A country perspective on “Assessment of Transversal Competencies”: The case of Australia

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14 December 2016
Australian Context

• Federation: 8 states/territories and federal govt.
• Approx. 10,000 schools
• National curriculum and assessment (ACARA)
  – ACARA develops
  – S/T implement
  – NAP: Assess literacy, numeracy, ICTL, Science, Civics
• Complex governance
  – ACARA not govt. ministry (funded 50/50 fed and S/T)
  – Mix of government, religious and independent schools
  – All (9) ministers must agree on national policies
Australian Curriculum (AC)

• Three-dimensional curriculum
  – Endorsed in 2015 with varying implementation
  – 8 Learning Areas
  – 3 Cross-Curriculum Priorities
  – 7 General Capabilities (Transversal Competencies):
    Literacy, Numeracy, Information and Communication
    Technology (ICT) Capability, Critical and Creative Thinking,
    Personal and Social Capability, Ethical Understanding,
    Intercultural Understanding
• CCP and GP embedded within LA as authentic and practical
# Australian Curriculum Learning Areas and TVCs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Australian Curriculum Learning Areas</th>
<th>TVCs</th>
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<tr>
<td>Humanities and Social Sciences (Civics and Citizenship subject area)</td>
<td>Global Citizenship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health and Physical Education</td>
<td>Interpersonal skills</td>
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<td>Intrapersonal skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technologies (Digital Technologies subject area)</td>
<td>Media and Information Literacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Arts (Media Arts subject area)</td>
<td>Media and Information Literacy</td>
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Study Findings

• Embedding of TVCs in the AC through the general capabilities is a significant systemic action to equip students with essential knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions

• Variation in the emphasis given to the TVCs by state and territory curriculum and schooling authorities and schools
  – Some state and territory authorities have taken steps to obtain greater insight into students’ acquisition of the TVCs
  – Some interest expressed by individuals, groups and state curriculum and schooling authorities for the assessment of general capabilities in the Australian Curriculum to be included in the NAP

• Principals play a key role in emphasis and support
Challenges

• Teachers’ knowledge and skills in relation to teaching the TVCs
• Lack of assessment expertise (general and specific to TVCs)
• Lack of appropriate assessment tools (formative and summative)
• Resources
• Need to assess GCs in the context of the various Learning Areas
Conclusion

• While there is growing interest in assessing student achievement in the Australian Curriculum general capabilities, it is too early in the implementation of the Australian Curriculum to capture sustained assessment practices or to make definitive statements about trends and directions in assessing TVCs across Australian schools.