# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority – comparison

**The following tables show the relationship between the Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 1.0 (VC1) and the Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0 (VC2).**

## Introduction

| Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 1.0 | Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0 | Comment |
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| The Victorian Curriculum F–10 includes opportunities for students to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures. The knowledge and skills that students are expected to develop about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders histories and cultures have a particular and enduring importance and assists students to understand the uniqueness of these cultures and the wisdom and knowledge embedded in them.Introduction Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are the oldest, continuous cultures in the world, having existed in Australia for at least 50,000 years. The uniqueness of these cultures and the wisdom and knowledge embedded in them are things to be highly valued by all Victorians. The Victorian Curriculum includes the knowledge and skills students are expected to develop about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders histories and cultures, given their particular and enduring importance.  | The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority provides opportunities for all students to deepen their knowledge and understanding of Australia by learning about the world’s oldest continuous living cultures. Students learn that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are strong, resilient, rich and diverse. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority sets out essential cultural knowledge that all Australians should know: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples form significant, diverse and resilient living communities within contemporary society. Learning about this cross-curriculum priority is embedded in the curriculum areas of the Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0. Through this cross-curriculum priority, the Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0, in the words of the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration:… provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with the ability to see themselves, their identities and cultures reflected in the curriculum; and allows all students to engage in reconciliation, respect and recognition of the world’s oldest continuous living cultures.[[1]](#footnote-2)Learning about the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority requires engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ knowledges, experiences, values and perspectives. For the Australian Curriculum Version 9.0 cross-curriculum priority, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), through its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Advisory Group, sought the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to inform the key aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures that all Australians should know. For the development of the Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0, the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) and the VCAA have collaborated to ensure this cross-curriculum priority meets Victorian standards and is relevant to the Victorian context.It is crucial to involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in decision-making about information relevant to them. Working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples has ensured a respectful and culturally responsive curriculum, with appropriate language. Shared decision-making is an essential component of reconciliation and strengthening relationships. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living throughout Victoria and across the country are diverse. While the term ‘Koorie’, or ‘Koori’, is commonly used to describe the Aboriginal Peoples of Victoria, the Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0 cross-curriculum priority uses the term ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ throughout because the cross-curriculum priority includes all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Within the cross-curriculum priority, ‘histories’ and ‘cultures’ are used as broad terms. ‘Histories’ relates to more than the History curriculum area; it also relates to contexts and perspectives in multiple curriculum areas in the Victorian Curriculum F–10. ‘Cultures’ refers to ways of being, knowing, thinking and doing. Living communities and identity are central to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority. | More information provided to assist with teachability. The role of partnerships and the consultation process is highlighted |

## Organising ideas

| Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 1.0 | Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0 | Comment |
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| **Country/Place** highlights and celebrates the unique belief systems that connect Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples physically and spiritually to Country/Place. | Country and PlaceThrough the ‘Country and Place’ organising ideas, students are able to recognise the special connection to Country and Place and celebrate the unique belief systems that connect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples physically and spiritually to Country and Place.‘Country’ refers to the physical environment that a particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ group has a relationship with. This is a reciprocal and deep relationship, where Country both owns and is owned by the People. For Torres Strait Islander Peoples, ‘Place’ is a space mapped out that individuals or groups occupy and regard as their own and that has varying degrees of spirituality; for Aboriginal Peoples, ‘Place’ refers to the special places that exist within Country.Students understand that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are the Traditional Owners of Country and Place, and they develop their knowledge of native title law. Through these organising ideas, the rights and interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Country and Place are recognised and the impacts of colonisation and the doctrine of terra nullius on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ ownership of, and access to, Country and Place are acknowledged. | More information provided to clarify the context for the organising ideas, including definitions of ‘Country’ and ‘Place’ |
| Australia has two distinct Indigenous groups (Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples) and within those groups there is significant diversity. | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities of Australia maintain a deep connection to, and responsibility for, Country and Place and have holistic values and belief systems that are connected to the land, sea, sky and waterways. VC2CCPACP1 | Codes have been added to identify each organising idea in VC2 This VC1 idea is now incorporated into the third organising idea (VC2CCPACP3) in VC2 |
| Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities maintain a special connection to and responsibility for Country/Place. | The occupation and colonisation of the land now known as Australia by the British, under the now overturned doctrine of terra nullius, were experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as an invasion that denied their occupancy of, and connection to, Country and Place. VC2CCPACP2 | The description of the connection to Country and Place in VC1 has been moved to the first organising idea (VC2CCPACP3) in VC2The impact of the occupation and colonisation by the British on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ connections to Country and Place is introduced in this organising idea (VC2CCPACP2) in VC2 |
| First Nations communities of Australia maintain a deep connection to, and responsibility for, Country/Place and have holistic belief systems that are connected to the land, sea, sky and waterways. | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are the Traditional Owners of Country and Place, protected in Australian law by the *Native Title Act 1993*, which recognises pre-existing sovereignty, continuing systems of law and customs, and connection to Country and Place.VC2CCPACP3  | The VC1 statement is now incorporated into the first organising idea (VC2CCPACP1) in VC2 Native title is now addressed in this organising idea (VC2CCPACP3)  |
| **Culture** examines the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures through language, ways of life and experiences as expressed through historical, social and political lenses. | CultureThe ‘Culture’ organising ideas help develop students’ understanding of the cultural diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, including their unique ways of being, knowing, thinking and doing. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are recognised as belonging to the world’s oldest continuous cultures and the many historic and enduring impacts of colonisation on the cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are acknowledged. Through these organising ideas, students understand that the cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are not static and that they have internationally enshrined special rights that ensure they can be maintained, controlled, protected and developed. | More information provided to clarify the context for the organising ideas in ‘Culture’ |
| Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies have diverse and distinct languages and dialects, customs and beliefs. First Nations Australians have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop cultural expressions, as Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property. | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies are diverse and have distinct cultural expressions, such as language, customs and beliefs. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural expressions, while also maintaining the right to control, protect and develop culture as Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property. VC2CCPAC1 | Refined language: ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander’ used instead of ‘First Nations’  |
| Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ ways of life are uniquely expressed through ways of being, knowing, thinking and doing. | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ ways of life reflect unique ways of being, knowing, thinking and doing. VC2CCPAC2 | Wording refined from VC1 to VC2, from ‘uniquely expressed through’ to ‘reflect unique ways of’ |
| The First Peoples of Australia (Aboriginal peoples) belong to the world’s oldest continuous cultures. The First Nations Peoples of Australia (Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples) demonstrate resilience in the maintenance, practice and revitalisation of culture, despite the historic and enduring impacts of colonisation. | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people belong to the world’s oldest continuous cultures. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples demonstrate resilience in the maintenance, practice and revitalisation of culture despite the many historic and enduring impacts of colonisation, and they continue to celebrate and share the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures. VC2CCPAC3 | Refined language: ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander’ used instead of ‘First Nations’. Included ‘continue to celebrate and share the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures’ |
| **People**addresses the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies. It examines kinship structures and the significant contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on a local, national and global scale. | PeopleThrough the ‘People’ organising ideas, students learn about the occupation of the Australian continent and adjacent islands by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples from time immemorial. Students develop their awareness and understanding that Australia has 2 distinct groups of First Nations Peoples, each encompassing a diversity of nations and peoples. Through these organising ideas, students build their understanding of the sophisticated social organisation systems, protocols and kinship structures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and the significant contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ histories and cultures on a local, national and global scale. | More information provided to clarify the context of the organising ideas of ‘People’ |
| The broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies encompass a diversity of nations across Australia. | Australia has 2 distinct First Nations Peoples; each encompasses a diversity of nations across Australia. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have occupied the Australian continent and adjacent islands from time immemorial. VC2CCPAP1 | Refined to include ‘the Australian continent and adjacent islands from time immemorial’, acknowledging the occupation of this land and adjacent islands from time long past, beyond record |
| Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have sophisticated political, economic, and social organisation systems, which include family and kinship structures, laws, traditions, customs, land tenure systems, and protocols for strong governance and authority. | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have sophisticated political, economic and social organisation systems, which include but are not limited to family and kinship structures, laws, traditions, customs, land tenure systems and protocols for strong governance and authority. VC2CCPAP2 | Refined to include ‘but are not limited to’ |
| The significant contributions of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the present and past are acknowledged locally, nationally, and globally. | The significant and ongoing contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and their histories and cultures are acknowledged locally, nationally and globally. VC2CCPAP3  | Refined to include ‘ongoing’ and ‘their histories and cultures’ |

1. * Council of Australian Governments, Education Council (2019) [Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration](https://www.education.gov.au/alice-springs-mparntwe-education-declaration), p. 15, Australian Government Department of Education website. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)