Movements for change in 20th Century) and *Geography 7-10*, (Global Transformations). Further discussions on other subjects and content are pending and more information should be available later in 2013 and 2014.

In the roundtable discussions, the introduction of national Australian curriculum subjects was seen as providing real opportunities to embed essential learning about rights into the national agenda for all schools. The point was also made that there would be a greater co-ordination of nationwide resources relevant to all states and territories:

The advantage of the Australian curriculum is that at least publishers will be able to produce something for the whole nation that could be used. The little publications we've had state by state [on human rights] could be replaced because they're more economically viable.

General Capabilities statements and Cross-Curriculum priorities

Participants were disappointed that, despite some advocacy from the Australian Human Rights Commission, human rights education was not specifically mentioned in the overarching framework of the Australian Curriculum, which prescribes a set of agreed General Capabilities statements and a set of Cross-Curriculum priorities to which all national curriculum documents should adhere. They noted that support documents for

the general capability on *ethical understanding* must focus on human rights, as should the supporting documents for *intercultural understanding* general capability.

Similarly, a number of participants noted that the three Cross-curriculum priorities (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures; Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia; and Sustainability) cannot be covered adequately without some explicit as well as implicit coverage of human rights issues within syllabus documents.

11. Australian Curriculum - Curriculum statements and priorities

Recommendation: Australian Curriculum support documents need to embed human rights issues as explicit topics in the General Capabilities Statements for Ethical Behaviour and Cultural Understanding and similarly in the relevant Cross-Curriculum Priorities.

There was particular mention of the importance of integrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories, not only into the new national History curriculum as a body of knowledge, but also into other subjects as a perspective. This discussion related specifically to the new National Teacher Professional standards introduced by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) which came into operation nationally in 2013 and specified knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures as an essential set of skills for accreditation. Given the diverse nature of our student population and the multicultural nature of our classrooms today, it was also seen as important to combine multiculturalism and diversity within a general human rights approach.

Another point related to the issue of Sustainability within the new Science National Curriculum. It was felt that this topic did provide a real opportunity for the integration of issues relating to human rights. The idea of Science as a Human Endeavour and the relationship between Science and Society, plus the issue of Sustainability as a cross-curricula subject, all provided openings for human rights to be addressed in the Science curriculum.

The researchers have noted that this project was undertaken at a time of change and transition in Education systems in Australia. Further research is required at the point at which the new national Australian curriculum is fully implemented, to determine the extent to which human rights content, issues and themes have in fact been integrated into the syllabus support documents and into Australian classrooms.

12. Australian Curriculum - Auditing

Recommendation: Once the new national Australian Curriculum is fully developed and implemented, Australian Curriculum subjects need to be audited to determine the extent to which human rights issues have been effectively integrated into the curriculum.

Social justice and social responsibility

A further system specific set of opportunities was evident in the social justice and social responsibility syllabus in the Catholic school sector, and to a lesser extent, the Independent school systems, that champion these activities as part of their school ethos. Although the modes of application may vary from state to state and even between dioceses, participants in the roundtable did applaud the efforts of the Catholic school system to work with social justice issues which of course are seen as being closely related to human rights education. More importantly, these projects are often linked with community groups, with NGOs and their own faith based lay organisations and do actively engage students in their operations.

Another example where student involvement was encouraged is in restorative justice programs. These operate in both private and public education systems. Some programs are linked to schools that have challenging discipline based environments, while other programs are linked to an improved understanding of children's rights.

One point of controversy with church-based schools, centres on which rights are ignored either implicitly or explicitly for religious reasons. Further, some participants noted that while the Christian mission is important (and Christian schools are doing excellent work) – should human rights education be seen as a secular mission? These topics provided rich discussion within the roundtables and further comments are noted below under Dealing with Controversial issues in Human Rights.

7.3 Human Rights Education: Implementation and approach

Teacher professional development

All the roundtables identified the major role of teacher professional development in helping to develop teachers' knowledge and pedagogical skills in human rights education. They suggested that education departments and schools should work with professional teacher associations to provide more targeted professional learning opportunities for teachers. This was particularly important given the changes that the Australian curriculum will bring to schools. Participants noted that teachers felt under resourced to tackle some controversial issues:

What I'm hearing is that teachers feel under resourced in that and they don't feel confident in what's a good pedagogy or what's a good context to provide these sorts of instruction.

It was noted that some teachers were feeling overwhelmed by the introduction of the Australian curriculum, and that resources and support materials to assist teachers to demonstrate that they were meeting curriculum requirements would be of great value. Professional learning was most important in helping teachers to take up the various explicit and implicit opportunities and to operate within the new framework of the *General Capabilities* related to ethical behaviour and cultural diversity.

Teachers were hesitant to approach some issues because they felt they lacked the skills to deal with them appropriately. So professional learning for teachers was very important in any implementation of a human rights education strategy and in the changing context of the new Australian national curriculum. In summary teacher professional development was identified as a critical dimension in the development of any effective human rights education efforts.

13. Teacher professional development

Recommendation: That a set of teacher professional development modules relating to human rights education across each school learning stage and subject areas are developed in partnership with the relevant Professional Teachers' Associations in each state and territory.

Further, teachers felt quite vulnerable in the newly mandated areas of Indigenous rights and history. The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) has introduced the national professional teaching standards, in which standards one and two related to knowledge and understanding of Indigenous issues and history. Pre-service teachers cannot be accredited without demonstrating skills in this area, and teachers in schools need to maintain their qualifications through training and professional learning.

School executive leadership and a whole school approach

The research identified that a key element of any successful human rights education program was having good school executive leadership that gave support to specific staff and programs to progress change in schools. Participants commented on the difference good distributive leadership made by taking a whole-school approach to a project. This was an effective way to promote a culture of rights. Comments included:

The schools that are making the difference, that really shine out, have got full principal support and the principal's right in there with everyone.

You've got to have a human rights culture through the whole school, the environment.

One teacher commented on a school where there had been a lot of bullying and major changes were achieved, led by the school principal:

It starts with the principal. The principal's taken it on board, and the school as a whole ... it had a shocking reputation.[Now] It is an incredible school to go to, and it starts from the principal. So the whole school's taken ownership of zero tolerance of bullying, discrimination, all that sort of stuff. So the whole school has ownership over it.

This point about good leadership within a whole school approach cannot be overstated, and is backed up by research into what makes a good school. It is worth emphasising here that this approach is also inclusive of parents and the wider school community.

14. School executive leadership and a whole-school approach to human rights education

Recommendation: That a conference be organised for school principals or their representative in each state and territory at which education materials and case studies of good practice in human rights education involving the whole-school community are showcased and discussed.

Role of Parents in Human Rights Education

The important role played by parents and the community in human rights education was also discussed. There was a need to engage with parents about what schools are teaching in the human rights area and to educate parents about human rights. This is particularly important in schools where parents may have concerns about the teaching of controversial issues. It was noted that this approach of parent and community education had been utilised by anti-bullying restorative justice projects. *Play By the Rules*, a national project about fair play in sport, was seen as an exemplar of changing attitudes in the wider community and *Fair Go Sport* was another example.

15. Whole-school approach - Role of parents in human rights education

Recommendation: As part of the effort to promote a whole school approach to the implementation of human rights education, school programs, parents and members of the school community need to be included in school human rights projects and activities.

Technologies and Resources

Global links promoting knowledge and experience of human rights issues

In the world of global connectivity, the capacity to link with schools internationally is an important aspect of human rights education. Participants mentioned that it was vital to build up the capacity to link with schools internationally as an important way of extending the learning opportunities in schools around various aspect of human rights education.

Some cultural exchanges did occur and connections arranged with the support of NGOs like World Vision, the *Hope Club* and *Millennium Kids* were noted as were international connections and video conferencing possibilities. The Asian Education Foundation, World Vision and the United Nations Youth Association were organisations already using technologies to engage with and create new global interactive opportunities.

The importance of utilising social media to engage young people was noted. Blended learning techniques using the latest mobile devices was an important way to engage students – though accessibility to resources by all students should be one important consideration in the implementation of schools programs.

The ACT Human Rights Commission was in the early stages of developing a human rights wiki, where key stakeholders would be invited to contribute and help to develop and update information about human rights in a collaborative way.

It was also noted that resources did not have to utilize new technologies to be effective and often what was important was providing face-to-face and hands-on opportunities for experiential learning that were also highly effective. The importance of providing hands-on experience to students was also identified. One example cited involved Engineers Without Borders, who run an experiential workshop that involves students making a water filter. Students work together in groups to produce a result.

16. Technologies

Recommendation: Schools require adequate access to, and resourcing of, Internet facilities to provide for various online applications, global connections, including online international cultural exchanges, as ways of supporting learning about human rights issues.

Designing for engagement – Technologies and high visual impact resources

Participants commented that there is a need for teachers to be better supported in learning how to effectively utilise communication technologies, social media and educational materials, and consider *design for engagement* of both communication technologies and learning materials. The development of human rights material that is succinct, has a high visual impact, with a focus on interactivity to engage young people was important. It was noted that such resources were often very resource-intensive to develop.

Some of the prominent resources being used in schools included resource on global education from AusAid; the Australian Human Rights Commission's Indigenous resources and its cyber bullying project and the recent SBS program and resources from *Go back to where you came from*. Also the *Tell me Something I Don't Know* campaign by the Australian Human Rights Commission was seen as an exemplar of the use of social media for human rights. Useful websites included, the Education Services Australia website which has a large number of excellent resources for schools on many topics; Amnesty International; Save the Children; and the Asia Education Foundation.

17. Design for engagement – teacher workshop

Recommendation: A professional development workshop for teachers is needed in communication technologies, social media and their related educational resources to assist teachers to apply these technologies in an engaging way with students.

National repository – Education Services Australia

Developing and distributing resources is expensive, and participants emphasized the value of a centralized repository for materials. It was noted that ideally this would be maintained by Education Services Australia as a national repository of best practice resources. Participants also noted the importance of the librarian as a key resource for teachers, *'so that resources don't just stay on the shelf'*.

18. Resources – National repository

Recommendation: That Education Services Australia establish a national repository of human rights education learning materials, making it easier to disseminate educational resources and enabling librarians and teachers to access this material in a timely and effective manner. A link to this site could also hold case studies of projects undertaken in schools that advance human rights and social justice.

Dedicated human rights website

Participants in the WA roundtable suggested a type of 'My School' website that highlighted case studies of good practice in school projects based around human rights and social justice. This would provide a good alternative for the current 'assessment-focused' MySchool website that is currently in existence. One participant noted:

... that [a new website] would be great as I know the criticism that's always come about with the MySchool website because you never get that snapshot of what else is happening in schools at that level, at the human rights level. What makes a school a school, and why - there's other reasons why parents choose to send their children to certain schools, beyond whatever their scores are on the MySchool website.

Teaching how to use resources

In addition to the development of resources, there was also a need for a focus on teacher education and on providing pre-service teachers with skills to teach human rights topics. It is not just a case of developing resources, but there is also an equal need to develop mechanisms to distribute resources and to in-service teachers to develop their skills to use these resources effectively.

Assessing outcomes

Participants expressed concerns about how the outcomes of any teaching about human rights could be assessed and determinations made about what students had learnt:

How do you assess emotional and social capability? How do you assess ethics? I'm not sure you can assess any of them. You can't assess values for a start.

The discussion centred on the conflict between the content-driven curriculum and issues related to human rights that are based on values. Therefore there is a fundamental problem with formal assessment – and this relates to both state and national curriculum. It was felt that given that a significant part of the current work on human rights also included the informal curriculum around social justice activities outside classroom time, it would be just as appropriate to ensure that teachers were encouraged to teach about human rights through positive support and quality resources. This might be more effective than undertaking the difficult task of trying to convince curriculum authorities to mandate human rights education in assessment regimes.

7.4 Conclusion

This summary of outcomes noted above from the extensive discussions of the roundtable conferences in each state and territory illustrates the variety and richness of the data gathered. Discussions at each roundtable were lively and engaging, as experts in their field sought to bring to the table their own knowledge and experiences as well as data pertaining to their area of responsibility within their educational organisation. The expert knowledge that was shared, often with passion and commitment, has enabled the research team to construct a series of purposeful recommendations for future action. Some general statements can be made in relation to the place of human rights education within the curriculum.

The research confirmed that the obvious humanities-based subjects of History, Geography and Legal studies in the senior school years, and Civics-based subjects in the lower secondary years, have explicit references to human rights in the curriculum. However, for many other subjects, including such important subjects such as English while there is the perception that human rights exists explicitly within the curriculum, more often this is not the case. There is an implicit assumption that ‘it would fit in in the section on...’ but this is not backed up by explicit directions or descriptions in the syllabus content.

Therefore, the overwhelming evidence is that there is a relatively narrow base of subjects in the curriculum spectrum across Australia that specifically offer human rights based learning opportunities for students. There exist opportunities for students to have related learning experiences in a more generalized sense about fairness and respect, but these are not couched in terms of human rights issues, and they are often localized to the individual committed teacher and their group.

A further observation relates to the fact that often it is rights based non-government organisations who initiate human rights-focused activities in schools. These NGOs create project-based links with a committed teacher in a school and while these activities are engaging and important, they are not sustained, nor are they extended to a large group of students in the school. Therefore, approaches to human rights education in schools are often ad hoc and based on individual teacher interest.

Another important conclusion from the roundtable discussions relates to the need for teacher professional development in the area of human rights. For sustained change and to ensure quality pedagogical practices in the teaching of human rights issues, teachers need professional development support and access to quality innovative resources that enable global perspectives and linkages that highlight human rights issues.

The views and recommendations expressed in this report come from experts in their field as policy makers and practitioners within various educational organisations in each state and territory and they are of immense value in the policy context. What is now required is to collect evidence of good practice within the school context – to enable the creation of a rich database of resources, which is inclusive not just of school-based activities but extends to include the whole community – whether it be local or global.

Appendix 1: Research methods

Roundtable Discussions

The Roundtable discussions were a key aspect of the research design for this project as they brought together for the first time key educators, policy makers and stakeholders concerned with human rights education in Australian schools across each state and territory capital. The schedule of the roundtables was as follows:

- New South Wales (Sydney, 21 June 2012)
- Western Australia (Perth, 26 June 2012)
- Australian Capital Territory (Canberra, 23 August 2012)
- Queensland (Brisbane, 11 September 2012).
- Northern Territory (Darwin, 30 October 2012)
- Tasmania (Hobart, 20 November 2012)
- Victoria (Melbourne, 28 November 2012)
- South Australia (Adelaide, 29 November 2012).

Roundtable Background Briefing Paper

A background paper identifying the issues for discussion and aspects of each state and territory curriculum as it related to human rights was circulated to all roundtable participants prior to each Roundtable discussion. The paper also contained the set of questions used to guide the discussion within each roundtable meeting. This allowed participants time to reflect on issues in advance and facilitated focussed discussions during the roundtables.

Participants

The roundtables were generally well attended, although representation across key stakeholder groups varied from state to state. Some difficulties were experienced in engaging state education department representatives in some states and territories to attend the roundtables. However, this issue was addressed in a number of states and territories by follow up meetings or teleconference discussions with state and territory educational department representatives to ensure their perspectives were included in the data collection.

Even though this current project was not specifically focused on collecting data about how the curriculum was being implemented, there was a strong focus in the organisation of the roundtable discussions on engaging with representatives from key Teachers' Associations. This ensured that the project contained perspectives on the practical challenges of incorporating human rights content within the current school curriculum, teaching within pedagogical approaches consistent with human rights principles, and providing school children with the opportunities to acquire human rights-related experiences and skills. The feedback obtained through the roundtables was extremely informative, with many human rights initiatives and activities identified and a wide range of issues and challenges canvassed. Analysis of the findings from the roundtables is detailed in Chapters 5, 6 & 7.

An additional and unanticipated benefit of the roundtables has been the development of an opportunity for networking among the participants, who all expressed an interest in human rights education.

Follow-up interviews

As mentioned above, some key stakeholders were interested in this project but were unable to attend the scheduled roundtable discussions. As a result, additional interviews were carried out to and conducted with:

- Director Community Engagement, Australian Human Rights Commission
- Principal, The Friends School, Tasmania
- Tasmanian English Teachers' Association
- Department of Education, Tasmania
- Education Department, Victoria
- Victorian Equal Opportunity Commission
- South Australian Department of Education
- Amnesty International South Australia.

Analytical framework

In framing the discussion about human rights education in the school curriculum the research team has developed a framework for the analysis of curriculum documents.

The UN Declaration on Human Rights Education highlighted three key dimensions of human rights education: Education *about* human rights, which entails student learning about their individual rights as well as collective rights; Education *through* human rights, which includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners; and Education *for* human rights, which includes empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect the rights of others for human rights.

In this report we have focused on a number of other curriculum dimensions to help clarify the nature of the content in curriculum documents which relates to human rights. Two key dimensions are: **Explicit content** and **Implicit content**.

Explicit content refers to direct references to human rights conventions, definitions, human rights topics and their application in historical or current contexts. **Implicit content** is much more diffuse and non-specific. It refers to content which could be interpreted by teachers to relate to human rights issues, but it is not defined as such. This also means there is often no clearly identified support material available for teachers to use in their teaching and learning. This necessarily creates obstacles and challenges for teachers in their attempts to address human rights issues. It is then up to each individual teacher to determine how and what they teach and to develop resources to assist the pedagogical processes in the classroom.

Analysis of curriculum documents

This study was undertaken during a transitional time when a major effort is underway to implement a national Australian School Curriculum across a range of learning and subject areas. Led by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), in consultation with each state and territory educational authority, the subjects have been in development over three stages since 2008. Subjects from the first stage have been implemented at a state level from 2012 and subsequent stages will follow. The subjects being developed include:

- Stage1 – English, History, Maths, Science (2008-2010)
- Stage 2 – Geography, the Arts, Languages (2010-2013)
- Stage 3 – Civics and Citizenship, Economics, Business, Health & Physical Education, Design & Technologies (2011-2013).
(Perkins & McAskill, 2012)

An analysis of the Australian Curriculum documents considered both the General capabilities statements and Cross-curriculum priorities.

State and Territory curricula

As state and territory subjects have remained in place alongside the newly developed Australian Curriculum subjects, an initial document search was carried out to inform the roundtable discussions with key stakeholders from each state and territory. Then a further key word content analysis of selected available curriculum documents was carried out to identify the opportunities for teaching about human rights. This was organised around three learning stages:

- Senior Secondary (Years 11-12)
- Secondary (Years 7-10)
- Primary (F/K -Year 6).

A summary of the findings from an analysis of the curriculum documents can be found in Chapter 4.

Technologies and Resources

The main technologies and resources available to support teaching about human rights issues in schools were also investigated. A range of communication technologies were identified, as well as educational resources available from bodies such as the Australian Human Rights Commission and a number of key non-government organisations (NGOs) that organise human rights programs in schools. In some cases, particular resources have been linked to specific curriculum topics, to assist teachers to better use the resources.

Appendix 2: Roundtable participants

Participants in the Roundtable Discussions and interviews represented the following organisations:

Curriculum Authorities

NSW Board of Studies
SA Certificate of Education Board
Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority
School Curriculum and Standards Authority, WA

Departments of Education

NSW Department of Education and Communities
Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment
Tasmanian Department of Education
Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Catholic and Independent Schools

Association of Independent Schools (ACT, NSW, Queensland, Tasmania, WA)
Catholic Education Office (ACT, NSW, NT, Queensland, Tasmania, WA)

Teacher Associations

Business Educators Association (ACT)
Economics Teachers Association (Queensland)
English Teachers Association (ACT, NSW, Queensland, Tasmania, WA)
Geography Teachers Association (Victoria, NSW, Queensland Tasmania)
Geography and History Teachers Association of the NT
History Teachers Association (Victoria, Tasmania, WA)
Legal Studies Association (NSW)
Queensland Economic Teachers Association
Science Education Association (ACT)
Science Teachers Association (Tasmania)
Social Education (Victoria, NSW)
Victorian Commercial Teachers Association
Victorian Association for Teaching of English

Other Agencies and Non-Government Organisations

ACT Human Rights Commissioner
Amnesty International (NSW, Victoria, SA, Tasmania, WA)
Anti-Discrimination Commission (Queensland)
Asylum Resource Centre (Victoria)
Attorney General's Department (Canberra)
Australian Association for Environmental Education (NT)
Australian Human Rights Commission (Sydney)
Council of Civil Liberties (Queensland)
Darwin Community Legal Centre (NT)
Equal Opportunity Commission (SA, WA)
Global Learning Centre (Queensland, SA)
Northern Territory Committee on Human Rights Education
Office of Anti-Discrimination (Tasmania)
Reconciliation Australia (ACT)
Rule of Law Institute (NSW)
Save the Children (ACT, Victoria, SA, WA)
Tasmanian Centre for Global Learning
Tasmanian Commission for Justice and Peace
Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission
Youth Action Network (Tasmania)

Appendix 3: United Nations Conventions, Treaties and Australian ratification

International Human Rights Conventions and Australia ratification

CONVENTION	YEAR OF SIGNATURE	YEAR OF RATIFICATION
Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 1948	1948	1949
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), 1966	1972	1980
Optional Protocol to the ICCPR (Communications from Individuals), 1966	-	-
Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR, Aiming at the Abolition of the Death Penalty, 1989	-	-
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), 1966	1972	1975
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989	1990	1990
Optional Protocol to the CRC on the involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, 2000	2002	2006
Optional Protocol to the CRC on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, 2000	2001	2007
Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment (CAT), 1984	1985	1989
Optional Protocol to the CAT, 2002	2009	NOT YET RATIFIED
Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), 1966	1966	1975
Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 1979	1980	1983
Optional Protocol to CEDAW (Communications and Inquiry Procedures), 1999	-	-
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), 2006	2007	2008
Optional Protocol to the CRPD, 2006	-	-

The main UN human rights treaties that have been specifically incorporated into domestic Australian law are listed below.

Federal Legislation incorporating Human Rights Treaties

INTERNATIONAL TREATY	DOMESTIC LEGISLATION
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	Racial Discrimination Act 1975
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	Sex Discrimination Act 1984
Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	Crimes (Torture) Act 1988

Appendix 4: Grounds for discrimination

The Australian Government's anti-discrimination law is currently found in four separate pieces of legislation, each of which deals with different grounds of discrimination: *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (RDA); *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (SDA); *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA), and *Age Discrimination Act 2004* (ADA). Each of these four anti-discrimination Acts deals with different protected attributes: race and immigrant status (Racial Discrimination Act); sex, marital status, pregnancy, potential pregnancy, breastfeeding and family responsibilities (Sex Discrimination Act); disability (Disability Discrimination Act); and age (Age Discrimination Act, Commonwealth of Australia, 2013: 3). Each state and territory in Australia also has anti-discrimination legislation in place that addresses a number of the rights protected by UN treaties. The table below outlines the grounds of discrimination under Australian government, state and territory legislation.

Grounds of Discrimination under Australian Government, State and Territory Legislation									
Ground	Australian Government	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	NT	ACT
Age	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Breastfeeding			✓	✓			✓	✓	
Colour	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Compulsory retirement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Criminal record (irrelevant or spent conviction)	✓				✓		✓	✓	
Disability	✓	✓					✓		
Descent	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Ethnicity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Family responsibilities	✓				✓		✓		
Impairment	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Marital status	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Medical record	✓								
Nationality	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
National origin	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Parenthood			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Physical features			✓						
Politics	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Pregnancy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Race	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Racial hatred	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Religion	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Sex	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sexual harassment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sexuality	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Trade union activities	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	
Transgender		✓				✓		✓	✓

Appendix 5: Resources for educators

The following resources were identified as of potential interest to human rights educators:

AHRC, *rightsED*, <http://www.humanrights.gov.au/education/rightsED.html>

Amnesty International, *The Human Rights Temperature Questionnaire*, in Amnesty International, 2012, *Becoming a Human Rights Friendly School. A Guide for Schools Around the World*, downloadable from <http://www.amnesty.org/en/human-rights-education/projects-initiatives/rfsp>

Amnesty International UK, 2005, *Exploring Human Rights of Sexual Minorities*, http://www.amnesty.org.au/images/uploads/hre/exploring_human_rights_of_sexual_minorities.pdf, accessed 26 March 2013

CARE Australia, 2012, *Global Poverty: Teacher's Toolkit*, <http://www.care.org.au/document.doc?id=825>

Council of Europe, *COMPASS: A Manual on human rights education with young people* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe 2002), <http://eycb.coe.int/compass/>

Flowers, N. (ed), Council of Europe, *COMPASITO – Manual on human rights education for children*, 2nd Edition, Budapest: the Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe: 2009, <http://www.eycb.coe.int/compasito/>

Gollob, R. and Krapf, P. (eds), *Living in Democracy. EDC/HRE Lesson Plans for Lower Secondary Level*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, 2008, http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/edc/Source/Resources/Teachers_manuals/Living_democracy_EN.pdf

Gollob, R. Krapf, P., and Weidinger, W. (eds), *Taking Part in Democracy. Lesson Plans for Upper Secondary Level on Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2010, http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/edc/Source/Resources/Teachers_manuals/Takingpart_EN.pdf

Human Rights Education Associates, Soka Gakkai International and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2012, Video: *A Path to Dignity. The Power of Human Rights Education*, <http://path-to-dignity.org/>, viewed 11 March 2013 – includes a case study of the impact of a human rights training program undertaken with the Victorian police

Human Rights Research Centre, *Taking the Human Rights Temperature at your School*, University of Minnesota Human Rights Research Centre, 1999, <http://www.hrusa.org/hrmaterials/temperature/default.shtm>

Interfaith Council on Ethics for Children, in collaboration with UNESCO and UNICEF, *Learning to Live Together. An Intercultural and Interfaith Programme for Ethics Education*, 2008, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001610/161059e.pdf>

Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (2009), *Human Rights Education in the School Systems of Europe, Central Asia and North America: A Compendium of Good Practice*, <http://www.hrea.org/pubs/Compendium.pdf>, accessed 30 January 2013

OSCE/ODIHR, Council of Europe, UNESCO, *Guidelines for Educators on Countering Intolerance and Discrimination Against Muslims: Addressing Islamophobia Through Education*, Warsaw: 2011, <http://www.osce.org/odihr/84495>

OSCE/ODIHR and Yad Vashem, *Addressing Anti-Semitism: Why and How? A Guide for Educators*, Warsaw: 2007, <http://www.osce.org/odihr/29890>

Rule of Law Institute, Video Presentation: *What is the Rule of Law?*, <http://www.ruleoflaw.org.au/legal-studies/videos/>

Stirling, Linda, and Singh, Angela, 2007, *Human Rights Online Teaching Guide*,

<http://www.amnesty.org.au/images/uploads/hre/HumanrightsOnlineteacherguide.pdf>, Curriculum Corporation and Amnesty International Australia, accessed 25 March 2013

UNESCO, *Guidelines on Intercultural Education*, Paris: UNESCO, 2006,
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001478/147878e.pdf>

United Nations, (2004), *ABC Teaching Human Rights. Practical Activities for Primary and Secondary Schools*, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights,
http://visit.un.org/wcm/webdav/site/visitors/shared/documents/pdfs/Pub_United%20Nations_ABC_human%20rights.pdf, accessed 30 January 2013

World Vision Australia, *Get Connected Series*,
<http://www.worldvision.com.au/Learn/SchoolResources/issues.aspx>, accessed 26 March 2013 – includes issues on water, the global food crisis, child rights, our Pacific neighbours, migration, climate change, global inequalities, disasters, and global citizenship

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