



Dance Educators Professional Association of NSW

DEPA NSW/PTC April 10, 2018 Draft Creative Arts K-6 Syllabus Consultation

DEPA NSW' response to the Draft Creative Arts K-6 Syllabus

General

- DEPA NSW Supports the retention of each arts discipline area as a discrete study, while highlighting the paradox that while each of the art forms is acknowledged to be a discrete entity, ***with distinctive bodies of knowledge, creative and critical practices*** they are being 'forced' to fit into ONE overarching framework, with **common learning domains** that of 'Making' and 'Investigating'. In the performing arts it is clearly possible to separate 'Performing' and 'Making'. They are two very different activities.
- It appears that each discipline has been led to convey outcomes with some form of common, language/framework when there are clearly physical, social, aesthetic and artistic differences.
- DEPA NSW strongly opposes the removal of 'Performance' as a learning domain within the study of dance as an art form. This is seen as a significant retreat from what is considered by research to be best practice. However, a workable compromise could be to retain ***'Investigating'*** but change ***'Making'*** to ***'Making and Performing'***.
- Given that this draft syllabus sits within the K-10 framework, there is great concern for the ongoing study of Dance 'Performance' in Years 7-12. A failure by NESA to provide any Philosophical/Educational/Artistic rationale raises the spectre of 'ulterior motives'.

Specific

- The diagram on Page 26 is labelled as ***'an illustrative representation of elements of Dance and their relationship'***. These are NOT the elements of dance as they appear in existing dance syllabuses, nor the general understanding of them as they appear in dance literature.
- Stage outcome statements provide little support and guidance in that they are largely identical with only slight changes in wording.
- There is little differentiation in outcomes between Stage 1 (5/6 year olds) and Stage 3 (10/12 year olds), when there are clearly physical, social and intellectual differences in terms of what students are capable of achieving.
- Attempting to subsume 'Performing' into 'Making' sees the use of terms such as ***'artist/performer'*** which is defined in the draft document as ***'people who individually or collaboratively create works'***. Performers can be artists and vice-versa and neither has to be a creator or maker in the art form of dance.
- There is a perception that the dance document is simply a 'grab bag' of dance terminology, expressions and ideas that often lack accuracy and cohesion. A consequence is that the outcomes are often unrealistic and would in some instances challenge senior students.
- There are references to the random inclusion of ***cultural dance*** without consideration of the complexity, subtlety, protocols and possible inappropriate appropriations of the same.
- Definitions/explanations/glossary range from the confounding: ***'In the Creative Arts artform refers to the particular physical, material, symbolic and virtual properties used by artists/performers to create works that are present in the combinations of making, performing, composing and use of material and technical skills and technologies;*** To the puerile: ***'Classical Ballet'*** is ***'Classical Theatrical Dance'***; to the humorous: ***'alignment'*** being defined as ***'when an imaginary vertical line can be drawn from the head to the toes'***; to the incredulous: when does a glossary definition end with ***'etc.'*** Too many others to point out here.

DEPA NSW has grave fears for NESA's reputation as an internationally renowned 'Education Standards Authority' should this document appear without a major re-imagining and re-write.