

Selecting and using resources for educational purposes guideline

This guideline is a recommended course of action under the operational policy framework. Any edits to this guideline must follow the process outlined on the [creating, updating and deleting policy documents](#) page.

Overview

The purpose of this guideline is to provide Department for Education (the department) staff with guidance relating to selecting, developing, using and reviewing educational resources. It establishes the expectation that those involved in selecting and using educational resources are critical and purposeful in the selection processes and compliant with relevant legislation and the department's policies, guidelines and procedures.

Scope

This guideline applies to all staff in the department preschools and schools, support centres and units involved in selecting and using educational resources for educational purposes.



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Detail

Guiding principles

The education goals of the [Alice Springs \(Mparntwe\) Education Declaration](#), endorsed by all Australian Educator Ministers in December 2019, and the declarations of the [Universal Declaration on Human Rights](#) and the [Rights of the Child](#) provide the basis for the following 4 principles relating to selecting and using educational resources for educational purposes.

The right to freedom of expression

The [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) part 1, article 13 asserts that a child has the right to engage with information and ideas from many sources and has the right to express their ideas orally, in writing, and through art and/or multi-media as long as they respect the rights and welfare of others.

Duty of care

All department staff have a duty of care to protect children and students from reasonably foreseeable risk of harm. Leaders and teachers need to consider the possible effect of any educational resource on children's and young people's welfare. When choosing resources they keep children's and students' health, wellbeing, and personal safety as their highest priority.

See sections 19 and 28 of the [Work Health and Safety Act 2012 \(SA\)](#) for more information about Duty of Care.

Involvement of parents and carers

Parents and carers make thoughtful choices about educational resources their children and young people use. For information about policy and processes to manage any concerns about educational resources refer to the [complaint management policy](#) and [complaint management procedure \(PDF 664KB\)](#).

Inclusivity and social inclusion

In the interests of equity and social inclusion, educators must be conscious of the diversity of all children and young people. This includes:

- Aboriginal children and young people
- those with disability or special needs
- those from different social, religious, cultural and/or economic backgrounds
- those who are same sex attracted or gender diverse.

Importantly, teachers and leaders consider a range of positive alternatives to promote social inclusion by challenging stereotypical representations of people and circumstances. This includes discerning resource suitability when selecting resources given the global accessibility of information from diverse sources.

Legislative requirements

Films and computer games classifications

Every film and computer game, as well as some publications, are classified before being made available to the public. Films include recordings like movies, series, and documentaries that are watched in cinemas, via streaming services, on DVD/Blu-ray and online. Computer games include video games, console games, online gaming and smartphone game apps. Classifications help to determine age and content suitability and must be adhered to. The Australian Government's Australian Classification site provides a number of resources providing up-to-date information relating to these classifications. The classification of a film, computer game or publication may be searched on the [Australian Classification](#) site. Use the classification markings and consumer advice in relation to this policy to determine what content is suitable for children to see and play at school.

Some resources developed prior to 1 July 2007 might have an 'E' classification marking. This classification is no longer used. Films and computer games are exempt under section 6B of the Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995 (Cth) are those shown as part of a registered event or an event organised by an approved cultural institution (the department) (section 6F) and are subject to a conditional cultural exemption in relation to that showing. A film or computer game (software) "whose main purpose is for training, instruction or reference, as a manual, a lesson, an encyclopaedia or a guide" is an exempt 'educational film' or 'computer game'. Such films and computer games in the department are typically distributed to students/staff and include films of an educational, sporting, live performance or musical presentation type and computer games of an educational type.

Pay particular attention to older films with 'E' classifications, including documentaries that are commonly also exempt from classification, and to Check the Classification (CTC) ratings which have not yet been classified. Such resources need to be previewed to determine suitability.

Suitability for viewing is based on classifications which must be adhered to:

Advisory categories

The following classifications are advisory categories. This means there are no legal restrictions about viewing and/or playing these films and computer games, however teacher guidance is still required.

- **General (G)** materials contain content which is very mild in impact. The materials may contain classifiable elements such as language and themes that are very mild in impact. G rated content is considered suitable for everyone and may be used without parental consent.
- **Parental Guidance (PG)** content is considered mild in impact. The materials may contain content that children find confusing or upsetting and may require teacher guidance. PG resources may be used. It is recommended that teachers/leaders inform parents/carers to give them the opportunity to withdraw their children from the experience.
- **Mature (M)** is moderate in impact. These resources are only recommended for viewing by people aged 15 years or over. It is recommended that teachers/leaders inform parents/carers in writing about the use of M rated resources. Parents should be given the opportunity to withdraw their children from the experience. These resources are not suitable for children and young people under 15.

Restricted categories

The following classification categories are legally restricted:

- **Mature Accompanied (MA15+)** materials contain content which is strong in impact. These resources are legally restricted and must not be shown to, or played by, children and young people under the age of 15 unless accompanied by a parent or adult.
- **Restricted (R18+, X18+)** pertains to high impact content restricted to adults. These materials are legally restricted and must not be used.

These restrictions also apply to any films, games and visual resources, including resources that children and young people bring into a department site. All material should be previewed by a member of the site's professional staff to determine suitability in addition to following these classifications and guidelines.

Copyright considerations

All educators have a responsibility to demonstrate compliance with Commonwealth copyright requirements including legislation relating to broadcasting. Children and young people must be encouraged to respect copyrighted materials. Teachers and leaders should model good practice and demonstrate appropriate ways to acknowledge authorship, sources and licensing. Texts can be written, spoken or multimodal, and in print or digital/online forms. Multimodal texts combine language with other means of communication such as visual images, soundtrack or spoken word, as in film or computer presentation media. Digital texts are subject to copyright in much the same way as books, articles, art works, videos, photographs and other whole works. Most department sites have a learning management system (LMS) or content management system (CMS) which also require copyright controls.

Public showing of films, DVDs or commercially generated visual texts requires a licence or approval from the copyright owner. The Copyright Act permits teachers to play films to their students in class provided that it is for educational instruction. Schools must obtain a licence to play films for non-educational purposes. Films shown for non-educational, ie shown on the bus for a school excursion, school camps or rainy day/end of term day, are not covered under current department copyright licence agreements. As such, a separate licence needs to be obtained from Roadshow Public Performance Licensing, accessed through [Smartcopying](#) the guide to copyright issues for Australian schools. Schools may also consider subscribing to the co-curricular annual blanket licence scheme to avoid copyright infringement.

The [National Education Access Licence for Schools \(NEALS\)](#) is an agreement between the State departments of education, Catholic education offices, independent schools associations and the Commonwealth Department of education, employment and workplace relations which allows schools to copy and use publicly available educational materials produced by other educational bodies without copyright fees. If a document is labelled with a NEALS logo, schools are allowed to make unlimited copies of the material for educational purposes only.

Increasingly, more content creators are moving towards openly sharing resources through [Creative Commons \(CC\)](#) licensing. Refer to the [Creative Commons information pack for teachers and students](#) created by the National Copyright Unit for resources on using CC licencing for teaching and learning.

Open Educational Resources (OER) are designed to support curriculum creators to understand and use open education materials to create curriculum resources. Using OER allows teachers and students to fully engage in the material while assuming copyright compliance. The [OER Toolkit for teachers, curriculum and eLearning](#)

[developers \(PDF 5.5MB\)](#), created by the National Copyright Unit provides a practical guide to using OER.

Wherever content is sourced, all resources need to both attribute the creator and provide relevant copyright information, including licensing, to ensure copyright compliance.

The following sites provide up-to-date information for educators:

- [Smartcopying](#) – the official guide to copyright issues for Australian schools and TAFE, including the NEALS, Creative Commons and OER
- [Creative Commons](#) – an international non-profit organisation providing free licenses and tools that copyright owners can use to allow others to legally share, reuse and remix their material.

Checking the copyright documents, requirements and licensing of any resources uploaded or embedded into learning or teaching programs is required. Many online resources may be used freely when streamed directly. However, copyright advice accompanying the resource must be checked. Increasingly, a range of copyright-free resources are accessible online and should be considered where they represent an appropriate alternative.

[Scootle](#) provides a useful platform for educators to curate and share digital content, including units of work. However, as with all resources, educators must ensure compliance with copyright laws for using the selected materials.

Section 113P of the [Copyright Act 1968 \(Cth\)](#) allows schools and other educational institutions to copy and share text and images in ways that usually require permission. A guide to the copying limits for electronic or hardcopy work can be found at [Education Licence B: Statutory Text and Artistic Licence](#) (particularly electronic copying rules).

Related policies, guidelines, procedures and frameworks

When selecting resources, educators should ensure balanced and purposeful resource evaluation to meet the needs of children and young people and the intended learning outcomes. To ensure resources align with the curriculum and department policy, refer to the following:

- [Early Years Learning Framework \(PDF 25MB\)](#)
- [National Quality Standard](#)
- [Educators' Guide to the Framework for School Age Care in Australia \(PDF 5.4MB\)](#)
- [Australian Curriculum](#)
- [Teaching for Effective Learning framework](#)
- [South Australian Certificate of Education](#) (SACE)
- or other formally recognised curriculum frameworks.

The [curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and reporting: early childhood services to year 12 policy \(PDF 194KB\)](#) establishes expectations about using the [Teaching for Effective Learning framework](#) to optimise learning for all students. An important aspect of this expectation includes selecting and using resources appropriately.

Domain 2, [create safe conditions for rigorous learning](#) and domain 4 [personalise and connect learning](#) of the [Teaching for Effective Learning framework](#) are particularly relevant when selecting and using resources to

further support learning that improves student achievement, growth, challenge, engagement, and equity.

Teacher-librarians, resource centre managers, technology coordinators, team leaders and IT managers have key roles in selecting, managing and distributing a range of resources. They are well-placed to provide advice about selecting resources including conventional books, newspapers, magazines and journals, CDs, talking books and DVDs, conventional charts, digital images, e-collections, apps and a variety of digital resources. Existing resources require regular review for quality control and to monitor continuing relevance.

Using apps or free commercially developed resources

Educators at all levels who use and model critical appraisal of application software, apps, or other resources developed by commercial organisations, as well as specialist educational publishers, need to ensure that resources explicitly support children and young people to develop their abilities to critically assess the embedded values. Consideration must be given to possible biases and commercial interests within many free resources. Consider, long term costs of 'free' apps which may require future payment.

Many apps, both free and paid, may contain in-app advertising that promotes features, links, or additional purchases. Even with an apparent educational value, it is important to ensure additional advertising, features or content also are:

- subjected to adequate quality control
- endorsed by the department
- compliant with department policies or guidelines
- recommended for children or young people.

Teachers and leaders are required to regularly check both free apps and commercially available resources carefully to ensure that inappropriate or harmful material is not made available to children or young people.

Using experts or external service providers

Local experts, external consultants and service providers can contribute positively to children's and young people's educational experiences. Examples include performances by an individual or group, guest speakers, mentors, coaches, tutors, hourly paid instructors, counsellors and peers. Principals can also approve speakers for school visits to address student assemblies on suitable topics. As with other resource selection, the educational program should drive careful speaker selection. A balanced view must always be presented to students. Speakers should not use the opportunity to solely promote commercial products or services, or for other personal gain. Schools must not supply personal information about individual students to any private organisation.

For political speakers refer to the [political matters policy](#) (staff login required).

Developing responsible digital citizenship

Keeping pace with rapidly changing information technology is a challenge for everyone, especially educators. Digital resources are increasingly available to children and young people and the nature of these resources constantly changes. Educators have a responsibility to model critical judgement about the appropriateness and usefulness of both conventional and emerging digital resources.

Developing critical frameworks

As a shared responsibility, all involved in selecting and using resources need to exercise balance and sensitivity to assist children and young people to develop critical frameworks. These frameworks will guide them to independently select appropriate resources for educational and recreational use – both now and later in life. Developing responsible digital citizenship aligns with an emphasis on developing the Australian Curriculum general capabilities, in particular, the critical and creative thinking and information and communication technology capabilities.

Managing social media spaces and online communities

Social media and social networking platforms can provide access to a range of online resources and be used as a medium for authentically sharing and publishing children's and young people's work. However, sharing or publishing resources including work from a child or young person, or engaging children and young people in digital environments needs to be managed with consideration for responsible digital citizenship and child protection. Common resources include: social networks, blogs, wikis, video, audio and photo sharing, message boards and discussion forums. The department's [social media guideline](#) (staff login required) provide guidance about open and closed networking, codes of conduct, respect for and adherence to copyright legislation and safeguards for using social networks for educational purposes. The [social media guideline](#) (staff login required) also provides additional references identifying resources for teachers on using social media for teaching and learning activities.

In the event a concern or a complaint in relation to distributing school-developed resources via social media spaces, site leaders should be able to show that they had complied with the department's [social media guideline](#) (staff login required) and [social media policy](#) (staff login required) statements.

Responding to complaints and concerns

Despite taking care selecting and using resources in an educational site, concerns sometimes arise. Most commonly, concerns come from parents and carers and occasionally from a member of the public. Additionally, teachers, leaders, young people or children may also voice concerns. Consult the department's [complaint management policy](#) and [complaint management procedure \(PDF 664KB\)](#) when dealing with concerns.

Further considerations

Using resources relating to Aboriginal cultures

There are many cultural differences and expectations relating to how non-Aboriginal people may handle cultural traits and artefacts. If there are Aboriginal children or young people in a site, it is best to check with the relevant community about what is acceptable. In general, take care regarding ceremonial and other sacred activities relating to Aboriginal cultures. Of particular concern is the depiction of the dead. In this case, a warning should be included that the resource contains images of deceased people which may offend some groups. Be sure to provide opportunity for affected young people to withdraw.

The colour red poses an additional concern for some Aboriginal groups. Apart from consulting with

community leaders about what is appropriate, educators can also check the [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library and Information Resources Network](#) protocols. Wherever possible, educators should confirm the authenticity of artefacts or texts, such as the dreaming stories, and acknowledge their origins.

Potentially offensive or controversial content

If the materials are likely to be regarded as offensive or obscene by the school community, the resource cannot be used. Instead, consider alternative resources. Some controversial issues and resources may have educational merit or significance, yet may be controversial or considered inappropriate by some students or parents. In this case, consider alternative materials or arrangements for those students. If objections can be anticipated, the school must inform the relevant students and their parents of the controversial nature and inform them of available alternatives. Discussion with colleagues, curriculum managers or leadership personnel, where appropriate, and open communication with young people and parents or carers, in relation to the topic or issues, is recommended. Talking with individuals who may be affected is also recommended.

Using student images in teaching and learning resources or publishing of student work

Refer to the [consent to publish media and creative work of children, students and the community](#) page (staff login required). Images may not be posted on any publicly available online site unless permission has been granted and child protection obligations have been met.

Roles and responsibilities

Curriculum and Learning division

Providing advice and direction for leaders and teachers to develop expertise in curriculum, teaching and learning.

Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing this guideline to ensure that department sites have relevant and current information for selecting and using resources for educational purposes.

Complying with all relevant department policies and procedures.

Preschool director, school principal or site leader

Working collaboratively with other site leaders, teachers, the governing council and parents or carers to ensure practices selecting and using resources comply with relevant legislation, whole of Government and department policies, guidelines, procedures and frameworks.

Ensuring that site resources are reviewed on a regular basis.

Teacher-librarian or resource centre staff

Providing leadership in collaborating with teachers and leaders to select resources to support the teaching

and learning program.

Providing advice to other teachers and leaders about the availability and management of a range of resources and particularly emerging digital resources to supplement more conventional resources.

Ensuring a balance of resources that challenge children and young people to access knowledge and engage critically and sensitively with a range of ideas and views.

Complying with all relevant department policies and procedures.

IT or resource manager

Managing access to resources via the appropriate site networks.

Working with teacher-librarians, resource managers, teachers, leaders and others to ensure that digital resources that are uploaded or made available via site intranets or held in digital libraries, are compliant with department policies, guidelines, procedures and frameworks, copyright obligations and classification rankings.

Leadership teams

Ensuring that all resources selected for educational use are appropriate and relevant to achieving positive learning outcomes for all children and young people.

Working with teachers and support staff, young people and parents or carers to inform them of the relevance of resources within the educational program that may be considered controversial.

Teachers and support staff

Selecting and using educational resources creatively to support engaging pedagogies and relevant curriculum that challenges children and young people to become successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens ([Alice Springs \(Mparntwe\) Education Declaration](#) – goal 2).

Working with leadership teams and resource managers within a site to ensure that the range of resources used are relevant, challenging and engaging, address issues of cultural, physical, social, emotional and economic diversity and promote equity of access and social inclusion.

Complying with all relevant department policies and procedures.

Parents and/or carers

Being involved in the resource selection process eg through governing councils, committees or as individuals.

Knowing their options to recommend or express concern about particular resources.

Children and young people

Use resources with respect especially in relation to ensuring equitable access and adherence to department ICT user agreements, copyright and related controls.

Use digital resources including social media responsibly within an educational context.

External service providers

Use this guideline to inform product and service offerings.

Governing council

Provide advice to inform the enactment of this guideline.

Definitions

access

Access means providing opportunities for all children and young people to seek out and use information and learning resources.

children and young people

All children and young people enrolled at or attending a site as defined in this glossary.

risk

The description of the likelihood and consequence of a hazard causing harm, injury or loss.

selection

Selection means choosing the most suitable and the most appropriate resources from an available range to support engaging curriculum delivery and positive learning outcomes.

sites

All pre-schools, schools, alternative education centres or offsite learning programs, out of school hours care and vacation care services, the homes of family day care educators, children's centres and childcare centres.

site leader

The individual who has responsibility for the welfare and education of children and young people on a site, including the principal, director, manager or family day care educator or a person to whom the site leader has delegated authority.

Supporting information

[Anti-racism](#) (staff login required)

[Australian Classification](#)

[Australian Curriculum](#)

[Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum](#) (staff login required)

[My Time, Our Place: Framework for school age care in Australia](#) (PDF 27MB)

[National Quality Standard](#)

[Playing films, television and radio in schools](#)

[Smartcopying: The official guide for copyright issues for Australian schools and TAFE](#)

[South Australian Teaching for Effective Learning framework](#)

[SACE Board of South Australia](#)

[Scootle: National repository of digital resources aligned to the Australian curriculum](#)

Related legislation

[Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 \(Cth\)](#)

[Classifications \(Publications, Film and Computer Games\) Act 1995 \(Cth\)](#)

[Copyright Act 1968 \(Cth\)](#)

[Education and Children's Services Act 2019 \(SA\)](#)

[Education and Early Childhood Services \(Registration and Standards\) Act 2011 \(SA\)](#)

[Work Health and Safety Act 2012 \(SA\)](#)

Related policies

[Children and students with disability policy](#) (PDF 194KB)

[Curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and reporting: early childhood services to year 12 guideline](#) (PDF 343KB)

[Curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and reporting: early childhood services to year 12 policy](#) (PDF 194KB)

[Early Years Learning Framework](#) (PDF 25MB)

[ICT cyber security standard](#) (PDF 488KB)

[Political matters policy](#) (staff login required)

[Social media guideline](#) (staff login required)

[Social media policy](#) (staff login required)

Record history

Published date: March 2024

Approvals

OP number: 239

File number: 14/5180

Status: approved

Version: 1.5

Policy officer: Policy and Project Officer, Curriculum Development

Policy sponsor: Director, Curriculum Development

Responsible Executive Director: Executive Director, Curriculum and Learning

Approved by: Director, Curriculum Development

Approved date: 27 February 2024

Next review date: 27 February 2027

Revision record

Version: 1.5

Approved by: Director, Curriculum Development

Approved date: 27 February 2024

Review date: 27 February 2027

Amendment(s): Updated to reflect change of ownership to Curriculum Development.

Version: 1.4

Approved by: Director, Strategic Design

Approved date: 13 April 2023

Review date: 13 April 2026

Amendment(s): Updated hyperlinks.

Version: 1.3

Approved by: Director, Strategic Design

Approved date: 7 May 2020

Review date: 30 March 2023

Amendment(s): Minor edit to update to new template, edit for plain English according to Writing style guide, applied new classification ratings, revised references to updated supporting information and corrected broken hyperlinks, incorporated references to Alice Springs Mparntwe Education Declaration and Education and Children's Services Act 2019.

Version: 1.2

Approved by: director, Strategic Design

Approved date: 9 April 2019

Review date: 17 March 2020

Amendment(s): Minor edit to update to new template, machinery of government changes and updates to hyperlinks.

Version: 1.1

Approved by: Senior executive group business

Approved date 24 October 2017

Review date: 17 March 2019

Amendment(s): Administrative edit to update broken hyperlinks

Version: 1.0

Approved by: NIL

Approved date: 1 March 2016

Review date: NIL

Amendment(s): Development of New Guideline: replaces Choosing and using teaching and learning materials Guidelines for preschools and schools and Video/DVD Viewing information.

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