

The arts

This section of the report seeks to describe progress on education in the arts in Australian schools. In nominating this area of the curriculum for special attention Ministers were mindful of National Goal 6h:

To develop in students an appreciation and understanding of, and confidence to participate in, the creative arts.

The National Curriculum Statement on the Arts identifies dance, drama, media, music and the visual arts (incorporating art, craft and design) as the five key strands of the arts. The statement acknowledges that, while this is not a complete listing of arts forms, the five are widely accepted as major forms of arts activity and are representative of the arts, both in schools and in the wider community. The statement points out that, although these arts forms are often used in inter-related ways, each has its own characteristics and body of knowledge, and each makes its own distinctive contribution to learning.

Student participation in the arts

Primary and junior secondary

Arts education forms a significant part of the curriculum in all Australian primary and junior secondary schools. During 1998, however, the manner in which students participated varied from system to system. The examples that follow are intended to describe both the manner and extent of participation at this stage of schooling.

In accordance with the *Education Act 1990*, primary schools in New South Wales must provide all students with knowledge, understanding and experiences in visual arts and music each year. Schools were assisted in meeting this requirement when the Office of the Board of Studies completed work on the creative arts K–6 draft syllabus in November 1998. The syllabus includes dance, drama, music and visual arts and will be trialled in all schools in NSW before implementation in the year 2000.

In Victorian government schools in 1997, the amount of time allocated to education in the arts indicate that primary school students spent an average of 2.5 hours per week on the arts in the early years, declining to 2.2 hours per week by year 6. In the first two years of secondary school, students averaged 3 hours per week on the arts.

The picture was similar in the independent sector in Victoria where, generally, primary students spent less time per week

than secondary students in arts studies, with primary students averaging 2 hours per week and secondary students 3 hours.

In Queensland schools, while music and art were mandatory in the primary sector, curriculum guides were also available in dance, drama and media. In 1998, schools included these in the curriculum, either as part of physical education and English programs, or as separate subjects. Most secondary schools continued to offer a number of arts subjects, including two or three in core studies at year 8.

In Queensland's government sector, over 80 per cent of primary school students attended schools where the general class music program was taught by a specialist music teacher and 471 full- or part-time teachers were employed for this purpose. Other schools had access to a quality program through the use of *Tune In Levels 1–4*, a resource developed by Education Queensland for schools without access to specialist assistance.

Early childhood language and cultural education programs were enriched through performances by Education Queensland's KITE theatre. KITE provided in-school theatre experiences in 114 schools across the State, and a total of 142 performances of four different shows were enjoyed by 11,650 young students. The Queensland Arts Council, over the course of a longstanding agreement with Education Queensland, provided 5385 performances (supported by curriculum materials) to an overall total of 668,516 students, including many in remote areas.

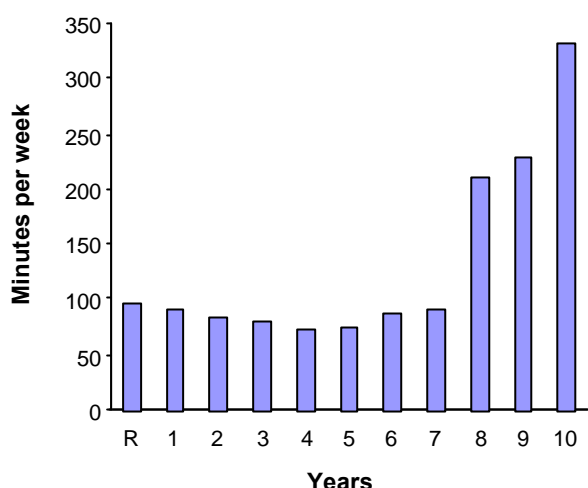
Also in Queensland, an Instrumental Music program has been offered as an elective in both primary and secondary schools since 1971. The program offers two contacts a week – free small group tuition in band and orchestral instruments and required participation in school bands and orchestras. In 1998, the program was offered in 754 schools across the State and involved over 45,000 students taught by 370 full- and part-time instrumental music instructors.

Table 3.22 Mean curriculum time on the arts by year level, government schools, Victoria, 1997

<i>Year level</i>	<i>Hours per week</i>
Prep–year 2	2.5
Years 3–4	2.3
Years 5–6	2.2
Year 7	3.0
Year 8	3.0

Source: Office of Review Benchmarks, Vic

Figure 3.5 Allocated time for arts studies by year group, Catholic schools, SA, 1998



Source: CEO, SA

The pattern of curriculum time for the arts, whereby the amount allocated decreased during the early primary years and increased as students entered early secondary years, was also evident in South Australian Catholic schools, as is illustrated in Figure 3.5. All students in these schools participated in arts education. In many schools this was through a specific

timetable allocation, for example a music lesson. In other cases the arts were integrated into the teaching program. Many schools provided opportunities for students to be involved in choirs, musicals or drama productions. At lower secondary level, years 8 and 9, music and/or art were compulsory subjects.

Senior secondary

Students in the senior secondary years construct a course by selecting from a range of available subjects. Decisions concerning the inclusion of an arts subject will be determined by a variety of factors, including availability of particular subjects, career aspirations, enjoyment of the learning area and the need for a balanced course.

Table 3.23 shows the changes in participation that have been taking place since 1991. Some features of the pattern revealed are:

- an overall increase in enrolments in the arts at year 12 from 47,164 students in 1991 to 60,944 students in 1998, an increase of over 29 per cent
- an increase in male year 12 arts enrolments from 33.6 per cent in 1991 to 35.7 per cent in 1998.

Table 3.23 Arts enrolments, year 12, by gender and strand, Australia, 1991–98*

	1991			1992			1993			1994		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
Visual arts	8,174	18,511	26,685	12,202	21,359	33,561	11,078	20,189	31,267	11,200	21,109	32,309
Dance	41	472	513	132	782	914	98	938	1,036	57	851	908
Drama	1,600	5,020	6,620	3,167	6,852	10,019	2,442	7,610	10,052	2,510	7,682	10,192
Music	2,987	4,744	7,731	3,607	4,556	8,163	3,348	4,262	7,610	3,493	4,528	8,021
Media	3,087	2,528	5,615	7,038	4,653	11,691	6,530	4,527	11,057	5,821	4,123	9,944
Total enrolments	15,889	31,275	47,164	26,146	38,202	64,348	23,496	37,526	61,022	23,081	38,293	61,374
	1995			1996			1997			1998		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
Visual arts	9,682	17,644	27,326	10,117	18,654	28,771	10,104	18,631	28,735	9,386	19,033	28,419
Dance	90	1,009	1,099	85	1,150	1,235	81	1,402	1,483	70	1,451	1,521
Drama	2,555	7,769	10,324	2,776	8,304	11,080	3,045	8,799	11,844	3,025	8,811	11,836
Music	3,216	4,106	7,322	3,676	3,886	7,562	3,569	4,486	8,055	3,627	4,882	8,509
Media	5,760	4,589	10,349	5,802	5,094	10,896	5,922	5,171	11,093	5,649	5,010	10,659
Total enrolments	21,303	35,117	56,420	22,456	37,088	59,544	22,721	38,489	61,210	21,757	39,187	60,944

Note: This table provides information on enrolments in strands of the arts key learning area. The figures may differ from the number of students studying arts as students may be enrolled in one or more strands in a KLA.

Source: DETYA

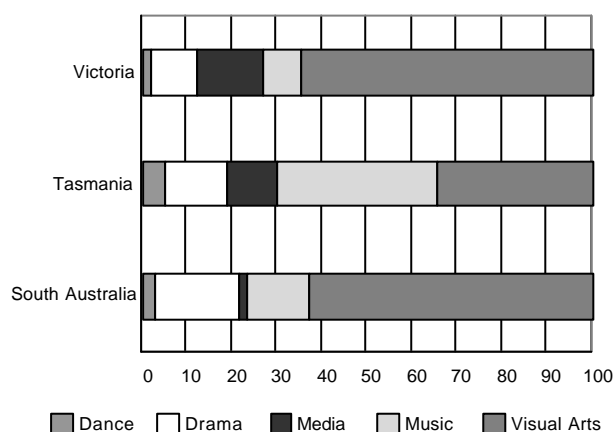
Table 3.24 Arts enrolments, year 12, by gender and strand, Australia, 1991–98 (per cent)

	1991			1992			1993			1994		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
Visual arts	51	59	57	47	56	52	47	54	51	49	55	53
Dance	0	2	1	1	2	1	0	3	2	0	2	2
Drama	10	16	14	12	18	16	10	20	17	11	20	17
Music	19	15	16	14	12	13	14	11	13	15	12	13
Media	19	8	12	27	12	18	28	12	18	25	11	16
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	1995			1996			1997			1998		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
Visual arts	46	50	48	45	50	48	44	48	47	43	49	47
Dance	0	3	2	0	3	2	0	4	2	0	4	2
Drama	12	22	18	12	22	19	13	23	19	14	22	19
Music	15	12	13	16	11	13	16	12	13	17	12	14
Media	27	13	18	26	14	18	26	13	18	26	13	17
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Note: The above table shows the enrolments in each arts category. It should be noted that a student can be enrolled in one or more arts subject.

Source: DETYA

Figure 3.6. Arts enrolments by strand, selected States, 1998 (per cent)



Note: Percentages are for year 12 enrolments across all sectors in the States concerned.

Source: DETYA

Further analysis of this data is provided in Table 3.24 which looks at the share of enrolments held by each strand. It is apparent that, while visual arts remains the most popular strand, it has lost some of its enrolment to dance, drama and media.

A number of States have provided information which shows that there were two significant features of the enrolment patterns in the arts in 1998. The first was a continuation in the large variation in participation in the individual strands. Figure 3.6 shows the percentage enrolments in subjects representing the various strands in a number of States.

It is apparent that the visual arts attracted the great majority of enrolments in 1998, although there were some interesting variations between States, for example the relatively high number of enrolments in music subjects in Tasmania.

The second significant feature of the pattern of participation in the arts, becomes apparent when enrolments are analysed by gender. Once again the pattern is similar to that of previous years, with females out-numbering males in most strands as, for example, in Victoria (see Table 3.25).

Table 3.25 Arts enrolments, year 12, by gender, Victoria, 1998 (per cent)

	Female	Male
Art	66	34
Dance	92	8
Drama	66	34
Dance styles	92	8
Graphic communication	40	60
Music performance – solo	56	44
Music performance – group	39	61
Media	55	45
Music history and styles	61	39
Studio arts	63	37
Theatre studies	68	32

Source: Board of Studies, Victoria

The gender difference in enrolments was evident in every jurisdiction. In Queensland, for example, females were twice as

likely to take arts subjects as males. There were approximately twice as many females taking the subjects art and music, three times as many taking drama, and 20 times as many taking dance.

Displaying achievement in the arts

One of the characteristics of learning in the arts is the capacity to display student achievement by means of exhibitions, performances, festivals, concerts and special events.

New South Wales

In New South Wales, student achievement for all age groups was highlighted by the State's extensive range of performance and exhibition opportunities. Overseas tours provide international exposure for highly talented students in music, dance, drama and visual arts.

The Talent Development Project is a joint initiative of the department and the entertainment industry to prepare students for and promote careers in the arts. Members of the performing arts sector work closely with selected students to help them refine their talents. In July 1997, 48 students were auditioned for the program and 32 students were selected for the initial phase of instruction and workshops. At the end of 1997, the most improved of these students were chosen to advance to graduation. Prior to graduating in August 1998, these performers concentrated on polishing and developing their talents in order to further their careers in the industry.

In 1998, the NSW Board of Studies and the Department of Education and Training presented the highly acclaimed annual showcase of top HSC talent in visual arts, music, drama and dance. These performances and exhibitions were presented at world-class venues in Sydney and many toured regional centres. As well, 14 concerts were held in the Sydney Opera house, involving 10,000 performers and audiences of 25,000.

Queensland

In Queensland, schools participated in major regional and statewide eisteddfods, festivals, exhibitions and arts-related competitions. The largest competition was the Queensland Festival of Music, which had over 30,000 student participants in bands, orchestras and choirs. In addition, the 1998 Excellence in Youth Art Exhibition showcased the art of years 8–12 students in a combined exhibition from government and non-government schools. A particular feature in 1998 was Fanfare 98, the statewide festival of bands and orchestras. Over 15,000 students in 508 ensembles participated in 11

regional festivals, from which the best were selected to perform in a statewide festival. The program concluded with a gala concert featuring the final five ensembles.

A further significant event in Queensland in 1998 was the Minister's Awards for Excellence in Art program. This involved 15 district exhibitions, through which 46 talented students were selected to attend four days of workshops in Brisbane led by leading artists. During 1998, the works from the 1997 program toured to ten regional galleries and the work from 1998 will be displayed in the Brisbane City Gallery in 1999.

Tasmania

The work of Tasmanian students was also featured during 1998. Independent schools participated in events such as the Adelaide Festival of Arts and a National Convention in New Zealand, while the following were typical of the involvement of students from government schools:

- 29 schools were involved in the Media Postcards Project, which culminated in the Media Postcards 'Posties' Awards Ceremony. These were five-minute videos produced by students.
- Two CDs of work were produced through the Rock Doctor Program.
- A book, *Two Rivers: A Reflective Journey*, written and illustrated by students, was published.
- A resource of images and digital footage to be accessed through a website was developed by the Aboriginal Students Cultural Arts Program on Big Dog Island.
- Portrait of a District, a black and white photography exhibition by K–12 students at 19 schools in the Derwent District in southern Tasmania, was mounted.

Australian Capital Territory

In the ACT, students and staff from government and non-government schools collaborated on the Smart ARTS Carnival, which featured music, dance, theatre sports and displays of art, ceramics and glass works. A further example of collaborative endeavours was provided by a weekend arts celebration, which was jointly presented by a senior secondary college and a community arts centre. It included visual art, ceramics, photography, multimedia, dance, drama and music.

Throughout the year in the ACT, dance programs offered students a range of experiences and were often integrated with curriculum areas such as physical education, drama and music. Students participated in the Rock Eisteddfod and the Canberra High Schools and Colleges Dance Festival. Over 1,300

students took part in the festival and performed to over 3,000 people. Both dance festivals focussed on creativity and innovation. Students also participated in the Oz Dance Festival and performed dance for the opening of Refugee Week at a shopping centre.

In ACT Catholic schools, education in the arts is gaining a higher profile at primary, secondary and senior secondary levels. An increasing number of schools are offering instrument tuition programs, initiating choirs and presenting musicals and dramatic productions. At secondary schools dance has been developing as an elective program and has formed an important part of quality productions, particularly the Rock Eisteddfod.

In the independent sector, ACT schools provided a wide range of arts opportunities for their students in 1998. In the performing arts, student access to dance and music programs was enhanced and students took part in musicals, sang in school choirs, played in school bands or string orchestras, performed drama or worked with artists-in-residence. In the visual arts, students took part in the School Arts Week, as well as participating in exhibitions, competitions and workshops. Media activities included helping to produce the school newsletter, designing the school website, entering a website competition, and establishing a new multimedia centre.

Measuring achievement in the arts

South Australia

At the end of the 1998 school year, South Australian government schools provided achievement information on more than 12,000 students in years 1–8 in the arts learning area. The collection of profiles data from schools allowed teachers to choose not to assign a level to a student for a number of reasons. For example, it was possible that one strand was not taught during the year or the term when the data were collected, or the school timetable may not have included all students in some strands during that time. The number of students assigned levels varied by strand and year level. Students were most frequently assigned levels in the visual arts strand, ranging from 88.8 per cent in year 2, to 61.6 per cent in year 8.

Table 3.26 Median arts level by strand and year, government schools, SA, 1998

<i>Strand</i>	<i>Yr 1</i>	<i>Yr 2</i>	<i>Yr 3</i>	<i>Yr 4</i>	<i>Yr 5</i>	<i>Yr 6</i>	<i>Yr 7</i>	<i>Yr 8</i>
Dance	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3
Drama	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3
Media	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	4
Music	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3
Visual arts	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3

Source: Dept. of Education, Training and Employment, SA

Among students in years 1 and 2, the median student achievement was Level 1 in all five strands of the arts profile. In year 3, the median achievement was Level 1 in four strands, and Level 2 in visual arts. This pattern appears to repeat, so that the median achievement in years 4 and 5 was Level 2, and in year 6 the median achievement was Level 2 in four strands, and Level 3 in visual arts.

In year 7, the median achievement was Level 3 in four strands, but only Level 2 in dance. In year 8, the only secondary year in the collection, the only different strand was media, with the median achievement being Level 4. In all other strands, the median achievement was Level 3.

For most strands and most year levels, there was little difference in the median level achieved by boys and girls.

In dance and music, girls achieved Level 2 and Level 3 before the boys. In media, boys had achieved Level 4 before girls.

Western Australia

Western Australia's Monitoring Standards in Education 1998 report provided data based on the 1996 testing of students in years 3, 7 and 10. Some aspects of the results are summarised in Table 3.27.

Further analysis revealed that at each year level and in each discipline girls significantly out-performed boys in all but year 3 media. In addition, the results showed that Indigenous students performed significantly worse than the rest of the population in years 3 and 7, while the year 10 sample was too small to produce a reliable comparison. In most areas, there appeared to be no significant differences between the performances of students from English-speaking backgrounds and those from a language background other than English. An interesting exception to this general observation was year 3 music in which students from language backgrounds other than English significantly out-performed English-speaking students.

Table 3.27 Performance in arts strands, years 3, 7 and 10, government schools, WA, 1998

<i>Discipline</i>	<i>Year 3</i>	<i>Year level Year 7</i>	<i>Year 10</i>
Dance	Over 80% achieved Level 2 outcomes	Over 60% achieved Level 3 outcomes	Over 70% achieved Level 4 outcomes
Drama	Over 95% achieved Level 2 outcomes	Over 85% achieved Level 3 outcomes	Over 70% achieved Level 4 outcomes
Media	Over 95% achieved Level 2 outcomes	Over 90% achieved Level 3 outcomes	Over 60% achieved Level 4 outcomes
Music	Over 80% achieved Level 2 outcomes	Over 55% achieved Level 3 outcomes	Over 80% achieved Level 4 outcomes
Visual arts	Over 95% achieved Level 2 outcomes	Over 80% achieved Level 3 outcomes	Over 55% achieved Level 4 outcomes

Source: Education Dept of WA

Significant developments in arts education

New South Wales

In New South Wales, some of the major initiatives in the arts in the government sector during 1998 included:

- the distribution of State funding to regional conservatoriums and music centres through the Department of Education and Training's Performing Arts Unit. This process is intended to lead to closer cooperation between conservatoriums and their local schools
- the alignment of areas of arts education with special events, celebrations and international relations. New South Wales government school students are encouraged to participate in a wide range of major public performances and exhibitions which have a high profile both within New South Wales and internationally. Special events include Australia Day, Anzac Day, visits by overseas heads of State, the Olympic Arts Festivals, the 2000 Olympic Games, the Paralympic Games and the Pacific School Games.

Two major new programs were established to support curriculum implementation and enhance performance and exhibition opportunities for students. These were:

- *Sing 2001* – this statewide program involved establishing student choirs in all 40 districts, each with a selected conductor and manager. *Sing 2001* impacted directly on 7,000 students and 200 staff, and indirectly on many more. Curriculum materials supported the implementation of singing in school classroom programs
- *Dance 2001* – this statewide program was based around dance workshops and ensembles and was designed to support teachers in developing classroom-based practice. The program will also support the major outdoor performances of the years 2000 and 2001. Professional

dancers and teachers were employed as tutors in a series of workshops for students and teachers in each of the 40 school districts. The program impacted directly on 8,000 students and 200 teachers and tutors.

Further support for teaching and learning in the arts in 1998 included:

- the production of curriculum materials (print, video, CD and Internet) and consultancy services
- the employment of 20 district arts consultants to support curriculum implementation in schools (K–12). This support complemented the existing six arts consultants in the Curriculum Support Directorate
- undertaking a Multicultural Perspectives in the Arts project. This project involved selected schools (primary and secondary) from different districts around the State to develop programs on multicultural perspectives in drama and visual arts. The programs will be trialled and published as units of work for distribution to all schools.

Queensland

Significant curriculum development in the arts occurred in Queensland, where a start was made on the Years 1–10 Arts Curriculum project. From January to August 1998, and after consultation with the syllabus advisory committee, professional associations and the arts consultative network, the project team developed a design brief, which was approved by the Queensland School Curriculum Council in September 1998.

A draft syllabus for trial schools was developed in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders. A large syllabus advisory committee made up of representatives from the State, independent and Catholic schooling systems, professional organisations and parent bodies helped steer the document into its current form. A consultative network consisting of over

200 individuals and groups also provided valuable feedback during the developmental stages.