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## Religious education: Outcomes-based integration across the primary curriculum

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# *Religious Education:*

## *Outcomes-based Integration across the Primary Curriculum*

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**Paul Longobardi**

**TITLE PAGE**

**TITLE:**                   **Religious Education:**  
**Outcomes- based integration across the primary curriculum.**  
  
**(setting: Diocese of Wollongong Schools)**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study shows that the integrity of curriculum in Catholic Schools can be demonstrated through an integrated curriculum, with Religious Education (R.E.) as the primary focus, centre point and generator of learning experiences across all subjects or Key Learning Areas (K.L.As). The contemporary, Catholic nature of curriculum is able to be developed via an outcomes-based approach that integrates R.E. with other Key Learning Areas.

The "Integrated Religious Education Outcomes Approach" represents a personal belief of the author, developed as a classroom teacher in five Catholic schools and a member of three schools' Executive. The response to this belief is the motivation behind this study.

The theoretical response includes an examination of integration and the function and purpose of outcomes-based education. There is relevance and potential for Religious Education curriculum outcomes to be linked to other Key Learning Areas. Consequently, the role of Catholic schools in developing courses of work within a Catholic setting, and the religious dimension of the broad curriculum and of each K.L.A., are explored. Findings show that there is validity to the development of an approach that integrates R.E. outcomes when programming courses of work.

This practical response is demonstrated in a uniquely Catholic unit of work that focuses on one of the R.E. themes recurring across the Primary school. The integrated unit used in this study sets out the outcome and content links across and between all K.L.A.s. Findings show that it is a document from which

teachers are able to facilitate the teaching and learning process, whilst maintaining course requirements of the N.S.W. Board of Studies' K.L.A. Syllabuses and the Wollongong Diocesan R.E. Curriculum Guidelines.

Findings also show that teachers are supported in developing the practice of integration, an increased awareness of the function of outcomes, and the significance of R.E. in the formal curriculum. The study shows that teachers are willing to embrace trends and methodology that assist planning, organise and present learning in new ways and promotes R.E. within the context of the broader curriculum.

**DECLARATION**

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

- (i) incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;
- (ii) contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or
- (iii) contain any defamatory material.



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Paul Longobardi.

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 The Background to the Study.

The Catholic school curriculum, in the main, is characterised by: restricted integration of learning experiences, no integration using outcomes, R.E. as a largely stand-alone K.L.A. and no organised cross-disciplined links using values. Planning is essentially segmented. The curriculum does not live up to the pedagogy relating to the education of the whole person, and it does not relate to the school climate and ethos in any organised, intended way.

This observation has developed over recent years and motivates this study, a response to the need to constantly review, assess and improve standards in developing quality and contemporary learning.

School life and the curriculum in the Catholic School require a distinct Catholic identity. In relation to this, we aim:

- to foster our schools as communities set up explicitly to nurture Catholic faith and impart Catholic traditions;
- to give priority to the integration of Catholic values via curricula and within the life of the school;
- to create an environment in which all members can contribute to the school's religious life and the students' religious development;
- to strive for optimum effective teaching practice via contemporary programmes and initiatives to develop the whole child.

Given that these represent a basic premise to quality Catholic education, it is necessary to consider the relevance of the religious dimensions of the curricula, the relevance of promoting Religious Education and education founded in the living of our religion, the facilitation of this through integration, and the relevance of outcomes-based education. These need to be acknowledged and incorporated within Catholic teaching and learning programmes and translated in terms of assessing students and reporting to parents because the integrity of the Catholic curriculum is dependent upon both its focus on Religious Education and its response to current trends such as outcomes-based education and integration. Therefore, these considerations form the cornerstone of this study both the theoretical background and practical application of the trial unit.

It is evident, in much of the literature pertaining to Religious Education in Catholic schools, that R.E. involves a dimensional process as is the case in other disciplines. There is the need to educate students in knowledge of the Catholic traditions. It is an objective process, which implicitly invites an understanding and development of faith, but which is primarily concerned with developing knowledge. Closely related is the acquisition of skills that will enable the student to participate fully in learning.

Formalised values' outcomes in R.E. and those located within other K.L.As are now documented and assessable along with knowledge and skills. The process of linking these across the curriculum needs to be a starting point, but tends to be recorded by teachers to satisfy programming requirements as opposed to

treating them as outcomes that can be assessed.

The formal nature of outcomes, therefore, needs to be considered. Wollongong Diocese R.E. Curriculum Guidelines and N.S.W. K.L.A. Syllabuses are organised in Stage outcomes. Given that outcomes are used to plan and assess the development of knowledge (and understandings), skills and values (and attitudes), consideration needs to be given to organisation.

Integration of K.L.As' outcomes is an option. To develop this further for Catholic schools, R.E. outcomes should be a priority within the integration process, thus promoting R.E. within the context of other learning experiences. Furthermore, R.E. values' outcomes have the potential to connect the curriculum even further. This would enhance the Catholicity of curriculum and help relate the informal elements of school culture and ethos to the formal curriculum.

There are strong urgings for teachers to integrate learning experiences, but there is a need to be aware of the potential and purpose of integration as a process as well as its relevance to syllabus outcomes. The integration of syllabus content using outcomes is a way of planning, presenting, and managing the primary curriculum.

Curriculum integration enables teachers and learners to identify and use the connections between syllabuses based upon the following types of principles: the strategies and activities must support students in working towards outcomes; opportunities to make connections should be utilised in order to assist students in consolidated learning by applying these in a range of contexts; and the

organisation of the learning environment sets the conditions for curriculum integration.

The Board of Studies and Wollongong Diocese documents support the process of integration and encourage the teacher to consider options. Suggestions for practical application, however, are generally incomplete, simplistic, broad and isolated.

The potential for an integrated approach in Catholic schools is enormous, especially if R.E. is the focus, since integrated Catholic learning occurs when an authentic exploration of the faith is the driving force in the curriculum. By participating in the exploration, students learn about more than one K.L.A. at the same time. There is a goal to achieve which provides a focus for learning, and as teachers and students work towards achieving that goal, activities interweave the processes and content from various K.L.As. If not linked to other learning, students tend to develop attitudes towards K.L.As in terms of their perceived importance, their own likes and dislikes, the time given to each K.L.A. by the teacher and the perceived irrelevance of some of them if not linked to other learning. This compromises the responsibility of teachers in giving worth to each K.L.A.

An appropriate response is to develop an integrated curriculum, structured upon an outcomes-based approach, with R.E. topics/themes as the link to, and generator of, maximum learning experiences. This study refers to this structure as the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach.

Most primary teachers programme and teach, in some form and to some extent, by integrating ideas, or at least by considering the links. A structured integrated approach to planning and implementing the curriculum provides for enhanced student learning. It is also a means of organising the curriculum in a logical, relevant and manageable way. It is extremely efficient, in that it connects many ideas and adapts to a number of learning outcomes.

As a result, traditional subject area boundaries are broken down, and the timetable becomes less compartmentalised. This type of planning also reflects a holistic, rather than a fragmented view of life. The connectedness of knowledge is emphasised, with multi-disciplinary investigations the norm. In this way, the importance of all K.L.As is maintained and their balanced treatment is sustained. Students are constantly encouraged to make sense of information and to consider the big picture. Many opportunities to gather information in a variety of ways are presented, and teachers can assess content knowledge, skills and development of values in the same context.

The Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach uses the R.E. topic to draw out related content areas in K.L.As including Human Society and its Environment (H.S.I.E.), Science & Technology, and Personal Development / Health / Physical Education (P.D./H./P.E.). It then links their outcomes and correlates outcome links with English, Mathematics and Creative Arts:

- reading, writing, talking and listening (English);
- number, space and measurement concepts (Mathematics);
- dance, drama, visual arts and music (Creative Arts);



- related knowledge, skills and values outcomes (H.S.I.E., Science, Health/P.D.);
- related units and content areas (H.S.I.E., Science).

Therefore, as they progress through a unit, students will use a range of processes in a variety of K.L.As to question, examine, analyse, reflect on, organise and represent understandings. The R.E. theme and Catholic perspectives will filter throughout the curriculum beyond its current compartmentalised status.

This status is not reserved for R.E. only. In recent years, the gradual inception of N.S.W. Board of Studies' syllabuses has affected teachers in a number of ways, creating distinct conservatism and reduced initiatives. Firstly, each K.L.A. is outcomes-based which has meant that teachers have needed to adapt to the philosophy, purpose and application of outcomes. Secondly, each K.L.A.'s format and content structure differ, due to the distinctive nature of each area. Thirdly, with the inception of each new syllabus, we have needed to revise the way we plan, evaluate and assess each K.L.A. The combined effect is a fragmented approach to curriculum design.

Now that this lengthy drafting, trialling, writing and distribution process is complete, and all syllabuses are mandatory, the challenge for systems and teachers surely lies in linking the syllabuses' content in a way that will promote effective learning. The way teachers know is through integration, but now integration needs to involve learning outcomes. Teachers must consider methods to plan, facilitate, evaluate, assess and report using outcomes.

This is an attainable yet complicated aim. Degrees of success would depend upon the schools' curriculum, leadership and professional development opportunities, as well as teachers' inclination to adapt to change and experiment with initiatives as part of developing quality classroom practice.

Consequently, in responding to this challenge, the intention of this study is to demonstrate these links in the writing of a unit, using a common, recurring R.E. theme - Reconciliation. Such an Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach unit can be used to develop other units and will be immensely practical to schools in the Wollongong Diocese and immediately usable. This study shows that such an approach enhances teaching and learning in a contemporary fashion.

### **1.2 Significance of the Study**

There are many views about teaching and learning in Catholic schools, the nature of the R.E. Curriculum as a K.L.A., the religious dimension of other K.L.As, integration and outcomes-based education. However, their collective relevance to one another, has not been addressed in terms of primary curriculum, a curriculum designed to promote each of these facets in providing validity and authenticity to Catholic education. There are no guidelines (and few references) relating to integration of outcomes, particularly with R.E. as the main method of linkage.

The value of this study, therefore, is essentially threefold. Firstly, methodology for the integration of outcomes does not exist in the syllabuses. Only outcomes

are presented within the framework of each syllabus. Secondly, the Wollongong Diocese is in the planning stage of developing a set of trial units, but have not explored the provision of links to other K.L.As via outcomes or related content. They also link and express the R.E. outcomes. Thirdly, the primary curriculum does not generally promote, in a formal or organised manner, Catholic perspectives on learning across K.L.As. The proposed approach goes towards achieving an evangelised curriculum.

### A Response to Educational Trends

Significant to teaching throughout the 1990s has been the introduction of outcomes with broad, long and short term implications. Also, significant to teaching pedagogy for a long period, has been the practice of integration, although from my experience the effectiveness and prevalence with which it is practised, is minimal.

This study argues that it is not educationally 'sound' to structure an effective teaching programme on learning experiences without planning these according to learning outcomes. An integrated curriculum for 2001 and beyond would need to be based upon outcomes.

The notion of integration, it may be argued, is alive and well, and active within contemporary education. In practice, however, even though much is documented regarding its merits and validity, the author's experience shows integration being applied spasmodically or in a limited form, and only in the linking of learning experiences, not outcomes. Planned integration is advised by

many theorists involved in education. Practitioners (teachers) may agree, but for integration to be central to planning, then learning outcomes need to be carefully considered and clearly documented. Teachers then consider what and how learning experiences are selected to bring about student attainment levels in achieving each specified outcome.

Once these structures and links are in place, a scaffold will emerge that identifies learners' desirable knowledge, values, and skills. They achieve these through the learning experiences devised by the teacher, but the educational accountability lies in the organisation of outcomes as representing reasonable indicators of learning, and from which teachers report to parents, the Catholic Education Office, the Board of Studies and the Commonwealth.

It is valid and essential that current syllabuses are linked via outcomes. The promotion of integration in this way is particularly relevant to Catholic Schools when the R.E. curriculum is interspersed throughout and between the other K.L.As. Significant considerations include the purpose of integration and place of outcomes-based education. It is therefore essential to explore the potential and function of integration via an outcomes-based approach.

Integration is the process whilst the outcomes represent the integrated links across all K.L.As. By using R.E. themes and associated outcomes, this integration can be represented in the form of teaching units that are specific to Catholic schools in the Wollongong Diocese, by developing existing R.E. units to be inclusive of other K.L.As' outcomes and/or content. Such units would represent

an alternative for teachers who find this style of organisation appealing. To others, it may represent a useful resource, but at the very least, it would invite teachers and schools to consider how their programmes might be developed to better reflect a distinctive Catholic curriculum. With the inception of outcomes, there are several major implications for teachers as planners and facilitators of programmes, as well as within the process of assessing and reporting.

Through an outcomes-based integration of R.E., these implications can be identified and addressed in ways more meaningful to teachers, students and parents of Catholic Schools.

#### A Response to a Diocesan Review of R.E.

The current situation in our schools justifies the development of research and professional development in integration, outcomes-based education, the place of R.E. in the process and the place of the R.E. dimension across the curriculum. It invites teacher opinion as facilitators of Religious Education, and as teachers in a Catholic school, and an analysis of teaching practice that reflects the limitations that have been placed upon them due to the recent climate of change in syllabus structure. To assess the style, structure and content of units, teacher feedback will be gathered via interviews, the trial of units, and progressive and post-trial evaluations.

It is true that R.E. exists largely as a stand-alone subject along with the other K.L.As. However, minimal integration occurs beyond its most simplistic forms,

even though the educational merits and validity of integration are broadly acknowledged and promoted.

Over the past several years, teachers' mindsets have been required to move to the planning, assessing and reporting of learning using syllabus outcomes. However, because each K.L.A. Board of Studies' syllabus was trialled and implemented chronologically, schools spent time focusing on or prioritising one syllabus at a time. The result to date has been a varying degree of working knowledge of each syllabus, but in isolation of one another. Consequently, this fragmented nature of the curriculum has restricted integration.

The impact of this process cannot be underestimated since it has further alienated R.E. from other K.L.As. Wollongong Diocese Curriculum Guidelines present sets of learning outcomes, reflecting the structure of other syllabuses. Some trialling of unit ideas has occurred, as the Diocese undertakes a full review of R.E. This study is timely since it presents an approach that incorporates all K.L.As by using outcome and content links. Teachers' familiarisation of outcomes within a K.L.A. and the use of outcomes across the curriculum are clear benefits, beyond the inherent value of its relevance to Catholic schools.

The integrated curriculum design proposed in this study, structures the links across the KLAs and serves as a document from which teachers can facilitate the teaching and learning process. The writing of the unit articulates outcome links and provides core learning experiences. It would be hoped that other activities, resources and allowances for extension and remediation be incorporated by the

teacher, thus promoting ownership of the programme by allowing for student needs, different teaching styles and priorities, and by encouraging resourcing.

### A Response to the Integrity of a Catholic Curriculum

By linking R.E. content and outcomes to other K.L.As, the sample unit's approach delineates the Catholic school curriculum distinct from others. Catholic schools need to promote Catholicity within programmes of work, since they function essentially as both educational and Church-based institutions. Much is written about the definition of authentic Catholic schools and their difference to other school systems. The curriculum is a basic consideration, but surely the Catholic school curriculum needs to be representative of Catholic ethos and more than an additional subject that is taught.

Another consideration when promoting a Christian / Catholic message within our programmes must be the values that filter through each K.L.A. and across the curriculum. Significantly, each syllabus has outcomes concerning values and attitudes. The integration of values is surely a significant vehicle of Christian growth and development. While it can be communicated and experienced within the context and perspective of individual K.L.As, it would be inappropriate to view any K.L.A. as having a monopoly on the development of any set of values.

It is well recognised that the assessment of values is not only different from assessing knowledge and skills, but is also inherently more difficult to undertake. Secondly, obtaining agreement on the kinds of values that the community would expect schools to teach is considered to be particularly challenging. Though some

values would appear to be unchallengeable and relatively easy to state, the dilemma is more with the detail. Opinions differ considerably on what would constitute "standards". These relate to what values teachers would actually teach, how teachers would teach these values, what students would have to do and say to demonstrate achievement, and how progress in these areas would be described.

Catholic school systems, via Church documents and Diocesan Curriculum guidelines, Openly state the values they hold, and expect to see these reflected throughout their schools. Indeed, it is the articulation of specific Church values that distinguishes one system from another. If the formal curriculum is seen to be presenting such tangible Christian values and Catholic perspectives that relate to the school's purpose and each individual's growth, then Catholic schools' uniqueness and integrity are surely well illustrated. The formal Religious Education curriculum is developed, implemented, and evaluated within the context of the classroom Religious Education programmes. This involves effective use of sound educational principles and practices to communicate the content of faith.

The incorporation of both the informal and formal, is reflected in the following:

- in the classroom (eg. knowledge, skills, attitudes, values related to religion and faith; class liturgies; liturgical events);
- within school climate and ethos (eg. religious climate; justice in the school, Christian community, Pastoral Care, the lives of people);
- in out of school experiences (eg. voluntary groups, retreats, school liturgies,



service projects, excursions).

How these relate to school life across the curriculum contributes towards the development of the whole Christian person. This integration of the above contributes to fulfilling goals and expressing aims of Catholic schooling.

The moral, ethical and spiritual development of students is a fundamental goal of Catholic education. It is clearly not confined to one area of the curriculum. All teachers, across all K.L.As have a responsibility to inculcate in their students sets of positive values and a capacity for moral and ethical judgement. After all, the Catholic school is founded in the person of Jesus, guided by his view of reality, energised by his spirit and enlivened by his values.

#### A Response to System and Teacher Issues and Requirements

The value of this study will be shown by teachers in the classroom setting. It is anticipated that the sample unit, structured around such outcomes-based integration and centred within Religious Education, will benefit quality teaching and learning in our Catholic schools. The advantages of this approach will be demonstrated in the way it addresses a number of issues and needs:

1. Integration addresses the time-management issue related to meeting each K.L.A's requirements.
2. Effective, broad-based integration is generally an uncommon practice, so planned units will assist.
3. Whilst many teachers do experiment with an element of integration with R.E., it is generally limited to aspects of Creative Arts. There is a need to demonstrate integration beyond this.

4. Teachers are still coming to terms with planning according to outcomes, therefore little innovation is occurring, least of all in outcomes-based integration. There is therefore a need for a scaffold or design that teachers can apply when planning and programming a unit of work.
5. By organising pre-planned units based upon the R.E. topics, other K.L.As' topics, content areas and/or outcomes can be matched and incorporated within each integrated R.E. unit. R.E. is an excellent connecting thread for integrating the curriculum.
6. It would be necessary to provide professional development for teachers to become familiar with the whole approach, from philosophy and pedagogical intent, to the facilitation of units, to organisation of the day, evaluation and assessment of learning.
7. The approach will assist the vitality and relevance of the curriculum to broad Christian formation and school life will become more evident.
8. The unit, based on a recurring theme that exists throughout the Primary curriculum, will provide a scaffold from which other grade-specific units can be written using the same approach.
9. The individual nature of the learner can be expressed in the variety of learning experiences used to assess outcomes, the remediation or consolidation allowances as teachers focus on a student's achievement of particular outcomes, and the extension options for those who demonstrate achieving beyond an outcome. Each of these will contribute to accurate and accountable reporting. The common objection or fear that outcomes are restrictive will thus be seen to be

unfounded.

10. The basic premise that Catholic schools educate the whole child is supported by this integration approach. It is expected that the students' learning will have clear linkages to other aspects of their learning and that values will be formatted, linked and expressed across all K.L.As and in daily school life;

11. By analysing and categorising outcomes, both obvious and subtle connections can be found across all K.L.As. This will enhance the depth and broadness of integration opportunities, thus providing more options for teachers. It will also skill teachers in discovering patterns of linked outcomes that can be applied when they are planning.

12. The R.E. values' outcomes can be effectively linked across other K.L.As. They can also be aligned with, and complement the specific syllabus values of each K.L.A.

13. The purpose of outcomes implies that more than one outcome can be achieved as a result of an activity or series of learning experiences (inter- or cross- K.L.A.). Therefore, integration holds particular credence to planning and assessing.

14. The integrative potential of P.D. has been overlooked in the main, meaning that like R.E., it exists largely as a stand-alone component of the curriculum (most P.D. outcomes can be aligned with R.E. learning experiences and used to elaborate or illustrate R.E. outcomes).

15. The approach is contemporary in its reliance on integration and in its structure of outcomes. Therefore, learning will be characterised by its cooperative,

interactive and assessable nature.

16. Integration of R.E. benefits the learner in several implicit ways, but it also explicitly acknowledges R.E. as a learning discipline that drives affective and cognitive learning in a Catholic school.

17. Currently, teachers in every grade within every school repeat the planning and programming process, every year for every R.E. topic and K.L.A. content area. There is great potential to streamline the process within and across schools to avoid duplication and at the same time, develop the concept of integrating R.E. across the curriculum.

18. A number of Catholic Education Office (C.E.O.) and schools' Executive staff have become aware of this work and have expressed interest in its development, acknowledging:

- the beliefs attached to promoting the religious dimension or character of each K.L.A.;
- the purpose and validity of effective integration, especially an initiative that prioritises R.E. and promotes R.E. across the curriculum without diminishing the syllabus requirements of other K.L.As;
- the significance that such an integrated approach is essentially unique to Catholic schools;
- the application of Board of Studies' and Diocesan syllabuses in making it current and relevant to other schools.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to create a curriculum structure that can be organised in unit form, by which the Primary curriculum can be described as distinctively Catholic. The desired outcome is to provide a sample outcomes-based, integrated Religious Education unit that deals with one of the recurring R.E. themes.

Essentially, the R.E. theme generates learning experiences. R.E. outcomes are linked to each other K.L.A., each K.L.A. is linked with others via their specific outcomes, and importantly, each K.L.A.'s content and outcomes will be linked to, or expressed, as part of the R.E. theme.

Core learning experiences and references are documented, sequenced and aligned with outcomes. There is provision for teachers to include other learning strategies in addressing specific learning outcomes, therefore allowing for personal choices regarding expertise, resources and students' enrichment and consolidation needs.

The structure has the potential to accentuate the religious dimension and contribute to the evangelisation of the whole curriculum by actualising the Catholic school ethos across the formal curriculum.

Short-term benefits will be seen in the connectedness of learning, the use of outcomes as planning and assessing structures, and the overt linking of R.E. themes and Christian values across the curriculum. Mid-term benefits are less measurable and will be reflected in each Catholic school's culture as students inadvertently contribute towards, and shape, school life in a fuller way via the

holistic, Christian nature of their learning. Long-term benefits will be reflected in a school's ability to use outcomes effectively in planning, assessing and reporting students' learning in an explicitly Catholic setting.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

The following questions present concerns of the researcher that motivated this study. The Literature Review is divided into headings ( 5 key elements ) that address these questions in educational terms. The Interview Questions are designed to elicit responses that relate to issues raised in the Research Questions.

1. What are the implications for a Catholic curriculum in the relationship between Catholic school ethos, formal Religious Education, the religious dimension of other Key Learning Areas, integration and outcomes?
2. How can the Primary curriculum in Wollongong Diocese schools be promoted as more explicitly Catholic?
3. In what ways do we promote the religious dimension of other Key Learning Areas in nurturing the meaning and Catholicity in student learning?
4. Is it appropriate for Religious Education to exist largely as a stand-alone subject in a Catholic school?
5. How relevant are Religious Education outcomes to other Key Learning Areas?
6. To what extent is the unit effective in confirming or changing perceptions regarding integration, outcomes and the relevance of R.E. across the curriculum?
7. What are the demonstrated effects on the teaching and learning process when adopting this Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach?

## **1.5 Definitions of Terms**

- Assessment** examples or processes that reflect student learning; formally represented by the extent to which a particular outcome has been achieved
- Broad Curriculum** the total of all learning experiences at school
- Curriculum** ( as per Formal Curriculum )
- Formal Curriculum** the structured content of what is taught - knowledge and understandings, skills, values and attitudes
- Indicator** an example of what the student may do to indicate or demonstrate achievement of a particular outcome
- Informal (or Hidden) Curriculum** the learning that occurs beyond the formal curriculum in the experiences gained as a member of a school community
- “Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach”** methodology used to integrate R.E. topics and themes across other K.L.As using R.E. outcomes to link and express other K.L.As’ outcomes (term devised by author)
- Integration** a method by which learning is not restricted to a particular K.L.A - the teacher determines what or how the student will learn and uses a variety of K.L.As’ learning experiences to facilitate the learning
- Key Learning Area (KLA)** an area of learning based on a learning discipline or a course of work: Religious Education (R.E.), English, Mathematics, Human Society and its Environment (H.S.I.E.),

Science and Technology, Personal Development / Health /  
Physical Education (P.D./ H./P.E.), Creative Arts

**Learning Experience** a student activity indicating a measure of achievement for a specific outcome (the 'doing' of an Indicator)

**Outcome/ Learning Outcome** a statement of the various knowledge, skills and values that students typically acquire as they become more proficient in one area; organised into Stages

**Outcomes-based Education** the methodology that focuses the curriculum on child-centred learning rather than teacher-directed facilitation, via a progression of statements that indicate learning applicable to each K.L.A. per Stage

**Programme** a teacher's document planned to facilitate learning; includes statements of organisation, outcomes, teaching strategies and learning experiences, assessment, resource references and evaluation

**Religious Dimension of K.L.As** the Catholic nature of a particular K.L.A, seen in each K.L.A's outcomes (especially values) and content areas

**Religious Education** relates to how the Gospel is made present in a personal process of assimilation, seeking to help students learn and develop a sense of the nature of Christianity (in the Catholic tradition ) and how we live our lives;

**Religious Education ( R.E.)** the formal curriculum /K.L.A. presenting content via learning experiences and outcomes



<b><u>Reporting</u></b>	communication of student learning ( individual or collective)
<b><u>Stage</u></b>	a grade or grades in which outcomes are grouped for each KLA ie. Early Stage 1 -- Kindergarten, Stage 1 -- Years 1&2, Stage 2 -- Years 3 & 4, Stage 3 -- Years 5 & 6
<b><u>Subject</u></b>	( as per KLA )
<b><u>Unit</u></b>	a sequence of learning experiences ( applying strategies and resources) that address outcomes; based on a topic or theme, it would constitute significant parts of a teacher's programme
<b><u>Work Sample</u></b>	a sample of student work that illustrates achievement levels of particular outcomes

## Chapter 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Overview

The following literature provides the theoretical background to the study. It has been organised according to the following headings:

#### DISTINCTIVENESS OF CATHOLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION

- Purpose of the Catholic curriculum
- The challenge
- The potential: linking the informal and formal curriculum

#### THE BROAD NATURE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE NATURE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AS A KEY LEARNING AREA

- School culture and the curriculum
- Religious Education as an educational subject
- Structural considerations of outcomes and integration

#### THE RELIGIOUS DIMENSION OF OTHER KEY LEARNING AREAS

- Catholic perspectives of the curriculum
- Values' education across the curriculum
- Content links across the curriculum
- The function of outcomes in evangelising the curriculum
- The potential of integration to evangelise the curriculum

#### INTEGRATION

- An educational trend
- Relevance to the Catholic curriculum
- Timetabling issues
- Benefits for teachers and learners
- The potential of new syllabuses and structure of outcomes
- Theory versus practice
- Applications

#### OUTCOMES

- Contemporary initiative and syllabus structure
- Relevance to the Catholic curriculum
- Positive educational development
- Implications for teachers

### 2.1.1 Distinctiveness of Catholic School Education

#### Purpose of the Catholic School Curriculum

"The authentic Catholic school is founded on the person of Jesus, guided by his view of life, energised by the Spirit and enlivened by values" (Dwyer, 1990, p.20). This broad view is inclusive of a school's total religious learning experiences and therefore reflects a priority for the formal curriculum. A Catholic school must be "committed to the development of a progressive [formal] curriculum which overcomes the problems of a fragmented... curriculum", which is the focus of this study. In developing the whole person, the curriculum plays an enormous role as students develop as complete a picture of human nature and Christian living as possible, by exploring knowledge, skills and values (The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, 1998, pp. 41-46 ).

The primary function of Catholic schools and the challenge for teachers is to provide forms of education through which the essential doctrines and devotions of Catholicism are transmitted (Groome, 1996, p.133). In identifying such challenges, Dwyer reinforces the process of integration in referring to the purpose of sustaining meaningful links throughout students' learning, and discusses the development of Catholic Curriculum. He promotes the worth of values as an issue which, in this study is recognised by justifying the development of an Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach when planning programmes and units of work.

"As we bring our Gospel-based view of reality to the learning experiences ...we can be said to be evangelising the curriculum... At the very practical level, we are challenged to give the highest priority to our formal

Religious Education programme, to the informal curriculum...and to the religious dimension of every subject" (1993, p.111).

Therefore, any approach needs to humanise the curriculum and create a balance of experiences and learning styles in an organised and intentional manner. In outlining the Catholic schools' formal curriculum's aims, Dwyer (1993, p.84) reinforces the process of integration in referring to the purpose of our programmes as promoting students' all-round development, allowing them to make connections and explore the relevance between who they are and their capacity to learn. He describes this "integration of life, culture and faith" as the "essence of Catholic education".

In this way, the challenge for educators is to establish and monitor a comprehensive curriculum that addresses the whole person, promotes values in exploring life and gets K.L.As. We must consider integration as the process, and outcomes as the means, by which formal curriculum is designed.

Groome (1996, p. 107-111) proposes "that the distinctiveness of Catholic Education is prompted by the distinctive characteristics of Catholicism itself, and these should be reflected in the whole curriculum of Catholic schools". This broad, yet pointed reference to the integrity of the Catholic curriculum, reinforces an integrated approach generated from religious ideals. The challenge is to formalise and document the connections across the formal curriculum that reflect and affirm students' dignity, rights, gifts, human attributes, responsibility, worth, and their awareness of relationships in a school community setting.

### The Challenge

Chesterton (cited by Haldan in *The Contemporary Catholic School*, 1996, p.126) asserts "that education has a connection with every other part", given that education teaches a philosophy about life whether it be in content, atmosphere or implication. A curriculum that is integrated can relate more readily to everyday life in the ways that Catholic values and truths are exposed.

The Catholic Education Office of Sydney Archdiocese (1996 p.6) identifies several categories of outcomes. This is presented in the form of desired outcomes and implies the distinct relevance to other K.L.As. It represents further proof of the desire to link R.E. to all areas of learning. Direct links can be found, especially within the categories' content areas, exploring students' potentials: to be open to growth and development; as a member of a community of faith; in being committed to justice; by displaying competent life skills; by being intellectually challenged and physically adept.

As in other R.E. curriculums and guidelines, it falls short of presenting these links in an integrated manner, but openly embraces the broad nature of R.E., inviting us to explore the means by which these can be incorporated into the classroom. Unfortunately, the separate nature of R.E. and each K.L.A. remains characteristic of crude or minimal integration of learning experiences (and not of outcomes).

The religious dimension of school life nevertheless is explored, referred to or implied in Catholic school systems' policies. However, their responsibility extends

beyond vision and mission statements, since it is each system's, and each school's, practical response to pursue "cultural goals and the natural development of youth.... To generate a community climate in the school that is permeated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and love," (*The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 1998, p. 7), which the Declaration on Christian Education in 1965 espoused. This document, in part, responds to this Vatican 2 Declaration by reviewing the presence of a religious dimension of school life and culture, and focuses on student studies, social and emotional development, spirituality, relationships, dignity, and opportunities.

Groome (1996), Chesteron (1996) and Dwyer (1997) address this broad nature of distinctive Catholic Education, reflecting their reference to the active participation of the students in the context of a Christian journey. They acknowledge academic pursuits and their influence on Christian formation, and parallel the relationships between faith and culture. They consider the religious nature of specific disciplines and view the nature of the whole informal and formal curriculum as involving the study of the entire person.

The links across all school experiences provide a basic premise to Catholic formation and the development of the whole person. This integration of experience surely cannot be complete unless the formal curriculum also, reflects deliberate connections between elements of content and values. The Congregation for Catholic Education (*The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 1998, p.54-56) reviews the role and purpose of Catholic schools in context

of its relevance to the world today. It emphasises its integration character and challenges educators to promote it as a place of integral education of each individual. A recurring theme is the provision of quality education or learning opportunities of which Christ is the foundation. This reinforces the themes presented in the Congregation's 1988 document which revisited the Declaration of Christian Education.

The Congregation presents a collection of ideas and recommendations for systems, dioceses and schools, and requires a response, part of which can be represented in how we fashion our curriculum, plan class programmes and facilitate students' learning. A practical response, therefore, is desirable and a duty of all key stakeholders. We, as educators, need to be able to demonstrate aspects of application, beyond theory and policy. The 1998 document invites a development of a mindset, for intellectual considerations are most meaningful when they are practised. For teachers, practice means how and what we plan in order to facilitate learning.

Dwyer (1991, pp.50-53) presents one such response. He outlines links between N.S.W. Syllabus statements and examples of classroom application, but significantly, he parallels each statement with a Catholic school perspective.

Dwyer (1997, pp.8-11) also identifies specific traits characteristic of each K.L.A. and aligns each statement with a Catholic school aim or pedagogical statement. The drawing out of each K.L.A.'s religious dimension can be promoted and communicated via programming learning experiences at the classroom level. In

asserting this view, Dwyer (1988, p. 24) states that it is “the task of all teachers .....to help students find these contact points. God can be encountered in every subject of the curriculum”. In a broader sense, he goes beyond the confines of curriculum, order to emphasise the vital nature of our education programmes, responding to the publication of *The Religious Dimensions of Education in a Catholic School* (1988).

A Catholic school’s distinguishing feature and strength is its climate, and can be “expressed through the Christian values that are observed and promoted in harmonious interpersonal relationships, and in the ready availability of people to be of service (1988, p. 24). Given that this describes school life, there are implications for both the formal and the informal curriculum.

*Catechesi Tradendae* (cited in Dwyer, 1988, p. 25) highlights this “special character of the Catholic school and the underlying reason for its existence, the reason why Catholic parents should prefer it, is precisely the quality of the religious instruction integrated into the overalleducation of the students.”

#### The Potential: Linking the Informal and Formal Curriculum

Dwyer 1991, p. 21) elaborates upon a school’s climate in identifying fundamental traits including respect, responsibility, curiosity and meaning, calmness and openness, a critical spirit and a sense of justice. Each should deepen and develop within the setting of the school. Again, the implications for teachers relate to how these values and attitudes are fostered generally and notably, within programmes and learning experiences. These would then command that links are explored



and facilitated, R.E. values' outcomes are filtered throughout, and each K.L.A's values' outcomes are observed as part of the planning and assessment process. This merging of both school ethos and curriculum aims, is explored in the following section.

### **2.1.2 The Broad Nature of Religious Education & the Nature of R.E.. as a Key Learning Area**

Dwyer (1993, p. 87) considers R.E. to be essential throughout the curriculum, formal and informal. He views it in two ways: as part of a school's culture and wider curriculum (all experiences that characterise life at a Catholic school) and as a structured formal programme.

#### **School Culture and Curriculum**

If religious education experiences describe what a Catholic School provides in the broad sense (across other K.L.As and within the informal or hidden curriculum) then values and beliefs must surely be central to our demeanour as facilitators of learning and members of Catholic School community. Therefore it is reasonable to explore the values documented as outcomes within each of the other K.L.As as well as the values' outcomes that are proposed within the formal R.E. Curriculum.

The focus upon, and integration of these values across the curriculum will nurture values as central to our being and purpose, each K.L.A's worth, the broad credence of the curriculum and importantly, values reflecting our capacity to learn, and how to live as Christians in the Catholic Tradition. As Dwyer

suggests, curriculum is not just the syllabuses, but the people who facilitate it and an instrument by which meaning and sense can be found. "No curriculum can be value-free. Its foundation is always the belief system of those who conceptualise and develop it" (1993, p.78).

The Congregation for Catholic Education recognises that there is no one definition of how religious education occurs, but that it will involve a formal programme of instruction. More importantly, however, is the quality of integrated religious learning throughout the students' overall education. Reflecting Dwyer's description (1993, p. 87) is their acknowledgement that whilst religious instruction should be formalised across the grades in syllabus form, it must also explore and formalise links across the K.L.As for some co-ordination to exist and develop between learning and religious awareness.

Definition, however, is important. Regardless of how religious education is viewed, it is necessary to establish a workable definition 'to which we can respond. The Bishops' Committee for Education (Holohan, 1999) presents current responses to various criteria which govern the presentation of the Christian message in schools, focussing on establishing a definition. If teachers are to implement the R.E. curriculum, address daily planning decisions, relate it in some way to our broad curriculum and make it alive within school life, then they need to consider and revisit a tangible definition. Holohan, in his monograph, articulates a cohesive and clear, albeit detailed and heavily referenced, overview of R.E. There are no surprises in terms of what is purported, but it is worthwhile

noting the underlying view that R.E. needs to reflect a pedagogy that reflects a Catholic understanding across all K.L.As.

This can be promoted in a practical sense within the curriculum by way of an Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach to planning units, as proposed in this thesis. Further to this assertion, Ryan (1997) examines the presence of R.E. in the context of the whole school - the equally important informal curriculum. He discusses the experiences that occur in schools, from organised events and celebrations, to the more implicit aspects reflecting relationships and school ethos.

A "school proclaims its beliefs, attitudes and values in the ways of its life, as a human community" (1997, p. 133). The benefits of having outcomes stating attitudes and values in each K.L.A. are actually a side issue, but the informal curriculum can actually assist more formal assessments of related values and attitudes as teachers observe and work alongside the students.

Boys (cited in Ryan, 1997, p.134) expands and affirms this view. "One's 'religious' education is not merely gained in religion class, but the intentionality shaping the whole educational experience....the 'religious life'....suffuses the curriculum (and not merely the explicit curriculum).

When this happens, the process should form truly liberating communities in which to educate." Ryan also acknowledges the importance of K.L.As' religious character as facilitating learning. They have the capacity to address issues which enhance religious meaning as well as promote themselves as a

discipline. Quite often it is appropriate to discuss the issues and societal events, but communication and discussion of the Catholic stance or perspective are required. Similarly, these can often provide opportunities to understand how and why people have differently prioritised values. Learning about people and their values is actually educating oneself in values itself. How we react is influenced by how we communicate our own values.

### R.E. as an Educational Subject

In focusing on the nature of the Religious Education K.L.A., there are some specific considerations and developments worthy of acknowledgement. "No school religious educational programme can stand alone", (Dwyer, 1993, p. 87) implies its relevance to and dependence upon family and parish, as well as its relevance to the broader curriculum. The Sydney Archdiocese Catholic Schools (S.A.C.S.) Board identifies several elements as crucial to reshaping Catholic Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It targets an up-to-date dynamic curriculum, a relevant and meaningful R.E. programme which embraces values and truths and an integrated approach to schooling (Catholic Schools: A Vision Statement for the Archdiocese of Sydney, 1998, p.24).

By using the approach proposed in this study to structure teaching units, such elements will be largely addressed. Also, units will be up-to-date through the use of outcomes, learning will be relevant and meaningful using values to integrate links between all K.L.As, and other aspects of school life will be reinforced and fostered. This profile of the Catholic curriculum challenges the

actual articulation of the formal R.E. curriculum or programme and calls upon systems, schools and teachers to embrace planning options that will create the most effective long term learning.

“All courses of study in the curriculum of a Catholic School contribute to the religious development of students. One.....R.E., has particular responsibility for the development of students’ understandings and appreciation of the faith heritage” (*A Syllabus for R.E. for Catholic Schools*, 1997, p. 12). This syllabus, as to be expected, outlines specific areas of content that are arranged into categories based upon key perspectives. It does, however, acknowledge in its preamble, the importance of the entire formal curriculum and the character of the school, as being involved in the total religious education.

It implies too, that whilst the key perspectives are treated across Scripture, beliefs, celebration/prayer and morality, they do in fact “provide a lens for reflecting upon the place and influence of religion in contemporary society”. This represents an invitation for teachers to consider the integration options so to formalise these links to other learning.

Notably, outcomes describe a development of learning that is child-centred, so are therefore closely aligned with the developmental approach and the promotion of integration in how they might achieve learning. R.E., consequently, can be clearly described by its range of outcomes ( Knowledge and Understanding, Skills, Values and Attitudes ) yet maintaining the essential components that are either explicit to, or derived from R.E. as a K.L.A.

Educators are accountable to plan, facilitate and assess students learning in preconceived and intended ways. Outcomes exist, so the modern response would be to document these links using outcomes. Furthermore, it then must find its origins with our pedagogy. It is generally true, for example, that the new Wollongong Diocese R.E. Curriculum Guidelines is being developed around a paradigm shift - a move from a praxis approach to one that is a more clearly articulated educational approach. It recognises R.E. as a K.L.A. within the school curriculum and specifies assessable cognitive outcomes in knowledge, process and communication skills, as well as inherent values and attitudes. Harvey (1999) acknowledges such shifts as both motivating yet challenging for teachers. There is the freedom to identify R.E. within the context of the entire outcomes-based curriculum and plan according to known cognitive approaches. Associated is the challenge to acquaint ourselves further with theology, Church history, moral and social teachings, then plan the learning experiences.

This leads to the notion of religious literacy based upon such an educational approach. The implications then, as outlined by Barry & Rush (1999), would relate to the R.E. Curriculum's potential to make meaning within beliefs, attitudes and values, knowledge, processes and communication skills. It is this educational relevance to the development of religious literacy that is brought about by integrating outcomes and is certainly a focus of my studies in formulating units based on an integration of R.E. outcomes.

Given that this "making of meaning" and educational relevance are central to the

Religious Education curriculum then clarity can be gained by not only considering the formal, but the informal R.E. curriculum- "The unofficial, implicit or unstudied learning which takes place in the daily life of students...the climate and ethos of the school together with the out-of-school curriculum" (Flynn, 1985, p. 115).

The implications of the combined R.E. curriculum can be clearly linked to integration of learning from a variety of sources in a variety of ways. If teachers can formalise the links to other K.L.As, then the effectiveness of integration will be multiplied vastly and be more related to deliberate planning decisions by teachers and schools. Perhaps the links can be explored by categorising planning decisions according to cognitive and affective learning experiences, as we would in other K.L.As in order to find a balance. When we place these dimensions in context with R.E., the limitless links to other K.L.As become apparent as does the exposure of the religious dimensions of other K.L.As.

Barry & Rush (1999, p.35) outline these terms of 'religious literacy'. The cognitive skills of knowledge, process and communication are concerned with learning outcomes that may be brought about by describing, distinguishing, recalling, recounting, specifying, discussing, arguing, differentiating, evaluating, solving, hypothesising, investigating, composing, dramatising, debating and performing. The capacity of incorporating any of these in other K.L.As is clear, as we explore cognition associated with Church history, traditions, stories, texts, symbols, values and lived experience of Christians in the Catholic tradition.

On the other hand, the affective dimension contributes to learning "through the

inculcation of desirable attributes and values in relation to the content studied", by developing learning of scripture, beliefs, celebration and prayer, and morality. In terms of content, there is a connectedness that comes from viewing R.E. in context with all subject areas. Students' inquiring attitudes are nurtured, progressively coming to understand, appreciate, and view the teaching of the 'Church in an increasingly mature fashion as related to their studies.

Regardless of viewpoint or perspective, it is clearly a Church intention to prioritise formal learning in R.E.. In response to the 1985 recommendations by the Synod of Bishops, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School* (1998, p.59-66) explored the nature of "a systematic course in religion". There have since been many developments in formal R.E.

#### Structural Considerations of Outcomes and Integration

This returns attention to the place of outcomes in R.E., each category of which articulates learning that is generated by both cognitive and affective dimensions. If we are true to these outcomes and explore the links across the curriculum, then both dimensions will combine to form a balance of learning experiences. The side benefit is that the values (outcomes) that are born out of the R.E. curriculum can be correlated with, promoted and even enhanced by other K.L.As' values' outcomes.

Dwyer presents several discussions that apply theory to practical suggestions and frameworks, in enhancing the Catholic school curriculum. He considers the role of educators as evangelising the formal and informal curriculum (1991), promoting



of the religious dimensions of K.L.As ( 1988, 1997 ), and applying pedagogy to the classroom (1990) in our endeavours to integrate learning experiences in the context of the person of Jesus. He identifies the importance of values as a constant throughout all aspects of school life, which is especially relevant since we have syllabuses, now, that are partly organised according to values. The way teachers incorporate these in their planning, teaching and assessing, is addressed, in part, within the author's Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach. Integration and holistic considerations are central to Dwyer's responses to current syllabus documents.

Malone & Ryan (1994) also promote integration, but specifically address the integration of content that is derived from within the R.E. program. Quite rightly, they are correct in their assertion that integration of content is practical, workable and should be obvious within Primary schools. Similar to this integrated-outcomes approach to planning units, they acknowledge the potential for teachers to centre the planning of units around R.E. themes which address specific R.E. knowledge, skills and values. However, the units would then draw on knowledge, skills and values of other K.L.As. Integration in R.E. is valid since it emphasises "the relationship between religion and life", and meaning is gained by linking and connecting learning experiences from a variety of disciplines using each K.L.A's characteristic learning styles and religious dimensions. "The learning experiences.... can be extended into other curriculum areas without... repetition or reintroduction of basic concepts" (Malone & Ryan, 1994).

The role of the school and teachers would be to plan such integration in a way

that did not create ambiguity or compromise the content of the R.E. curriculum. Given that teaching/ learning, strategies, resources and programming proformas are evaluated, and student learning is assessed according to outcomes in an attempt to demonstrate changes in learning, then the approach can be evaluated. The potential of this "shared experience of other curriculum areas can be an important integrating factor of value" to the R.E. curriculum. After all, the integrity of quality teaching practice in a Catholic school, must be centred upon the value that we place in R.E. across the school.

Further to this integrative aspect of R.E. curriculum as a K.L.A., are the views expressed by Liddy & Welbourne (1999). They identify and consider how the religious dimension of K.L.As actually enhance religious education. They offer justifications and explanations, but importantly apply those beliefs in a practical way by identifying key concepts and suggested associated activities. They too, promote the stance that R.E. involves cognitive and affective domains, with the "totality of outcomes....more likely to be met when the content is processed by a variety of strategies from both the analytical and intuitive modes... that give evidence of the desired outcomes" (1999, p. 121).

The proposed Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach draws upon both modes in providing a balance of learning experiences from different K.L.As. Essentially, the categories of outcomes allow students to indicate achievement in areas of knowledge, skills and values. Teachers' response, then, is in the application- to plan, facilitate and assess this variety of outcomes, based on the R.E. topic, that is

complemented by other K.L.As' content and outcomes. The effective organisation of this is via an integration model that links a variety of K.L.As' outcomes to specific learning experiences.

### **2.1.2 The Religious Dimension of other KLAS**

#### **Catholic Perspective of the Curriculum**

In defining the formal curriculum, Dwyer (1993, p. 83) states that "this task of using our religious faith to give direction to school life extends into the formal areas of the curriculum- the disciplines, subjects." He challenges the reader to consider whether, as Catholics, there are implications for the way we teach select learning experiences in all subjects. We can assess how we incorporate our faith across the various K.L.As because as teachers, opportunities arise to "apply some elements of our belief system to the major elements of the formal curriculum" and there is a need to identify such elements and organise them so that they are developmental to the students' learning.

A successful method of integrating R.E. outcomes in promoting the curriculum as Catholic, is via values' outcomes in the formal programme. These would surely promote the religious dimension of other K.L.As in how and what we teach. We probably do it indirectly and unintentionally. But it needs to be formalised - then it becomes part of conscious planning and consequently, part of assessment and reporting.

Dwyer ( 1993, p. 84 ) refers to individual K.L.As as collectively including themes

that can be easily explored (or at least providing obvious opportunities) in the context of religious education. It is such themes, many of which, are recurring throughout the curriculum, eg. relationships, self-esteem, community, growth and development, that will be applied when writing the units.

This supports integration as a process beneficial to broad learning and exploring the religious dimensions and our faith across the formal curriculum. Dwyer states that "many teachers are very successful in enriching what might be seen as secular topics by the highlighting of gospel values and Catholic Church teaching." This study would argue that whilst examples exist especially within P.D. topics, they are generally neither outcomes-based nor linked to other learning. The units will aim to strengthen the values' dimension across all K.L.As, as well as incorporate knowledge and skills- a formal, contemporary response in interweaving the existing segmented syllabuses.

Dwyer (1997) has published practical assistance to teachers to demonstrate how the N.S.W. Board of Studies' syllabuses might be linked to Catholic beliefs and perspectives, which in fact connects the distinctiveness of Catholic schools with the religious character of subject areas within that of an integrated framework. He prioritises the distinctiveness of Catholic education and he draws teachers' attention to basic syllabus statements that can either be aligned with its philosophy or linked to desirable Catholic classroom practice. He promotes the significance of values' education in fostering a Catholicity across the curriculum and identifies this as a vital aspect of the whole integration process.

### Values' Education Across the Curriculum

Mills (1998, p.42) further illustrates the relevance of linking religious values to other K.L.As and explores the worth in doing so. He cites the topic of Democracy as useful in providing examples. The N.S.W. H.S.I.E. syllabus features Australian democracy from Kindergarten to Year 6 which invites direct and inferred links with R.E. via such concepts as justice, equity, rights, opinion, forgiveness, reconciliation, hopes, integrity, leadership, community, folk heroes, peace builders, identity, esteem, and our place in context of the region and world.

Such content links are obvious and conducive to learning when exploring R.E. themes. Also, the way the H.S.I.E. outcomes are structured, clear connections can be drawn especially with R.E. (and Personal Development) outcomes. In addition, since many learning experiences relate to writing a variety of text types, listening and speaking, and working with data, the links to English and Mathematics, too, can be expressed in concrete ways.

For example, a study of Aboriginal issues since the 1967 Federal referendum would allow Stage 3 students to:

- discuss the implications of a reconciliation process ( personal, family, community, political );
- examine our call to service and action in the Sacrament of Reconciliation;
- write a discussion on the justice issue at stake in 1967; write a report on a subsequent social or cultural issues of Aborigines; express an interest in, and

willingness to provide opinions about current community issues by arguing a point of view;

- describe the contributions of groups, movements and policies in the development of fairness and social justice; research the process and purpose of conducting a referendum;
- graph and analyse the referendum's result according to overall, regional and demographic data;
- present a pictorial or dramatic time line of Aboriginal issues and events subsequent to 1967, to demonstrate the significance and long term effects of the Constitution's changes;
- identify indigenous folk heroes and examine their role.

Supporting this to a point, is the view that because a school is part of a community, it is an effective model for student participation in the broader community and democratic society. Consequently, students gain skills and establish values that will be developed with age and experience (Wilks, 1993, p.48). The implications of each K.L.A's values' outcomes, especially R.E., are clear as students determine in their own way a response to curriculum and life experiences; and how various values-related concepts, ideals and skills relate to them and the communities in which they exist.

Notably, the Congregation for Catholic Education developed a set of guidelines promoting the learning that results within a Catholic school's religious dimension. It represented a response to a twenty year review of the Second Vatican Council's

Declaration on Christian Education in 1965, to assess whether the Council's words had become a reality in Catholic education. The Council described the distinctiveness of Catholic schools as being founded within each school's educational climate, the personal development of students, the relationship between the Gospel and "the illumination of knowledge with the light 'of faith" (*The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 1985, p.7).

The guidelines outline a set of educational goals which include the transmitting of values throughout all K.L.As. This is reiterated in various contexts via each school's culture, climate, mission, child development and curriculum, and is reflected in general terms in that "religious values and motivation are cultivated in all subject areas and indeed, in all of the various activities going on in the world."

Importantly, the document also acknowledges the relevance of intellectual work to students' Christian formation in that they are encouraged to challenge and justify, examine and explore. It specifically offers science and technology-related studies as areas for which the religious dimension is inherent as all such understandings would "bear the imprint of the Creator's wisdom and power".

#### Content Links Across the Curriculum

Dwyer (1997) further explores the potential of incorporating the religious dimension across the general curriculum and importantly, offers practical ideas and examples. He actually specifies how features of each K.L.A. are relevant and challenges us to consider how the aims of Catholic schools are served in each K.L.A. This is

a refreshing move in the way that it applies pedagogy to the practical response, made pertinent to teachers. He draws links by identifying basic N.S.W. syllabus content statements per K.L.A. and parallels these with examples of “desirable” classroom practice that foster a religious element or Christian belief. He identifies, within a multi-faceted pedagogy, the “maximising of opportunities for integration and the adopting of a holistic approach to learning”.

He falls short of specific detail and methodology probably due to his recommendation that each Diocese and school address their own curriculum needs. There is also no reference to the likely or considered use of outcomes. The author would see them as a necessary starting point to planning a programme or unit of work because it is each outcome (and set of indicators) that represent what is intended to be learnt, whilst the classroom practice/learning experiences will determine how.

However, in his address to school and C.E.O. leadership teams at the Wollongong Catholic Education Office in June, 1997, Dwyer’s elaboration upon his thinking behind the practical ideas support the intentions of this study’s approach. He claimed that, in order to be consistent with Catholic beliefs and aims for education, teaching styles and practices need to be reviewed. Seen as part of a holistic and integration approach is the linking of knowledge and understandings, values and attitudes, and skills. Also, in highlighting the religious dimension or “Christology” across each K.L.A., values are recognised as a vehicle that would provide connectedness between learning, a deeper perspective to each K.L.A. and



an underlying influence within general school life. Therefore, the formal and informal curriculum can each be distinguished, yet impact upon one another.

Content strands from the H.S.I.E. and P.D./Health syllabuses present numerous aspects that relate to R.E. themes or topics. Learning relates to the environment, historical events, leadership, social and community issues, interpersonal relationships, personal growth and development, personal safety and human sexuality. The way these can be expressed in light of each own's outcomes as well as R.E. outcomes, contribute significantly to the integrated R.E. curriculum.

#### The Function of Outcomes in Evangelising the Curriculum

This study's intention to promote an approach of integrating R.E. outcomes across the Primary curriculum, consequently draws its motivation from Dwyer's philosophy and hopes. The correlations of values and content throughout the K.L.As will be applied, dominated by R.E. outcomes and explore how they link to other K.L.A. outcomes in the development of teaching units. Application of the approach, it is expected, will progressively benefit learning, modernise and improve classroom practice, and deepen and expand students' religious education. Importantly, the author considers that this approach will assist in materialising a key component of the National Catholic Education Commission's Statement on Curriculum (cited in Dwyer, 1997) that curriculum must "give a central place to education in faith and acknowledge the relevance to all areas of learning of a Christian view of life as interpreted in the Catholic tradition."

The significance of value outcomes will be reflected throughout the unit since

these will not only assist in linking K.L.A. learning and developing the Catholic perspectives of specific content, but also foster the religious dimension of the curriculum. The N.S.W. Board of Studies encourages schools and systems to respond to the presence and purpose of values (represented as outcomes of prescribed values and attitudes in each K.L.A. syllabus) in a formal manner through the planning and assessing of learning (*Values in the primary curriculum*, 2000). This surely has significant relevance and potential for Catholic schools. The Board acknowledges that a variety of school systems, all of which are required to implement its syllabuses, purport specific and distinguishable sets of values.

This, then, defines each system as unique, which is keenly promoted within each Catholic school's ethos and mission. It is true that values are integral to all students in their formation in all aspects of life, but the Gospel meaning behind values justifies these outcomes as especially relevant to Catholic schools, not only in the context of class curriculum, but also to school climate and the Parish faith community.

D'Orsa, D'Orsa, Hindmarsh and Warner (1995) present a practical and Catholic perspective to the above in outlining the belief structure behind a Secondary school programme (*Sense of the Sacred*). Initiated by Sydney C.E.C., it was designed to "re-value" the curriculum. The implications are clear for Primary schools, with the strong parallels to the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach a source of great motivation, since it applies educational theory to classroom practice.

D'Orsa, et al. (1995) claim that advances in Catholic education "will remain

incomplete until the re-integration of fact and value occurs at the micro-level of classroom teaching” and that authentic Catholic schooling should be characterised by this, as such programmes brings educators’ ideas to fruition in the classrooms. Learning experiences should be structured and designed to “infuse values into the curriculum, rather than expand the curriculum to include values”.

The organisation of each N.S.W. K.L.A. is such that values are part of a set of learning outcomes that also includes knowledge and skills. The way teachers plan, programme and assess therefore, should reflect values as an important part of other learning and see them documented as intended achievements. This applies to the Wollongong Diocese R.E. Curriculum Guidelines document. Unless specific values’ outcomes are treated in conjunction with knowledge and skill outcomes through deliberate planning and purposeful assessment, then the scope of learning opportunities will be lessened and the integrity of the curriculum diminished.

#### The Potential of Integration in Evangelising the Curriculum

The problem of organising integrated class programmes can be addressed using a structure such as that of the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach. If outcomes are linked across K.L.As and learning and assessment are planned by using multiple outcomes, then maximum educational judgements can be made. For example, one specific class episode of tasks might be planned and assessed according to the following categories of outcomes: R.E. Knowledge, R.E. Values, English Text Writing, H.S.I.E. Knowledge, P.D. Skill. When the programme incorporates R.E. outcomes in this process, and uses the R.E theme to generate integration decisions,

then teachers' priorities are clear.

*Sense of the Sacred* organises and identifies the content, R.E. values, related outcomes, and the links to R.E. Its significance rests in the recognition that such a curriculum design finds it worth in the classroom, as it presents a form of integration, uses values to add expression to content, and promotes the religious dimension of the curriculum.

A similar approach in Primary school is essential in developing youngsters as learners within the context of integrating learning experiences across all K.L.As - a feature only possible in K-6 grades. In discussing its potentials and relevance to Primary schools, Dwyer (1991) invites schools to consider the evangelisation of the curriculum in its policy and programming decisions. His assertions find a place in the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach, particularly those that relate to the formal curriculum. He agrees that it is necessary to bring a gospel perspective to all aspects of school, and notably the curriculum, but it needs to be organised and able to be implemented, measured and maintained.

The way he explains the influence of such a perspective on the informal curriculum is based upon values. There is an inherent link then, with the formal curriculum since each K.L.A., including R.E., has sets of value outcomes that students would typically acquire at any given stage as they become more proficient social beings. Other aspects of authentic Catholic schools' formal curriculum would then foster each child's:

“total development (religious, intellectual, aesthetic, social, emotional,

physical)...ability to think clearly and judge responsibly...skills necessary for finding personal meaning and ...as a member of a community ... development of self and others...capacity to think and experience creatively and intuitively... capacity to integrate faith, culture and lived experience” (Dwyer, 1991, p. 48).

Given that these are a selection based on their individual and collective relevance to the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach, the implications are vast. Clear benefits are associated by integrating the curriculum, especially when R.E. outcomes can be interspersed as an integral part of the process.

Dwyer then explores pedagogy that would materialise the above aims in terms of teaching and learning. They clearly depend on well structured innovation of learning experiences, outcomes and the integration of the R.E. curriculum. Key elements include finding meaning in experiences, learning that is empowering and creative, a balance of experiences, integration and holistic approaches (1991, p. 49). He identifies the importance of being person-centred or relationships-driven. If this concept is linked to learning and in line with outcomes-based education, then the curriculum would be truly child-centred, focusing on how and what they learn rather than what we teach.

In conclusion, schools need to avoid speaking of the “religious” and the “secular” curriculum as though separate and distinct. This may at times be convenient, but in reality the curriculum as a whole and each part of it, is religious, since there is nothing that does not ultimately relate to God (Dwyer, 1997, p.16). Any move

then, to structure a programme that is founded on an R.E. theme that incorporates learning from other K.L.As, surely contributes to evangelisation and integrity of the curriculum.

#### 2.1.4 Integration

##### An Educational Trend

Gardner asserts that “nearly every topic can be approached in a variety of ways ranging from the telling of a story to a formal argument to artistic exploration, to...hands on experiment or simulation. Such pluralistic approaches should be encouraged” (cited in Liddy and Welbourne, 1999, p.120).

Banks, McGaw and Piper (1991) regard the coherence of learning programmes as one of three key principles for curriculum organisation. Coherence is achieved “when the programmes... give students a continuous (vertical) and integrated (horizontal) arrangement of learning experiences”. They argue that diversity of K.L.As, without coherence, inhibits educational opportunity.

##### Concerns

New insights into teaching and learning are reflected in the above quotations and they underpin the work of many educationalists. However, views that challenge integration also need to be considered in order to promote the advantages and merits of the type of integrated approach that is being proposed in this study. A view of the author is that opposition theory is more readily relevant to the Secondary curriculum, since the Primary curriculum is more readily integrated than that in Secondary schools. For the most part, one teacher assumes responsibility

for the entire curriculum so integration options can be applied without affecting other teachers' programmes. The Primary teacher, too, is not trained in a specialised faculty, generally exposed to a culture of linking or integrating activities as part of teacher training and within their schools.

The educational rationalist might argue that there needs to be divisions of subjects with "the central concerns of the curriculum to transmit certain kinds of valuable knowledge ... divided up into certain ...discrete forms of rationality" (Blenkin & Kelly, 1987, p.151). It is purported that the treatment of each K.L.A. in a largely isolated fashion not only ensures that specific knowledge, skills and values are addressed, but it creates an awareness by the students that specific learning disciplines exist.

Therefore, integration as a design mechanism has its detractors, concerned that it can result in content areas losing their separate boundaries. A central concern is that boundaries that create and define each K.L.A. can be blurred if not disguised or lost. This is due to the fact that subjects' systematised organisation present each with a distinctive kind of content and process dimension. This organisation, it is argued, need not be experimented with or compromised.

Hirst, cited in Hunkins, 1980, argues the existence of "three quite different knowledge organisations" and that these shape learners' capacity to make full and clear understandings. His view, as with others, that "disciplined knowledge exists independent in its application", has long challenged integrative methods.

Furthermore, there are concerns that go beyond the theory behind integration. Such concerns relate to curriculum design problems and the practical application of integration. Hunkins (1980, p.234) acknowledges that such designs are "difficult to achieve and procedures by which the various interrelationships...are made evident to the planners...and learners" have had limited success. These difficulties arise largely because: curricula are presented as unrelated subjects; theory within subjects is made distinct from practice and application; and those responsible for planning tend not to innovate with syllabuses in any formal way. In short, integration tends to be localised within the school or by individual teachers, often without "tried and tested" integrative curriculum designs that have adapted existing syllabuses.

Similarly, it is regarded that the onus of effective learning must be on the understanding and utilising of knowledge within one discipline. The learner is then better able to make clear associations where they are "encouraged to generate additional information from known information and to perceive the variety of interrelationships among the key concepts, ideas, generalisations and principles" (Hunkins, 1980). Students' ability to make clear decisions, judgements and expressions of learning within specific subject areas will therefore prepare their learning mindsets or frameworks for future years when specialisation will become increasingly relevant.

Such opposing views assist in the shaping of an integrated curriculum design that is aware of, and addresses, the characteristics of the K.L.As. The purpose of any



integrated approach and the way it is designed will be evaluated in terms of its clarity of structure for the teacher and its benefits for learning.

This is possible within the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach because it identifies the integration threads of K.L.As' content and syllabus outcomes. It maintains links with K.L.As' outcomes, treats content and is theme-based, which allows for a selection of specific content and sequenced activities from a variety of K.L.As. The approach proposed maintains K.L.As' defining elements due to its structure of outcomes, so whilst the boundaries may be disguised, they are neither lost nor blurred.

Importantly, since the curriculum is divided into K.L.As, the religious educator needs to consider how to take heed of recent insights into learning and intelligence theories. "One way to do this is to use integrated activities that accommodate learning as interactive and cooperative" (Liddy and Welbourne, 1999). The potential of an integrated approach, within the context of Catholic schools, is of particular relevance to this study- the way that R.E. topics can link to other K.L.As' topics and content, and the way that R.E. and other content and outcomes can link to, complement and be expressed within one another.

#### Relevance to the Catholic Curriculum

The potential and role of integration, as previously discussed, is significant in the organisation of R.E. as a K.L.A. and in expressing the religious dimension of other K.L.As.

The intentions, merits and impact of integration continue to be explored and discussed in general educational terms as well as by those in Catholic education. Dwyer (1993, p. 95) links characteristics of an evangelised curriculum, one of which would be its holistic nature in that it is non-fragmented and is cautious of divisions. He also lists as one feature of a broad Catholic 'pedagogy' the "maximising of opportunities for integration and the adopting of a holistic approach to learning" (p. 86).

Elliot (1995, p. 24) challenges curriculum practices. He describes religion as being in a "curriculum straight-jacket" the result largely of perceptions of religious concepts, represented and perceived in media as separate and independent entities. His concerns include the "compartmentalisation" of the curriculum, reasons for which are mentioned and exist as stronger or broader than occasional tendencies towards integration. He sees that, by not promoting religious issues and concepts of truth and values across the curriculum, or by not exploring other K.L.A.s' relevance to religion, then we in fact "often relegate theological thought and awareness to the periphery of the young person's mind" (Elliot, 1995, p. 25).

Unless the programme is organised in a way that reflects integration, then the R.E. curriculum will remain as a largely stand alone K.L.A. Even if activities are listed (in expressing an outcome) that might seem to have an English or Maths or H.S.I.E. trait or potential, if they are solely presented in the R.E. 'block' of the timetable, then it is still perceived by students as the teaching of R.E. in one R.E. lesson time.

Bringing R.E. (via outcomes and content) to other K.L.A.s, and vice versa, is a significant consideration when planning. This reciprocal nature of integration is vital within a process that aims to maintain the integrity of each K.L.A.

### Timetabling Issues

The programme and timetable need to be as all-inclusive as possible in order to display a structure for the predominantly integrated day as well as display the meaning and relevance of learning across all K.L.As. If this can be achieved using outcomes then it will clearly structure learning and assessment, yet allow for teacher flexibility and options by not being so prescriptive in the choice of learning experiences.

Such prescriptiveness tends to occur when the programme is structured primarily on a sequence of learning activities for each K.L.A. Programmes are therefore organised in distinct K.L.As and as a result, the day is organised in K.L.A. blocks of time. Conversely, the structure of the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach units presents a sequence of learning experiences that cover all K.L.As. Time allocations would need to be monitored, but generally the timetable would document 'Integrated Unit'; plus learning such as P.E. and aspects of Maths and other weekly events or learning not part of the integrated unit).

The Curriculum Corporation (Primary Curriculum, 1996, p.29-33) presents sample timetables that are useful in illustrating the integrated week since concerns and issues are often raised regarding how to manage it as well as our accountability responsibilities. It structures each day into K.L.A blocks, generally, meaning that

K.L.As' importance, relevance and purpose are not diminished. It is done so, in the understanding that K.L.As still exist with the outcomes and learning experiences reflecting certain types of learning that links to the class theme. There is further scope to develop such a structure to reflect to a greater extent, the integrative nature of planning and teaching, for example, by combining or overlapping K.L.A blocks or by bracketing associated K.L.As with another.

Murdoch (1994, p.46) claims that doing justice to all K.L.As presents problems for teaching. She reflects, what has almost become teacher rhetoric, the bemoans attached to 'fitting everything in'- course requirements of K.L.A, plus the extras such as assemblies and other events that require preparation and attendance, and additions to our curriculum such as Child Protection, Protective Behaviours, AIDS Education and Fitness. These place strains on the timetable. In fact, such issues further illustrate the benefits of an integrated day.

The author suggests that the 'extras' and 'additions' be incorporated within our existing programme by identifying outcomes that express the intended learning. It is often necessary to review and prioritise a current programme's content in order to accommodate and slot in such 'extras' which would have relevance to the students' learning and be planned or scheduled well in advance.

However, what Murdoch claims is true - the load of K.L.As is, in itself, relevant to burdens related to teachers' motivation and sense of achievement. Teachers need to identify how to absorb the perceived extras by examining the benefits of integration and relevance of syllabus outcomes.

### Benefits for Teachers and Learners

Foster (1997, p.23) identifies a need for the R.E. curriculum to assess the intellectual studies or other K.L.As. He proposes an holistic model. His justifications are derived from the character of contemporary Australia especially its "considerable secularisation" as influential on our youth. His model is a response to how the Catholic curriculum needs to be reviewed. It can be deduced that, if students' education is to be developmental, his concern for the effectiveness of Secondary R.E. must be reflected in the Primary curriculum. He acknowledges the diversity of students' backgrounds, interests, and faith developed, and reasons that the programme must treat other traditions, religions and societal world issues.

In the Primary H.S.I.E. and P.D./Health syllabuses and the Wollongong Diocese R.E. Curriculum, specific topics and outcomes address these, therefore inviting an integrated approach. The documentation of these links is vital, because other links can then be explored.

Malone and Ryan (1994/5, p. 9) discuss planning issues in R.E. and consider their relevance to effective classroom practice. If we are to aspire to more effective teaching and learning, the aim is to produce a systematic approach to planning the programme. This planning involves three levels, generally: the C.E.O., each school and each grade's teacher/s. The onus is ultimately on the teacher to plan their units, apply a methodology that will inspire interest and relevance, and facilitate and assess learning. This study advocates that such a process is best achieved via an integrated approach, especially if R.E. outcomes and those of

other K.L.As are linked, and associations explained.

Malone and Ryan (1994/5, p.9) draw the conclusion that if the programme does not assist the teacher to plan and teach, then it is not achieving its purpose. In supporting this view, they address the relationship of R.E. with other K.L.As. Quite simply, they state that it "ought to take into account what is happening in other curriculum areas." Their observations reflect planning practices in the Wollongong Diocesan schools that in part, are the motivation behind promoting and presenting the R.E. curriculum in an integrated way. They state that R.E. curriculums do not "reflect this relationship" with other K.L.As. They draw upon examples of units.

These, as in the Wollongong curriculum, focus largely on nature and creation, the family and being special. Their connection to Science, Health and P.D. seems obvious. Surely, the R.E. programme "should extend the concepts developed in other curriculum areas and introduce religious dimensions".

Ian Mitchell (2000, p. 21), throughout the 1990s, has observed and drawn conclusions about quality teaching and learning. His *Project to Enhance Effective Learning* outlines twelve principles, one of which supports an integration approach directly - "to develop students' awareness of the big picture: how the various activities fit together and link to the big ideas". This intention for a programme can be elaborated to include methodology such as the integration of R.E. outcomes.

Mathews (1986, p.9) defines and rationalises the integrated curriculum outlining

strong arguments and a clear methodology for teachers to consider. Whilst the approaches and guidelines are neither linked to outcomes (instead, learning experience-based) nor presented within the context of R.E., they do present integration as thoroughly educationally valid, with values and beliefs integral to content planning and assessment right across the K.L.As. Outlined are the processes involved in quality learning, environs of effective learning, personal qualities that are enhanced, philosophies of learning and learning propositions- each presented as optimal in an integrated setting.

He considers as vital, the presentation of a curriculum designed for teachers to use, because the planning process (in terms of time and design) can be such a large stumbling block to an effective integrated programme. So, if core R.E. units were written, teachers could, as necessary, make amendments by elaborating, substituting, adding or deleting activities and resources that best meet the needs of the students in enhancing the degree to which individuals achieve a particular outcome. At the same time, time-consuming and difficult decisions would have been made regarding the organisation of integrated learning experiences and outcome links. This is certainly an intention this study's trial unit.

In one example, Challender (1998, p.8) summarises the methodology and trial results from having redesigned her Secondary History programme. The relevance to Primary teaching is evident, since the strategies used have implications for all levels. She examines the potential of various learning styles: concrete, reflective, abstract and active. If these are deemed essential in teaching the whole child by

providing varied learning experiences, then integration is not only valid, but perhaps a measure of teachers' quality teaching practices. These learning styles can be explored and a balance provided, by linking learning across all K.L.As. Of importance, however, is how the outcomes can both provide the links and facilitate the learning styles.

The categories of outcomes are diverse. Therefore, learning is about variety, options available to students and teachers, and the potential for students' talents and abilities to be identified, honed and developed.

The importance of the teacher's expertise in a particular area is not diminished within an integrated Primary curriculum. They still need to place an emphasis on thinking processes and appropriate levels of thinking (eg. Blooms Taxonomy) in order to vary experiences, relate and respond to outcomes, and to meet students' levels. The teacher can actually spread their expertise or incorporate it in a broader context. They need to trust in and believe in integration, and that there is a compatibility with the way children learn holistically, and that children's thinking and understandings can be extended and deepened. They still need to select appropriate activities that demonstrate learning for assessment purposes for inclusion in students' learning portfolios and other means of reporting.

There is predominant support that segregation of K.L.As or learning styles preferences given to either, by teachers, debilitates students' learning in the Primary School. Unless teachers are inserviced and guided, there is a tendency for their preferences to surface. Actually, Dorrington (1998, p.13) identifies this point



as a perceived failing in education today. As a Deputy Principal, his judgement is based on first hand experience, observing that schools are organised by “chunking” learning into “subjects which are taught in isolation ... having segmented knowledge and encouraging a blinkered approach to learning”. He draws the analogy of slicing and separating pieces of cake- that what was one whole, is now separated, where initial joins are lost and the character and size of pieces uneven.

This division of the whole is reflected in the gradual development of N.S.W. syllabuses. The Board of Studies, however, does acknowledge the validity of integration and promotes the organisation of its syllabuses as conducive to linking learning experiences. Examples of programming methodology are currently being developed in *Linkages*, which is an ongoing curriculum project to be accessible on the Board’s website. (*The Primary Curriculum*, 1998) It is understood that these would need to be developed as school initiatives in terms of documentation and facilitation and measured according to teachers’ application.

Teachers’ programmes are a response, therefore, to syllabus guidelines. The manner of facilitation must be a response to employer directives, recommendations and each school’s professional development. The latter can draw upon individual teachers’ expertise and the setting up of initiatives that can be trialled and reviewed. Skilbeck (1984) outlines steps essential in effective curriculum development, reliant on a “collaborative, structured decision-making process”. Even though the mandatory syllabuses of the Board, combined with the Diocesan R.E.

Curriculum document, present the courses of work, the work of schools in organising and maintaining these as effective programmes is vital and integral to the ongoing quality of learning - a process dependent on teachers' ideas and feedback. This empowers teachers. It educates teachers in how to plan the content in a way that will best meet the needs of the students and the mission of the school.

Importantly, however, it demands that we analyse and interpret each K.L.A.'s content and outcomes, explore the links and expressions of their religious dimension, document our program in a way that is concise, flexible and selective, establish clear evaluation methodology, and identify assessment tasks that provide meaningful learning information for students and parents. Skilbeck cites, amongst nine decisions in planning the programme, the importance to consider learning methods, groupings and combinations of subject matter and the relationship of each K.L.A. to the overall curriculum.

Each is closely linked to the philosophy behind the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach, but significantly, he regards the K.L.As' relationships as "a particularly important and often neglected matter in planning". This is supportive of the author's concern that theoretical benefits of integration are one thing; the effective organisation and practice (or even existence) of integration are another.

The Curriculum Corporation has developed an interesting design. *Ed-Ventures* (Winter, 1999) outlines a practical move to promote imagination, initiative, persistence and enterprise within the curriculum. It is an attempt to promote these

aspects as valuable learning outcomes of education, to develop an enterprising approach to teaching, to apply these to general life and to better enable students to exit school as skilled contributors to society. It recognises several elements to consider when implementing such 're-thought' planning of syllabuses, including thematic or modular-based activity, cross-curricular activity and extra curricular or co-curricular activity. Significantly, integration, connectedness and outcome statements are integral components.

### The Potential of New Syllabuses and Structure of Outcomes

The Curriculum Corporation's publication of integration suggestions is in response to the perceived need to support teachers working with national working area statements and profiles via the implementation of State syllabuses. The Corporation recognises that "the prospect of curriculum planning, in the light of the new documents, can seem daunting." (*Primary Curriculum*, 1996, p.27) This is the case in NSW with the inception of all-new Syllabuses during the 1990s, plus the ongoing development of a new Diocesan R.E. curriculum document, hence this study's response in the form of an integrated approach using outcomes.

The Corporation acknowledges that most teachers apply some intent to integrate, but need guidelines for programme writing. It also allows for the assumption that there will be time dedicated to K.L.As for treatment of specific skills and content. Teachers need to aim at the integration of as many learning experiences as possible via outcomes. Teachers would benefit by the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach's organisation of learning experiences and outcomes, and considerations

of a Catholic curriculum. Otherwise it is likely that programmes will revert to offering minimal integrative opportunities, void of the curriculum's religious dimensions.

What an integrated approach does provide is a structured means by which more than one outcome can be used to describe particular episodes of learning. For example, in writing a discussion on a Government issue (H.S.I.E. topic), English and H.S.I.E. outcomes are obvious. But if an integrated unit was planned around the R.E. topic on Reconciliation or Social Justice, a variety of R.E. outcomes would apply as well, plus some relating to P.D. (goal-setting, leadership, roles in society, self esteem) and Health (making decisions, environmental health, safety). Similarly, other K.L.As could be linked, such as Maths (analysing, presenting data) and Creative Arts (design, song, drama).

In short, different K.L.As' outcomes can be used to provide different perspectives to learning- several K.L.As' outcomes can describe a student's learning. If teachers allocate several outcomes from across the curriculum to each episode of learning activities, then not only are they able to view student learning in light of different disciplines, but the time-efficiency of treating all outcomes will be improved.

Murdoch (1994, p.47) highlights the importance of professional development in assisting teachers in the implementation of an integrated curriculum with a defined framework a necessity. Teacher perceptions of integration need to be explored, urges Murdoch, since there have been many models and examples available,

presenting a deal of confusion and consequently, teachers have tended to stay with the convenient and more familiar treating of K.L.As in isolation.

This view varies from that of the Curriculum Corporation (*Primary Curriculum*, 1996, p.28) and is one that motivates my study. The Corporation's view is creditable and of practical relevance, however it largely presumes that schools will automatically wish to, or be skilled to adopt the approach, and that teachers will embrace its ideas and methodology. This is optimistic, since it does not address the timeframe, refer to a specific design or approach, or the need for professional development and trial.

Murdoch measures the success of an integrated curriculum by its clarity of purpose and direction, and sharing of ideas and inservicing to achieve any significant improvement in the classroom. The clarity of the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach comes largely in the form of 'teachable' and assessable outcomes that are integrated in the form of a unit. Importantly, Murdoch's commitment to integration exists within the context of contemporary outcomes-based syllabuses. She refers to the importance of developing teachers' skills in using such documents "to help fine tune their planning, audit their selection...[and] assess children at work within an integrated context" (1994, p.49).

### Theory versus Practice

There seems to be a void between the theory and practice of integration. On the one hand, it is broadly espoused and recommended, regarded as current and educationally valid. Yet, the study contests that in reality, limited application

occurs. Interestingly, Bear (1999, p.48) recognises the potential of integration and emphasises its place in educational planning over the next ten years. This study promotes viewpoints that concur with his, in that the curriculum is dependent on the ways that subjects are organised and planned, with the curriculum gradually becoming more “connected and interconnected, and formally articulated”.

The latter is interesting because methodology, in terms of how to programme in an integrated manner, is a barrier to many teachers. They may integrate to a point, but their programme will not demonstrate how the learning experiences are arranged within a framework of integration. The formal articulation of organisation is an aspect that the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach intends to address in the way the units will model and scaffold outcomes-based planning.

Furthermore, it is true that many schools probably include the process of integration amongst its initiatives or practices when communicating to parents. True, too, is teachers’ perception of quality classroom practices, which more than likely includes integration. The questions involve: How? why? To what extent? For what purposes? Experiences of the author show integration as generally minimal, shallow, content-based, not enhancing of K.L.As’ content and traits (least of all religious dimensions) and excluded within formal assessment.

So, many parents are of the opinion that integration is “happening” effectively (as indeed are many teachers), when it is not necessarily the case. We must explore its potential within examples of classroom use, supported by clear written guidelines and suggestions. In briefing parents on today’s schools, Dwyer (1994,

p.17) explains integration and represents it in its purest and most creative forms. He states that teachers "value it, plan for it to happen and strive to make it work". The author considers this a very generous statement and whilst in agreement that ideally, this should be the case, would propose that generally, teachers do not embrace it. They may plan and document some content links and teaching strategies, but teaching/learning episodes are typically segmented and not explicitly linked. The gradual inception of K.L.A. syllabuses and the implications of outcomes-based education have no doubt contributed to this situation.

### Applications

In light of all that is documented on integration, and in view of its potential relationship with R.E. and outcomes, it is appropriate to reflect upon a selection of others' first hand experiences. Darvel (1999) experimented with an integrated class programme by focussing on the scope of Creative Arts' strands (music, drama, dance and visual arts) in providing expression and different meaning to other theme-based learning experiences.

The affective domain is clearly entrenched in this K.L.A. and can be applied to any theme within R.E., H.S.I.E. and Science & Technology, as well as finding connections with various Health and P.D. syllabus outcomes. "We need to ensure that our students know the joy and exhilaration of creating and see this as an accepted, valued and integral part of life...each art form is honoured as unique, seen as part of a wider whole".

Secondly, Sweeney (1999) concluded that by integrating Creative Arts, she and

her students became more able to articulate related learning by verbalising both cognitive and creative responses. They were also able to recognise and appreciate the melding together of K.L.As and associated learning experiences, orally and expressively, as part of evaluative feedback and assessment. She observed that students were able to share, explain and respond to their learning through oral interpretations to a creative act, often required for others' understanding and useful for teachers' ability to assess learning as well as the approach.

Experimentation with elements of information technology also presented alternate, expressive tools for integration. A slide show on Claris Works, the accessing of the Internet for research purposes, an email drama and a digital camera display provided options in her classroom and presented a new, intuitive dimension to students' learning.

Gibson-Quick (1999), on the other hand, presents a summary of a trial unit that was written to the draft N.S.W. Creative Arts' syllabus, based on a Science & Technology topic. She presented learning experiences that covered each strand, identifying the processes of experimenting, exploring, making and appraising. Each activity was linked to selected science activities and teaching strategies, and integrated in English through speaking, listening and some forms of writing. Reference is made to the characteristics of each strand and the connectedness with one another as well as other K.L.As. The desire to display connected learning is apparent through its clear structure and acknowledges that Creative Arts are diminished and a less effective vehicle for learning without obvious and



documented connections to other learning.

Equally important are other K.L.As' application of Creative Arts. Cited examples are few in number, but significant in ideas. Essentially, they demonstrate and imply the capacity of integration to be inclusive of outcomes, classroom Religious Education and other K.L.As in producing a Catholic curriculum. Consequently, they demand a variety of in-class practical responses and a concerted approach to the planning of a contemporary and balanced programme that is developmental throughout the grades and refined as teachers improve implementation and alter their mindsets.

Clearly, the balance of thought reflects the fact that integration is more than simply being concerned with how to facilitate learning. Although there are variances in definition of integration, the nature of learning is the underlying focus. Behind much of what is written are educational ideas presented as firm philosophical views about the nature of learning, strongly urging decisions related to learning to reflect a commitment to integration. If, in reaching educational decisions, educators take the objective view in contemplating a non-integrated methodology in order to make comparisons, then conclusions similar to those of Pring may be reached (cited in Barry, 1988, pp.85-87) :

Insufficient account taken of the pupils' previous experience, levels of understanding, individual perception of things...failure to link the pastoral care of the school with curriculum activities...inhibition of close personal relations between teacher and pupil...termination of worthwhile enquiries because they cannot be confined within the boundaries of subject areas... learning

difficulties arising from the constant switch of attention from one subject matter to another...inability to accommodate practical and inter-disciplinary concepts... links between subject matters not taught, and support of another not provided...inflexibility of organisation...the pupil's initiative in his own studies discouraged.

### **2.1.5 Outcomes (and Outcomes-based Education)**

#### **Contemporary Initiative and Syllabus Structure**

Outcomes-based education has been broadly embraced due to several main virtues that illustrate what students will learn, compared with previous curriculum development that had focussed on what we teach and how (ie. output or demonstration of learning versus input and style of instruction).

Outcomes-based education provides: clear goals of learning (as opposed to what will be taught), standards-referencing (as opposed to norm-referencing), succinct learning statements (as opposed to check lists), direct links to assessment (as opposed to no prescribed standards or benchmarks) and statements of what has been achieved and what will be done next that take in all of these virtues. It is important then, in order for teachers to progress and develop through this transition stage of outcomes education, that schools consider "both the thinking behind learning outcomes and what to keep in mind when developing and using them" (*Outcomes: Why and How*, 1996, p.46).

Understandably, it is widely considered that the benefits of an outcomes-based

approach are yet to be fully realised, as teachers come to terms with the planning of learning around outcomes, assessment of this learning and outcomes' function in the integration of K.L.As.

As a syllabus structure, outcomes direct teachers in meeting course requirements. As an educational development, outcomes education requires teachers to review planning practices and the process of learning and teaching.

One response is via the familiarisation, relevance, purpose and potential of outcomes within an integrated approach which is a focus of this study. The article, *Outcomes : How and Why?* (1996,p.52) outlines criteria for what constitutes a set of useful outcomes. It mentions such aspects as student behaviour that would result from learning, long term learning, discipline standards, differing learning styles and forms of intelligence, and higher order thinking skills. If these are among considerations when choosing syllabus outcomes or writing generic outcomes, then it seems that they could be used to describe learning beyond the specific K.L.A. to which they refer. Therefore, by their very nature, outcomes invite integration.

McGaw (*Curriculum Stocktake*, 1995, p.74) categorises more recent educational developments in the context of the move from the teaching content to learning outcomes. He acknowledges that there is some convenience in segmenting parts of the curriculum in High Schools, and that the K.L.As have strong lobbies for their preservation. At the same time, there is the capacity for other K.L.As to be consigned to broader learning areas through the respective content areas and

related outcomes. Regardless, however, it is the focus on planning to a set of outcomes that now drives curriculum decisions. In the non-specialist teacher environment of Primary Schools, this view would relate to the argument that outcomes are useful in linking and merging various K.L.As.

A significantly influential review of outcomes-based education in N.S.W. was commissioned by the Department of Education (Eltis, 1995). Since then, the Board of Studies has either produced an updated or new syllabus, and support documents, for each K.L.A. The ease of working with outcomes has improved due to such reviews and teachers' developing expertise.

The question of how they work with outcomes in terms of improved methodology is subject to debate. It is probably true that teaching is less content riven, because teachers plan and assess using outcomes due to the way syllabuses are structured. However, it generally remains true that learning is more teacher-driven than child-centred. The broad purpose and function of outcomes, particularly in integration, the correlations between the outcomes, and a multi-disciplinary outcome approach to planning, assessment and reporting, are far from being realised. This affirms a number of issues raised by Eltis. The fact that the report's conclusions and recommendations are still relevant, is indicative of the ongoing support required, and the fact that the projected long term goals of outcomes-based syllabus structures were well founded.

The current issue is how schools continue to respond to the disparity between effective and ineffective use of outcomes. The trialling and implementation process

that each new syllabus demanded of systems, schools and teachers is over. Schools should first look at the links and means by which outcomes from different K.L.As can be aligned. Schools could document a range of outcomes in the various K.L.As' scope and sequence of content. Grade or Stage content for all K.L.As could be presented as a flowchart, matrix or overview, 'organised using outcomes. For assessment, grades could simply experiment using several outcomes (eg. knowledge and value from one K.L.A.; a skill from one or two others) using student work samples to indicate achievement of learning. Options are numerous. By presenting outcomes in such a fashion, integration opportunities will stand out and their broad purpose and function will be exposed and further developed over time.

It is true that the outcomes' framework has encouraged educators to closely consider what they want to achieve by selecting certain learning experiences. It has also insisted that teachers actually consider all aspects of the curriculum and learning styles, without unnecessarily favouring those regarded as comfortable, familiar or more essential (Eltis, p.55). What is done with the outcomes is the measure and essence of our success as facilitators of an organised, progressive system of learning.

Relatively early examinations of outcomes-based education (Woodward, 1994) are interesting in that they express developments, perceptions, concerns and beliefs of pioneering works, and without the benefit of hindsight. In planning a class unit, Woodward outlines a process, including outcomes-related considerations that

involves the participation of a variety of K.L.As, the importance to be selective and aware of a balance between knowledge, skills and values, and to realise the “overlaps between the various curriculum areas”.

### Relevance to the Catholic Curriculum

In programming from a Catholic school curriculum, however, this study emphasises that outcomes from the R.E. curriculum not only need to be integral to planning and assessment, but the foundation upon which the entire curriculum is developed. R.E. needs to be placed within the whole framework, not only as a contextual presence, but as the prime influence and generator of maximum experiences within and beyond the formal curriculum. An examination of the place of outcomes-based education in R.E. as conducted by Ryan (1998), presents it as a K.L.A. in its own right and one that improves and defines educational accountability, and structures assessment and reporting procedures.

Convey (1992) highlights the value and purpose of outcomes in determining levels of achievement in the context of Catholic schools' Religious Education. Emphasised, is the importance of teachers' programmes (and the teachers as facilitators) to examine all sets of outcomes, not knowledge and skills alone which has been reflected in teacher practice and formal curriculum design. Now, values (and attitudes) are expressed as outcomes too, meaning that they are able to be planned, learned and assessed.

Convey sees this as having significant meaning to Catholic schools in that their effectiveness can be determined in terms of schools' religious education and value

development of students, at a curriculum level, across other K.L.As and in the context of the whole school as a community. Values' outcomes are integral to an authentic Catholic curriculum, as a foundation of R.E., and as a way of expressing the religious dimensions of other K.L.As.

Many K.L.As' knowledge and skill outcomes can be identified within or expressed By R.E. topics. Each K.L.A. too, presents a set of values' outcomes, many of which can find additional meaning in R.E. outcomes and content areas of Health and P.D. are explicitly relevant to aspects of Christian living. Issues raised in H.S.I.E., plus the natural phenomenon themes of science also provide direct links to specific R.E. topics. The expression of these areas can quite obviously be explored in English (reading, writing, speaking) and Creative Arts.

Ryan, in his study, reflects upon the effectiveness of an outcomes-based approach as reported back to him by teachers. This study concurs with the feedback (a view developed from trialling the unit and collating responses), in the way teachers were predominantly very satisfied "with greater clarity... sequencing of material, the goals described" (1998, p.18). Much of what he discusses makes particular sense, since Wollongong Diocese is currently developing outcomes-based curriculum guidelines. The philosophy behind outcomes in R.E., the general nature of outcomes, and the feedback from teachers who have planned outcomes-based units, has been the focus since early 1999. Ryan's remarks can be paralleled with these experiences.

### Educational Development

There is, however, an element of scepticism derived from a combination of teachers who claim concerns regarding integration and the nature of programming for R.E., those who assume the 'devil's advocate' role, those for whom change is usually an issue, and those who claim a contemporary pedagogy regarding outcomes-based education, but struggle to plan, facilitate and assess effectively using the outcomes.

One such viewpoint is similar in general terms. Eisner (cited in Ryan, 1998, p.19), asserts that our tendency to be consumed by educational trends and programme structure takes us away from other priorities that need to be right for their benefits to be realised. "Such reforms cannot improve education in Catholic schools, but distract us from the deeper...problems which beset our schools." The author contests that, in his elaboration of this view, the structure of outcomes could actually assist or enhance rather than hinder. He mentions that it distracts us from "building a culture of schooling that is genuinely intellectual".

This study rejects such curriculum structures compared with a design that involves integration outcomes because:

- they are heavy in the affective domain, whereas outcomes address knowledge, skills and values across all K.L.As, thus presenting the important balance of cognitive and affective learning;
- they detract from, as opposed to attracting teachers towards "professional opportunities". Staff curriculum development in outcomes actually moves beyond



philosophy and traditional or mainstream approaches towards a creative use of outcomes, and new options for assessment and reporting;

- they generally focus on specific K.L.As' content and learning outcomes to describe a student's learning levels. The potential to meet the needs of high-achievers and those 'at risk' is greater when learning is expressed in a variety of ways. Also, teachers can refer to outcomes of a previous or subsequent Stage in order to plan such students' learning experiences;
- they do not promote to the same extent, the "interactions between teaching, curriculum, evaluation and school". An advantage of using outcomes is the way they formalise learning statements, are categorised the same per K.L.A., express the school's educational priorities of the formal curriculum, and demonstrate an accountability framework. Similarly, the planned integration of values and attitudes reinforces and enhances the climate and ethos of the school.

As a result, if each concern is considered in terms of outcomes, then they represent a collective argument for an outcomes-based approach. Then, if outcomes were to be filtered or integrated across the curriculum, then the process of outcomes-based education would be infinitely more effective. It is not enough for R.E. outcomes to find their place in R.E. alone. They need to seek relevance within other K.L.As' content and outcomes and beyond, to reinforce the purpose and mission of the school.

Outcomes are seen to define syllabus intent and content in a precise fashion, to clarify student performance, to assist schools in communicating student progress

and to provide a focus for assessment. By using a cross-discipline approach, students are able to express and identify their achievement in various ways. The quality and variety of learning experience then dilutes the importance of teaching strategies.

Often our strategies are planned in a 'blinkered' or less peripheral manner as we focus on a strategy within a specific K.L.A. to demonstrate learning. So, given that integration links learning, it indeed allows students to express learning in a variety of ways as a result of episodes of experiences selected to illustrate the achievement of certain outcomes.

In this way, a cross-K.L.A. approach will link outcomes, the result being that a set of outcomes will describe learning. This multiple use is surely favourable, since outcomes are designed to demonstrate learning by representing the "intended results of teaching and learning expressed as a broad, comprehensive, assessable and observable indicators...of student achievement at each stage" (*Board of Studies, NSW, 1991*).

This document outlines aspects of outcomes-based education that schools ought to consider and revisit occasionally and was intended to assist in teachers' trialling of subsequent syllabuses. It remains remarkably relevant today now that the development of K.L.A. syllabuses is complete, because teachers continue to fine-tune and refine their use of the syllabus and their approach to outcomes. It is worthwhile exploring the background and inception of outcomes as an integral structural component of contemporary school education (and wide from Tertiary

institutions to the corporate world). The document presents the relationship of syllabus outcomes and achievement, their relationship to objectives, advantages of outcomes (such as their child-centred nature), their function and purpose when programming and outcomes' potential in reporting information to parents, system and Government.

The clear intent of educators is to facilitate meaningful learning. In order to measure success, it needs to be explored in light of students' achievement. Outcome statements actually state the learning that the student has acquired. They are transparent and accessible by being documented in teachers' programmes, by being stated and measured on students' selected work samples, students' learning portfolios and reports, and demonstrated in data that is collected for schools' accountability purposes.

Most significantly, outcomes are available to students since they provide students "with a clear perception of goals to be achieved" (*Board of Studies, NSW, 1991*). They infer that students' needs will be met, they define content, and importantly, can be used by the teacher or system to communicate learning-related recommendations, levels of achievement and aspects for revision and practice.

The child-centred nature of outcomes is a basic premise of what the conduct of teachers should reflect. It is their learning so teachers need to communicate to them in an explicit fashion, yet in a way that shows their learning as part of a progression- the building on of previous knowledge, skills or values. Students can take ownership of each assessed outcome because each is about their level of

achievement, what they have done and an indication of 'where to now?'

### Implications for Teachers

Outcomes invite teachers to respond to methods of teaching (or facilitation of learning) in providing remediation, consolidation or extension, by referring to previous or subsequent outcomes.

N.S.W. Department of Education identifies outcomes as having significant effects on current programming methodology in the classroom. The document, *Introducing an Outcomes and Profiles Approach*, presents facilitation ideas and recommendations for school planners and classroom practitioners. The focus is the important relationship that exists between school, teacher and the student, detailing processes involved in what will be learned and when, and how the learning will be measured and communicated.

"By looking ahead for achievements or outcomes still to be reached...[teachers can] plan work units that both cater for different levels of achievement, and challenge, direct and support students to move gradually from one level of achievement to the next". Students need to "understand what they are being asked to achieve and what other achievements could follow if they are to improve their performance" (1994, pp.5-15). The dignity of the child is clearly implied within these statements. The philosophy of Catholic educators is based on promoting worth in the child as we recognise achievement, set personally challenging goals and support them in all they aspire.

As teachers occasionally become caught up in the constant endeavour to apply outcomes to each progressive step in tracing students' learning, it is worthwhile to reiterate the benefits of outcomes-based learning and also a curriculum that is relevant beyond the classroom. Rhodes and McCabe (cited in Woodward, 1994, p.6), in an overview of outcomes' methodology, identify aspects with clear implications for an integrated and a religiously influenced curriculum. The process "strongly advocates [an] interdisciplinary curriculum", "relies on authentic tasks and assessment for determining student progress", "emphasises creation of a community of learners in the classroom and in the school", promotes respect of learning, an order to learning and a respect for students as different learners to one another, uses "interactive, co-operative learning", involves "specific social and human interaction skills" and incorporates "integrating thinking skills" development into [the] daily curriculum".

It is appropriate to conclude with several positive elements of an outcomes-based approach: variety of learning styles; variety in the way learning can be displayed; articulation of knowledge, skills and values, emphasis on quality of learning; cohesive, clear standards; progressive through Stages; precise, comparable; and child-centred. An application of these attributes to include integration, within the context of R.E., must surely encapsulate a viable, contemporary curriculum for Catholic schools.

## **2.2 Review of Literature Summary**

The literature reflects an emphasis on the curriculum decisions that confront Catholic school teachers.

If teachers integrate knowledge, skills and values they will demonstrate that whilst they like to think that they teach in different ways, teachers will actually acknowledge that students learn in different ways. Similarly, if what teachers plan is purposeful and relevant to other K.L.As, it is an opportunity for students to express learning in a variety of ways using alternative skills and processes on occasions, and conducted with the awareness that all students require levels of remediation, consolidation and enrichment.

When this planning process is structured using outcomes, then the outcomes will in fact communicate and demonstrate learning, informing and guiding teachers and students for subsequent learning. They offer directions and affirmation of what has been achieved, identify what might be achieved, and invite students and teachers to determine how.

If this whole structure of integrating outcomes across the curriculum is built upon R.E. topics, associated outcomes and content links with other K.L.As, then the curriculum develops a unique character. Learners will then perceive other K.L.As differently. They will see that learning experiences are related, each K.L.A. is connected, and that all K.L.As can be viewed in light of the Christian message and by Catholic perspectives.

So, if this formal curriculum structure is seen to foster Gospel values, address the needs of the whole person, and highlight the relevance of our faith to life and other learning, then the curriculum might be described as authentically Catholic. It is evident that there are clear links between the educational distinctiveness of Catholic schools, the nature of R.E. within school life and within the curriculum, the religious dimensions of each K.L.A., the practice of integration, and the place of outcomes-based education. There are both distinct and implicit elements of interdependence.

Significantly, however, there appears to be very little formal consideration or practical application of integrating the Primary curriculum using outcomes, nor including R.E. as a focus or generator of experiences by integrating the R.E. curriculum. There are no examples of integrated R.E. curriculum units that reference outcomes and link other K.L.As' topics across the curriculum, and there is no specific literature that explains, demonstrates or merits such a structure.

### Chapter 3

## METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

### 3.1 Theoretical Framework

The challenge for systems and schools is delivering a formal curriculum that is unique in its Catholicity. The theory centres upon elements that relate specifically to Catholic schools, combined with these that are inherently educational considerations. The literature references offer overwhelming encouragement and valuable insight into these elements, which constitute the main pillars of this theoretical framework: the distinctiveness of Catholic education; the nature of R.E. (in the context of school life and as a K.L.A.); the religious dimension of other K.L.As; integration; and outcomes-based education.

There is no theory that incorporates all the above. There are associations between each and it is clear that there is a degree of interdependence for some.

So, in designing an Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach for Catholic schools' class programmes, each aspect is considered and central to the approach's development. These aspects are based on educational theory, and by definition, give recommendations for practice to those employed in the concrete day-to-day business of education. Moore, et al. (1984,p. 11) state that any such theory would involve a certain structure. It would assume that some educational end be achieved, resources considered, certain means be appropriate to achieve a particular end and recommendations be involved in order to best achieve the desired outcome.



This study aims to consider the theoretical beliefs and assumptions, and to contemplate the inter-relationships. In this way, it presents as a broad theory expressed in the structure of a work unit.

Moore, et al. (1981, p. 14) assert that valid educational theory would make “morally acceptable assumptions about aims, correct and checkable assumptions about children, philosophically respectable assumptions about knowledge and verified assumptions about the effectiveness of methods.” This assertion can be founded fully within the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach, since it is centred on worth and is concerned with methods and “ends” all related to quality classroom practice that facilitates optimum learning, based on a developing pedagogy, all within a Catholic school setting.

There is distinct potential to organise a truly Catholic curriculum. The purpose is to offer a structure that implements integration and outcomes, and is based on the relativity between R.E. and other K.L.As. This structure has the capacity to actualise the connectedness of learning, overtly linked with R.E. themes and Christian values.

## **3.2 Materials and Methods**

### **3.2.1 Target Population**

The following were approached to participate in interviews:

- 17 class teachers (Kindergarten to Year 6, predominantly Stage 3) from 3 schools;
- 3 Catholic Education Office Religious Education consultants;

- 3 Principals;
- 2 schools' Religious Education Coordinators.

The cross-section of staff selected was intended to provide variety within the target group.

Selection was based according to staff members' different school roles, experiences in this and/or other systems, extent of teaching experience, and general style of classroom practice. Such considerations were vital in achieving a group that is broadly representative of Wollongong Diocese primary schools.

Expressions of interest were sought for the trial of the unit. Their involvement was negotiated, based on:

- the need to target Stage 3 teachers (since it is a Stage 3 unit);
- the need to include teachers from a few schools;
- a preference to involve both or all teachers on a particular grade/ Stage in a school;
- the extent to which the trial unit can be accommodated within the school's sacramental calendar;
- the current priorities set by the Principal;
- participants' awareness and acceptance of the procedure steps.

### **3.2.2 Design**

The structure of the research can be viewed in terms of methodology design, use of data and the various components involved in thesis development. The study

essentially focuses on teachers' responses and evaluations of the trial unit, designed according to the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach.

Ethnographic Inquiry is a form of qualitative research and depicts the main approach adopted in this study. Such inquiry is designed to capture and understand the specific aspects of the life of a particular group. (Wisniewski, 1994) The focus is on obtaining full and detailed descriptions from informants through dialogue and observation. Typically, the ethnographer is immersed in a setting of interest whilst trying to stay as detached as possible from the subject matter.

Ethnographic Inquiry can be described on a continuum from relatively pure description to more theoretically grounded explanations of cultural, social and organisational life. On the inductive end of the continuum, the researcher developed theory out of description and interpretation, whereas at the deductive end, the researcher's study reflects an established theoretical framework.

The study's data is primarily derived from evaluations of the teaching unit - these address the links and associations that exist between established theories (related to R.E. in schools, the distinctiveness of Catholic schools, integration and outcomes-based education). The data collected from teachers' perceptions regarding these, serves to justify the development of the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach to planning programmes of work. The qualitative nature of the data is reflected throughout various steps outlined in the Procedure section.

In addition, an element of quantitative data was gathered from pre-trial interviews

and post - trial evaluations.

The methods and practices used to gather and analyse the data and evaluate implementation, are of an ethnographic nature. By definition, this study involves the study of people and how they behave and respond in certain situations and conditions. The key forms of data collection were:

- Interviews, which were designed to address aspects of this study, integral to Catholic schools (refer Procedure Step 1);
- The questionnaire (refer Appendix 4), eliciting a variety of scaled and open-ended responses, divided into categories: unit evaluation addressing the five key elements of the study; review of interview questions; and potential of the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach.

(The interview questions and questionnaire were structured upon the initial Research Questions.)

### **3.2.3 Instruments and Materials**

Techniques included face-to-face interviews using established questions, personal explanations about the purpose of my study, informal monitoring of the facilitation of the trial unit, unit evaluations, post-interviews, questionnaire, observation of students, student self-evaluations and formal assessment samples.

Various items were required:

- at interview ( tape recorder, copy of interview questions for interviewer);
- at trial stage (copy of discussion points used at inservice- refer Procedure Step 6;
- an evaluation log for trial teachers; an evaluation log for researcher, a copy of

the unit and assessment sample- refer Appendices 2,3);

- at post-trial stage ( transcript of personal responses at interview; questionnaires).

### **3.2.4 Procedure**

Interview questions were developed with advice sought from E.C.U. Research Consultant, Jan Gray. The interview procedure and the questions were trialled with three independent teachers.

**Q.1 *What, in your view, is the aim of Religious Education?***

**Q.2 *In what way do you see the formal curriculum of Catholic Schools as different to that of other schools?***

**Q.3 *What do you understand by the term 'curriculum integration'?***

**Q.4a. *In your current programme (or that of others), to what extent is each of the Key Learning Areas integrated?***

**b. *From what you practise or observe, to what extent is R.E. integrated?***

(Interviewees asked to respond to each KLA using 'Majority', 'Some' or 'None'.)

**Q.5 *How do you view integration?***

Interviewees are asked to select 3 of the following that best describe their view:

- a. Integration assists planning and programming;
- b. Integration enhances learning;
- c. Integration is essential in meeting curriculum requirements;
- d. Integration of learning experiences is difficult to document when programming;
- e. Integration of K.L.A. outcomes is valid, but unfamiliar;

- f. Integration can complicate assessment and reporting;
- g. I would like to integrate more effectively;
- h. I prefer minimal integration;
- i. R.E. should be integrated throughout the curriculum.

**Q.6 *How do you use (or view the use of) syllabus outcomes?***

**Procedure Steps**

1. Pre-interview
  - a) Discussion with prospective participants of the background to the research project;
  - b) Identification of the interviewees;
  - c) Confirmation of confidentiality and the intention to invite/ask some teachers (from those interviewed), to trial the units;
  - d) Clarification of the methods of data collection and their part in establishing research findings.
2. Conduct 1:1 interviews, recording dialogue on tape.
3. Post-interview
  - a) collation of responses by analysing and recording anecdotal comments;
  - b) offer to Stage 3 teachers to trial the unit;
  - c) explanation to all participants of their involvement in the research, whether trialling or not.
4. Inservicing, to present teachers with their integrated units (their core class programme's content) and to provide an overview of structure, methodology and the various roles of all participants.

Explain that : - it meets School (and Diocesan) programming policy requirements;

- it meets course requirements;
- how to “teach from” this unit structure/design;
- decisions will still need to be made regarding some resources, reference material, alternative and additional activities and tangents, thus allowing teachers to access their own expertise, preferences and the need to meet individuals’ needs (provision for amendments is part of each unit’s proforma );
- evaluation procedures (ongoing journal and post ) of teaching strategies, learning experiences and resources;
- options for informal assessment;
- the use of student self evaluation sheets and student assessment sample (with several cross- KLA outcomes, including RE outcome/s);
- timetabling options / issues.

Discuss their role, both the trial and non-trial group :

- to consider the points raised on the post-trial questionnaire, in order to focus on aspects;
- to provide their perceptions of the approach;
- to maintain a journal of issues, observations, amendments, classifications, ideas regarding content or layout, and resourcing;
- to facilitate student self-evaluations and formal work samples that assess learning to nominated outcomes;
- to consider evidence of the distinctiveness of a Catholic curriculum approach , religious dimensions of KLAs, benefits of integration,

value of using outcomes to structure the approach;

- to liaise with their grade colleague; or school colleagues who are trialling;
- to promote team-teaching or modules;
- to liaise with the researcher;
- to seek student feedback via self-evaluations of learning and the method's approach.

6. Teachers trial the Reconciliation unit:

- journal of observations and evaluation.

7. Post-trial evaluations:

- a) discuss, share (school basis) - journals; specific aspects of implementation, eg. timetabling, time management; effectiveness of the programme from which to plan and teach, evaluate and to assess learning; the way it addressed the key elements-reference to the questionnaire;
- b) complete the questionnaire;
- c) re-visit the interview questions (individual) to analyse the extent to which the trial altered or reinforced their perceptions of their practical implementation of integrating student learning and R.E. as the focus of student learning and Catholic schools.

8. Post-trial findings; conclusions:

- (i) analyse pre- & post-interview comparisons,
- (ii) collate questionnaire data;
- (iii) draw conclusions from questionnaire data.



### 9. Recommendations:

- for practical application;
- for further research.

### 10. Conclusion:

- potential for broader application;
- evidence of success in terms of facilitation and subsequent student benefits;
- impact on teaching and learning;
- shortcomings, solutions, development;
- effects on teachers' methodology and pedagogy;
- implications for students;
- implications for teachers, school, Diocese.

### 3.2.5 Data Analysis

The Research Questions numbered below are aligned with the Procedure Steps that were the prime contributors of data.

<u>Questions</u>	<u>Procedure Steps</u>					
1.	2,	6,	7a,	7b,	8(i)	8(iii)
2.	2,	3,	4a,	6,	7a,	7b,
3.	2,	6,	7a,	7b,	8(i),	8(iii)
4.	2,	4,	7b,	8(i)	8(iii)	
5.	2,	4,	6,	7a,	7b,	8(i) 8(iii)
6.	6,	7a,	7b,	8(i)	8(iii)	
7.	6,	7a,	7b,	8(iii)		

The data is presented in the form of:

- interview summaries and associated implications;
- questionnaire conclusions.

Pre-trial data was used to justify and illustrate the purpose of the Integrated R.E. Outcome Approach to planning and programming, facilitating, and assessing learning. It was also used to guide discussions and explanations as part of inservicing. The main components of this stage were the 1:1 interviews.

Data collected during the trial served to clarify, amend, review and confirm elements that relate to the written units or the process of facilitation. The main component of this stage was teachers' journal records and personal contact.

Post-trial data were instrumental in gauging the successes of various facets of the approach and the value of the units as teaching and learning documents. The main component of this stage was the recap of interview questions and questionnaire. Group forums were beneficial in providing insight into interview and questionnaire responses, and providing an opportunity to debrief as a group.

### **3.2.6 Limitations**

Methodologies applied in the collection and collation of data may have been somewhat limiting due to the fact that some teachers were more aware and informed of this study, or better known by the researcher. This, however, did not necessarily mean that they were convinced of the approach's advantages or their capacity to implement such a unit. One concern was that some participants may have provided evaluations and responses for which they felt the researcher was hoping or expecting. Another, was that by responding positively, perhaps this was seen as a way of avoiding justification or a close critique.

The various pedagogical backgrounds of teachers who trialled the unit caused some initial concerns even though quite a broad sample was sought (ie. years of experience, roles held, classroom practice, knowledge and application of syllabuses and outcomes). It was preferable that each teacher on the grade or Stage was involved in the trial of units, regardless of their pedagogical preferences. They could plan together and discuss aspects, and avoid having one class working through a separate unit. Therefore, the results, in terms of facilitation and the extent to which participants embraced the approach, could be considered to be representative of the variety of teachers in the Diocese.

A broader overall sample may have provided greater depth to the evaluation process, however the selection of participants was representative of teacher styles and backgrounds. The sample also involved others in local Catholic education including Principals, school Religious Education Coordinators and Diocesan personnel.

Also, having a larger sample from other schools may have exposed individual or school initiatives, quality classroom practice methods or other variables, but again, due to the sample of participants, it proved to be adequately representative for the study's purposes.

### **3.2.7 Ethical Considerations**

Steps were taken by the researcher to ensure that the ethical standards of Edith Cowan University were satisfied and maintained. A submission (Ethics Declaration Form, p.37, Research Handbook) was made and ethical clearance was obtained.

The approval and support of the Wollongong Diocese Catholic Education Office were obtained before contact was made with research participants. Participants were assured confidentiality relevant to the interview process and questionnaire.

Chapter 4**RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION****4.1 Pre-trial Interview Responses and Educational Implications**

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**Data Collection and Conclusions**

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**Pre-trial Interviews ( 1:1)**

**Sample:** 25 Catholic Educators, Diocese of Wollongong

**Breakdown:** - 17 class teachers ( Kindergarten to Year 6 )

- 3 Catholic Education Office Religious Education consultants
  - 3 Principals
  - 2 schools' Religious Education Coordinators
- 

The following summarises participants' responses to each question. Based upon these, the author identifies ways that the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach is expected to maintain important aspects and professional beliefs, address concerns, and benefit teachers' planning of the curriculum.

These are presented as 'implications' and 'aspects to be addressed'.

**Question 1**

**What in your view is the aim of Religious Education as a Key Learning Area?**

**Sample of commonly stated responses:**

- to a growing appreciation of God's love;
- to provide an instructional aspect to their faith development;
- to involve the engagement of the whole being;

- to extend the Church's work of evangelisation;
- to present knowledge, values and skills as in other K.L.As (viewed as a formal, scholastic discipline);
- to provide depth to student understandings in other K.L.As via content and values;
- to be developmentally organised and age-appropriate;
- to link to one's own life and have meaning;
- to inform, form and transform students' identity, way of being and way of acting;
- to develop an appreciation and understanding of their faith heritage;
- to present a syllabus structure so it can be linked to Board of Studies' K.L.As;
- to affect changes in how it is planned, so RE relates to, and provides insight to learning in other areas.

Implications for an Integrated RE Outcomes Approach and aspects to be addressed:

- a desire for integration with other K.L.As via an organised structure of the content of knowledge and skills, outcomes and values education;
- a concern that current planning of RE is unrelated to other K.L.As;
- a perception that the education of the whole self can be related to the formal curriculum;
- that the integral nature of life experiences to RE relates to knowledge, skills and values of all K.L.As (which has implications for integration);
- that the integrity of a RE programme is centred on the Incarnation and therefore needs to be made relevant to each learner within the context of Church and the whole curriculum.

Question 2

**In what way do you see the formal curriculum of Catholic schools as different to that of other schools?**

Sample of commonly stated responses:

- its mission of evangelisation;
- recognition of the religious dimension of other KLAS;
- emphasis on values education, connected throughout the curriculum;
- teachers' witness to, and presentation of the Christ's message in the Catholic tradition;
- through the development of structures in the curriculum that link other K.L.As' outcomes and content to R.E.;
- via values, teachers foster an understanding of Gospel teachings, the nature of Christianity and the way Catholics are called to live their lives, all of which should transcend our planning; R.E. not only presents knowledge to be attained, but also values to be acquired and truths to be discovered;
- the common denominator of being Catholic impacts greatly on the development of school culture and learning;
- learning and the curriculum are permeated by a Catholic educational philosophy;
- our challenge is to awaken too many teachers from a perception that the curriculum is not different, except for the addition of an R.E. timeslot.

Implications for an Integrated RE Outcomes Approach and aspects to be addressed:

- provision must be made for the purpose and potential of values;
- links with other K.L.As are more implicit than explicit and do not tend to be based on content, but rather through expressive links in Creative Arts,

for example;

- other K.L.As do not tend to derive meaning in R.E. topics, but vice versa;
- integration of outcomes and content has the potential to evangelise through improved formal learning, education in values and the demonstration of Catholic meaning in other K.L.As.

### Question 3

**What is your understanding of the term “curriculum integration”?**

#### Sample of commonly stated responses:

- the linking of maximum KLA tasks to a specific KLA topic;
- basing English, Maths and Creative Arts tasks on a theme or topic;
- matching topics from Health, H.S.I.E. or Science with other subjects;
- exploring connections between different K.L.As’ knowledge, values and skills;
- a theme-based approach to planning learning activities for a variety of K.L.As;
- the blending of learning experiences;
- a non-compartmentalised approach to the learning and teaching process;
- recognising links between K.L.As in order to maximise learning;
- implementation of a multi-K.L.A. approach in designing units;
- the selection of a topic or content area, the identification of learning outcomes (taken from all K.L.As ) to be achieved and the organisation of learning activities that will assist in expressing any one or combination of outcomes.

#### Implications for an Integrated RE Outcomes Approach and aspects to be addressed:

- some difficulty in articulating meaning reflects barriers to integrative planning;



- the type and scope of integration adopted by teachers is a concern, especially since the majority would consider their class programme as integrated;
- R.E. is not specifically mentioned;
- integration of content is acknowledged, but outcomes of learning achievement need to be arranged in the planning process;
- integration needs to involve RE topics and has additional meaning for our schools;
- outcomes-based education needs to be seen as integral to the contemporary planning and assessment of learning.

#### Question 4

- a. In your current programme (or that of those you previously planned or supervised), to what extent is/was each of the KLAs integrated?**

Table 1- Integration per K.L.A.

Key Learning Area	% Majority	% Some	% None
Religious Education	20	60	20
English	72	20	8
Mathematics	0	40	60
Human Society & Its Environment	60	28	12
Science & Technology	40	40	12
Creative Arts	40	52	8
P.D. / Health / P.E.	0	40	60

- b. From what you practise or observe, do you integrate with RE?**

Table 2 - Integration of R.E.

Key Learning Area ( with RE )	No	Yes
English	80	20
Maths	96	4
H.S.I.E.	80	20
Science & Technology	88	12
Creative Arts	40	60
P.D. / Health / P.E.	68	32

Implications for an Integrated RE Outcomes Approach and aspects to be addressed:

- some integration occurs in RE, but generally via Creative Arts;
- English attracts quite high levels of integration, but is linked mainly with H.S.I.E. and Science topics, not R.E.;
- minimal or no integration of English, Maths, H.S.I.E., Science or PD/ Health/ PE occurs within the R.E. programme;
- P.D. (and to a lesser extent Health) content and outcomes actually lend themselves to close integration with R.E.; some schools have developed a scope and sequence of P.D. outcomes to link with the R.E. topics; some P.D. outcomes and content areas are planned as part of the R.E. curriculum in order to provide specific Catholic perspectives and Christian values, eg. AIDS Education; human sexuality, puberty and reproduction programs;
- whilst forms of integration are in practice, few links exist with R.E.;
- R.E. does not generate or guide planning in other K.L.As, that is, other K.L.As might incorporate RE ideas to demonstrate an outcome (eg liturgical movement or an art work in Creative Arts), but not another KLA's idea to demonstrate an R.E. outcome (eg how the dance, discussion or art assess an R.E. skill or understanding);
- the indication that some integration occurs in all K.L.As with R.E. can be built upon by sharing programmes and activities at a school level (with implications for Diocesan professional development).

Question 5

**How do you view integration? (Select 3 of the following to describe your view):**

Table 3 – Participants' Views of Integration

View of Integration	Tally / 25
a. Integration assists planning and programming.	4
b. Integration enhances learning.	12
c. Integration benefits the meeting of curriculum requirements.	8
d. Integration is difficult to document when programming.	10
e. Integration of KLA outcomes is valid, but unfamiliar.	7
f. Integration can complicate assessing and reporting.	10
g. I would like to integrate more effectively.	14
h. I prefer minimal integration.	3
i. RE should be integrated throughout the curriculum	7

Implications for an Integrated RE Outcomes Approach and aspects to be addressed:

- the validity of integrating R.E. across the curriculum is generally important to Principals, R.E. Coordinators and R.E. consultants which raises the need for a practical model, able to be used by teachers;
- integration enhances learning, but is not regarded as practical to programming;
- planning to outcomes is increasingly proficient, but whilst integration of learning experiences occurs, integration of outcomes does not;
- effective communication of student achievements does not need to be complicated when working to an integrated unit;
- programmed documentation of integrated learning is deemed difficult, therefore less integration occurs than is desired;
- there is imbalance between the desire to integrate and the idea of integrating R.E. so there is the perception that the integration of R.E. is difficult or less important or an uncommon practice;

- eight who indicated that assessment can be complicated stated that they would like to integrate better (reasons of methodology); similarly, few agreed that integration assists the planning process, which implies that either programmes and timetables are generally compartmentalised into distinct K.L.As and that basic integration methods are being used and documented, or more integration occurs than the programme might suggest, but is affected by documentation and time-tabling issues.

### Question 6

**How do you use (or view the use of ) syllabus outcomes?**

#### Sample of commonly stated responses:

- as a checklist of learning to be achieved;
- as statements of learning to be achieved at various stages of a child's development;
- as a guide to provide a balance when planning types of learning experiences;
- to structure each KLA's content in terms of what and when;
- to link values across the curriculum;
- to match learning activities to outcomes (and indicators);
- to track the progression of students' knowledge and skills;
- to develop programmes that meet the diverse needs of a class;
- to refer to previous outcomes for "at risk" students and to apply or adapt future outcomes to enrich high-achieving students;
- to structure assessment samples and procedures, and for reporting purposes;
- to make judgements of student achievement;
- to describe and instruct what learning the students need to demonstrate within a

given Stage in each K.L.A;

- to explore links within K.L.As, eg. between Writing and Reading; between the Maths strands.

Implications for an Integrated RE Outcomes Approach and aspects to be addressed:

- integration and awareness of links within and between K.L.As' outcomes were inferred, but not stated as a deliberate function of outcomes;
- some hesitancy indicated uncertainty regarding the use and application of outcomes. Programming decisions generally remain content / learning experience focussed, rather than organising learning based on a set of nominated outcomes;
- outcomes are being assessed and reported upon (with reference to knowledge and skills) although integration is minimal. How the achievement of one outcome can be described and documented alongside other K.L.As' outcomes is new;
- the way teachers use outcomes in the planning process varies greatly (post-planning, during planning, pre-planning). The latter is intended, but is least commonly or effectively administered;
- there is a general familiarisation with outcome statements as part of assessment samples / student learning portfolios / school reports. These structures are often formatted and organised by a school committee or as result of ongoing staff consultation (in order to meet school and Diocesan policy). Issues relate to:
  - consistency of grading student achievement within a class based on proof of learning as opposed to potential;
  - consistency between classes on the one grade;
  - consistency across grades within the one Stage;

-ongoing education of parents, especially that their child will be at different levels of achievement eg.beginning/ developing/ established/ achieving beyond.

### Summary

As listed above, the implications for the study's approach are numerous. The participants' responses per question raise the issues and support the statements made in the Background to the Study and Significance of the Study sections in Chapter 1.

Participants' responses reflect a broad understanding of the nature of Religious Education as a Key Learning Area with reference to structure, instruction and assessment.

However, integration and R.E.'s capacity to enhance other learning (and vice versa) presents only as a minor consideration. The developmental nature of learning via outcomes (of knowledge, values and skills) is referred to, yet generally, the question of R.E. as a K.L.A., is dominated by how it supports the overall religious life of the child.

These reflects the researcher's concern that, generally, teachers do not treat R.E. as a K.L.A. in the same way that other K.L.As are treated – a variety of outcomes that require the planning of learning strategies, resourcing and assessing, and which are relevant to other learning.

Participants' responses describe an awareness of the educational viability and

importance of integration. However, programming and assessment issues inhibit experimentation, diminish desire or confidence. Integration is seen to be very relevant to outcomes, since the outcomes describe student learning. Yet, the process of integrating learning (combining sequenced learning activities with the developmental nature of outcomes) is unfamiliar. The sample unit displays how this process or approach can work. Similarly, the unit can be presented as a scaffold upon which teachers can plan.

Responses indicate the use of limited K.L.As, little R.E., and content rather than outcomes. R.E. certainly attracts little integration, except for Creative Arts (predominantly visual arts, and to a lesser extent music and drama). English, Health / Personal Development and H.S.I.E. are also identified as likely links (predominantly via writing and values education), yet minimal.

The above aspects are further developed in the findings that follow from the post-trial questionnaire.

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## 4.2 Post- trial Questionnaire Responses

### QUESTIONNAIRE

( Copy of the questionnaire - refer to Appendix 4 )

#### 4.2.1 Unit Evaluation

The unit, based on the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach, can be evaluated in terms of the following elements. The 25 participants involved in this study were asked to indicate to what extent they agreed or disagreed with each statement?

Table 4 – Unit Evaluation Data

	Strongly	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
<u><i>Distinctiveness of the Catholic Curriculum</i></u>				
The structure and content:				
-exposes Catholic values and perspectives	20%	80%		
-clarifies RE connections within the total curriculum	100%			
-addresses personal growth and interpersonal relations	40%	60%		
-represents the education of the whole child	20%	60%	20%	
-presents diverse implicit learning via values	40%	60%		
<u><i>Integration</i></u>				
The sequence of mixed KLA activities:				
-is an effective method of integration	80%	20%		
-is unfamiliar to personal practice	80%	4%	16%	
-benefits students by linking and blending learning	88%	12%		
-proves that many links can be found and organised	80%	20%		
-is received positively by students	88%	12%		
-is preferred to organising learning in KLA blocks	32%	68%		
<u><i>Outcomes-based Methodology</i></u>				
The integration and sequence of outcomes:				
-improves awareness of outcomes' potential to planning	72%	28%		
-heightens teachers' knowledge of outcome statements	88%	12%		
-provides improved assessment data	20%	64%	12%	8%
-did not complicate assessment procedures	20%	60%	6%	8%
-creates depth and meaning to tasks	60%	20%	20%	
-shows how a task links with different KLAs' outcomes	80%	20%		
-maintains a focus on the topic.	84%	8%	8%	
-achieves consistent links to RE outcomes	72%	24%	4%	



Table 4 – Unit Evaluation Data (Continued)

	<u>Strongly</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Unsure</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
<u>Religious Dimension of KLAs</u>				
The presentation of outcomes and learning experiences:				
-helps to focus on values	80%	20%		
-articulates the relationship of RE to other KLAs	88%	12%		
-links other learning to an RE topic	80%	20%		
-helps to clarify the religious dimension of each KLA	72%	20%	8%	
-helps teachers to plan an authentic Catholic curriculum	84%	8%	8%	
<u>Religious Education as a KLA</u>				
The unit:				
-maintained links with RE outcomes	88%	12%		
-presented explicit RE knowledge and skills	80%	20%		
-linked RE values with other KLA values	20%	68%	12%	
-was structured on connections with RE	60%	40%		

#### 4.2.2 Review of Interview Questions

Participants (as Catholic educators) were asked to refer to a copy of their interview responses and indicate if their response per question had been clarified and/or provided increased insight.

Table 5 – Review of Interview Questions Data

Question	<u>Clarified</u>			<u>Increased Insight</u>
	<u>No</u>	<u>Unsure</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>
1	20%	12%	68%	60%
2	20%	0%	80%	100%
3	4%	0%	96%	100%
4a	0%	0%	100%	100%
4b	0%	0%	100%	100%
5		N / A		60%
6	0%	20%	80%	84%

### 4.2.3 Potential of the Integrated RE Outcomes Approach

#### Opinion

Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the following statements.

Table 6 – Potential of Approach

Statement	Strongly/Agree/Unsure/Disagree			
1. The integrated style addresses time-management issues related to meeting each KLA's course requirements.	20%	72%	8%	
2. This integrative approach is generally uncommon and has specific intentions so planned units would assist.	80%	20%		
3. Whilst many experiment with some RE integration there is a need to demonstrate integration beyond this.	60%	20%	20%	
4. Teachers, generally, are still coming to terms with planning to outcomes, therefore little innovation is occurring such as outcomes-based integration.	78%	22%		
5. This approach improve teachers' application of outcomes to planning and assessment.	60%	40%		
6. It is important to identify a variety of different KLAs' outcomes when planning and assessing	60%	20%	20%	
7. The linking of outcomes assists teachers to identify various connections between KLAs	60%	20%	20%	
8. The assessment of different KLAs' outcomes in one assessment sample enhances students' and parents' understanding of achievement.	40%	32%	20%	8%
9. By organising units based on RE topics, other KLSs' topics, content and outcomes can be incorporated without losing their integrity.	20%	60%	16%	4%
10. Professional development needs to occur to demonstrate the integrative capacity of RE and its significance in a Catholic curriculum.	40%	60%		

Table 6 – Potential of Approach continued

Statement	Strongly/Agree/Unsure/Disagree		
11. The approach assists the vitality and relevance of the curriculum to broad Christian formation.	40%	60%	
12. The unit provides a scaffold from which other grade/Stage-specific units can be written.	36%	52%	12%
13. RE Values' outcomes can be effectively linked to, and supported by, other KLA values.	80%	20%	
14. The education of the whole child is an integral consideration when planning the formal curriculum.	80%	20%	
15. The integrative potential of Personal Development has been overlooked generally, especially in relation to RE.	60%	20%	20%
16. Integration of RE needs to be explicit, acknowledging RE as a learning discipline.	80%	20%	
17. There is great potential to streamline and develop the programming process, especially the delivery of quality RE.	60%	40%	
18. Promotion of other KLAs' religious dimension is critical.	60%	28%	12%
19. The majority of NSW Board of Studies' syllabus topics can be linked to Wollongong Diocese RE topics.	40%	40%	20%
20. Quality learning programmes can be developed by combining other KLAs' Knowledge, Skills and Values outcomes with those of RE.	80%	20%	

### General Remarks

Participants were invited to provide a general comment. Dominant responses include:

"Encouraging, was the inclusion of a group that did not trial the unit. This non-teaching group is important to curriculum decisions."

"Some (participants) were advantaged because they had contact with trial participants in their own school."

"The unit provided a great range of activities... and it just flowed."

"Our (non-trial group) part in this study is significant due to the fact that:

- responses were based on perception having read the unit (and having been provided with background to the study). Essentially, it is this type of evaluation that teachers will apply when presented with the opportunity to use subsequent units;
- our roles involve school leadership and Religious Education;
- for subsequent units to be developed and implemented, we and our colleagues will need to support the approach and be motivated by its purposes because we:
  - have access to teachers and influence over programming;
  - are accountable for monitoring the development of quality R.E. programmes;
  - share control in directing professional development which includes the meeting of Board of Studies' course requirements and the implementation of Diocesan R.E. Curriculum Guidelines."

"The sequence was efficiently organised ...didn't feel that any K.L.A. was missing out."

"...just included the separately programmed parts of Maths to coincide with the planned Maths in the unit."

"The activities provided an excellent coverage of all possible links with other subjects...some were basic-core learning; others were certainly aimed at the high achievers."

"The explicit R.E. was evident-I wasn't sure if it would be! I really like the R.E. presented this way, and the rest... well we are on about R.E. and the

remaining K.L.As seemed to be well catered for.”

“... very helpful to have some resources provided; other information references and resources were generally easy to access or able to be substituted.”

“It was good that the unit was so closely linked to the syllabuses... easy to refer to...definitions, checking related indicators for some outcomes, structure of specific text types...”

“The fact that I didn’t need to spend ages programming (and I would never have come up with a unit like this!) allowed me to spend valuable time collecting resources, assessing ... and just preparing properly.”

“I did not feel that I lost out by not programming the unit...there were too many other important school and class things that I could do, and do properly. I was still able to change parts and make other decisions to do with my funded children, groups, classroom organisation, resources, and the list goes on.”

“...students recognised the difference... responded very positively to the day being so related; there are so many benefits in this type of arrangement.”

“R.E. finally hit its straps in my room- with me and the children. We seemed to have so much more discussion and there was a different energy... sometimes the introduction of a Religion lesson is met with a forced reverence or the feeling of a time-out from other learning.”

“Can’t believe how so much is relevant to Reconciliation...all types of activities. The Government unit was the perfect link and there was all the English, P.D.,etc;

“I wasn’t sure that I would have the self control to keep it up, but the style soon became automatic-I just kept following the programme. Having my grade

partner doing it helped both of us.”

“I initially worried about the other parts that I needed to cover, but what we (colleague) did was to programme our Maths separately and teach it at a set time or when a Maths activity came up in the unit. This was the only time we really worked independent of the unit.”

“What we did was to tick off all the outcomes each time they were addressed in the unit...amazing how much was covered. Now we can identify the outcomes that need to be included or revisited next term.”

“No doubt the curriculum is better off - the push for the religious dimensions of other K.L.As is liked...something we often hear. You have come up with a way.”

“This is a straightforward, novel approach that teachers would try, but it would take someone to write the units.”

“This approach can be incorporated quite easily, I expect. The C.E.O.'s sample units have the R.E. organised...a good start. Your approach offers a lot more... R.E. across the curriculum for starters.”

“Fortunately, this approach will ask pertinent questions of our Catholic educators - those in the classroom and those involved more in curriculum decision making.”

“An effective teaching document requires the learner to be fully engaged...and challenged. If the learner then is motivated, learning will occur...not only the nominated syllabus outcomes, but the unwritten and unexpected which, if may even nurtures their faith.”

“Some, maybe many, teachers' mindsets will be challenged... I hope. Mine were.”

“The reactions and enthusiasm of the students - great! Case closed.”

### Summary

The general trend of comments centre around the nature of Religious Education, its potential in directing much of the curriculum via integration, and the valid use of outcomes to organise learning programmes. There is clear evidence that R.E. was an important consideration when evaluating their experiences -- that quality and relevant learning and teaching as priorities.

Participants' comments are gratifying, especially when paralleled with the writings of educationalists. Groome (1996, p.108) urges that Catholic schools should allow Catholic perspectives and teachings to transcend and "be reflected in the whole curriculum", and that these need to be clearly organised by teachers and documented in programmes. Policy and programme writers, too, should be guided and "prompted by the distinctive characteristics of Catholicism".

Similarly, Dwyer (1988, p.24) strongly promotes integration as the means by which religious understandings are most effectively learnt. Furthermore, Barry and Rush (1999) highlight the capacity of R.E. to make meaning within knowledge, values and skills based on a Catholic belief structure.

The streamlining benefits of integration, too, are referred to by Malone and Ryan (1994) in the context of R.E. They argue that religious dimensions and learning styles of the various K.L.As can compliment one another, therefore resulting in better learning. Importantly, too, learning can be linked across a variety of K.L.As "without...repetition or reintroduction", hence a sequenced, streamlined order of learning experiences using a variety K.L.A. outcomes.

Participants' comments favour such a scaffolded approach to programming because it is not only relevant to all Diocesan Catholic schools, but is able to be shared and adapted, relates directly to existing syllabuses, and sets out sequence of learning that is integrated throughout the K.L.As and outcomes-based.

### **4.3 Questionnaire Conclusions**

#### **Unit Evaluations**

In terms of the distinctiveness of the Catholic curriculum, the Integrated R.E.

Outcomes Approach:

- clarified R.E. connections of knowledge and skills with other K.L.As;
- exposed a Catholicity via values and Catholic perspectives;
- generally demonstrated a consideration for the growth of the child in its:
  - organisation of values;
  - attempt at integrating personal development;
  - overall link to R.E.

Participants' responses reflect Dwyer's promotion of the worth values in developing a distinctive Catholic curriculum. Dwyer (1993, p.111) urges teachers to "bring our Gospel-based view of reality to the learning experiences" and so "be evangelising the curriculum...challenged to give priority to our formal Religious Education programme...and to the religious dimension of every subject".

In terms of its integration, the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach:

- addressed a need or desire to integrate more effectively;
- clarified a "non block" approach to planning the timetable and organising the day;



- improved teacher confidence that learning can be more meaningful compared to alternative approaches;
- demonstrated an effective integrated method of organising an assessment sample;
- showed the types and variety of links that can be found between K.L.As;
- presented an uncommon form of integrated programming because generally, they are organised:
  - in specific K.L.A. sections, using a code to indicate links;
  - in blocks of time allocated each day or over the week.

Participants' responses display an improved awareness in terms of implementing an integrated approach. The acknowledged viability of integration is now discussed with renewed confidence. This move from trepidation to practice is reflected in Mathews (1986, p.9) who saw a need to provide examples of an integrated approach to assist teachers. He recommends the writing of a programme if integration is to be adopted and applied. Teachers are able to amend as needed, but the structure is clear. He argues that the philosophy and methodology of a programme's integrated approach will be learnt by the teacher through its implementation. They will gradually be able to fine-tune, develop and improve the programme as they increasingly make amendments to meet the needs of individuals and so on.

In terms of its outcomes-based methodology, the Integrated R.E Outcomes Approach:

- helped focus the teacher on the nominated outcomes;
- increased teachers' knowledge of outcomes via constant reference to the variety of nominated outcomes;
- improved teachers' use of outcomes in planning and assessing;
- invited teachers to relate the wording of an outcome to a specific task, therefore

- seeing how a learning experience can demonstrate a learning outcome;
- highlighted other K.L.As links to R.E. outcomes;
- exposed some doubt regarding planning and assessing to outcomes:
  - a level of uncertainty in outcomes-based education;
  - a lack of confidence when describing knowledge or use of 'outcomes.
- displayed minimal innovation or variety of use.

Participants' responses reflect the concerns of Woodward (1994) that teachers need guidance and education in the use of outcomes not just as indicators of achievement, but as a structure of developmental learning that needs to be programmed and assessed. He emphasises the importance to be purposeful, so outcomes dictate the planning process, addresses a balance between knowledge, values and skills, and "overlaps between the various curriculum areas".

In terms of promoting the religious dimension of K.L.As, the Integrated R.E.

Outcomes Approach:

- demonstrated, by providing examples, the relevance of the other K.L.As to R.E.;
- provided an organised approach to incorporating values as a deliberate part of the planning process;
- required teachers to consider the importance of K.L.As' religious dimension in their teaching, evaluating and assessing.

Participants' responses reflect an awareness that, as Catholic educators, teaching of the faith is not restricted to R.E. as a K.L.A. Dwyer (1991, pp. 48,49) emphasises that the Catholic school is responsible to ensure that schools engage in professional dialogue and programmes that centre on a balance of experience, integration and

holistic approaches if “integrating faith, culture and lived experience” into the formal curriculum, is to be achieved. The values reinforced in other learning and across all aspects of school life distinguish Catholic schools from others. However, the organisation and documentation of these, as important issues for teachers, seem to be addressed by implementing this study’s approach

In terms of promoting R.E. as a K.L.A., the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach:

- clearly promoted R.E. outcomes and links to other outcomes;
- articulated knowledge and skills via explicit cognitive processes and learning tasks;
- incorporated Christian values from across the K.L.As;
- primarily brought links to R.E. from other K.L.As, rather than only finding R.E. links in other learning;
- maintained a structure of learning connected to the R.E. topic.

Participants’ responses reflect clear structure and specific learning as key elements. The stature of R.E. as a K.L.A. has benefited through its outcomes-based organisation and reinforces the notion of religious literacy (Barry & Rush, 1999) via the “cognitive skills of knowledge, process and communication”. Explicit knowledge and skills are characteristic to each K.L.A., including R.E., and although integration is an integral part of the overall class/ grade /Stage programme, the understandings explicit to each K.L.A. must be maintained and not misplaced, lost or disguised in the integrated programme.

Responses indicate an acknowledgement that some knowledge, skills and certainly values are duplicated across, or identified within, other K.L.As through

themes or topics, and outcomes. Therefore, R.E., too, has the capacity to be part of the integrated curriculum.

### **Review of Interview Questions**

As a result of trialling the unit, the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach succeeded in clarifying:

- the purpose of R.E. as a K.L.A.;
- the distinctiveness of a Catholic curriculum;
- the meaning of curriculum integration;
- a means of integrating across all K.L.As;
- the capacity of each K.L.A. to be integrated;
- the potential of integrating all other K.L.As with R.E. via outcomes and content;
- personal perceptions of integration;
- options when planning to outcomes.

These are encouraging results, however it is the researcher's opinion that such questions require constant discussion at the school level. They present integral issues for Catholic educators and teachers as professionals. Generally, articulation of certain aspects was not as fluent or certain as perhaps could be expected.

### **Potential of the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach**

The majority agreed that:

- effective, broad-based integration is generally an uncommon practice and there is particular need to integrate with R.E. beyond current practices;
- teachers are still coming to terms with planning to outcomes and this approach

improves application;

- the Catholicity of curriculum is important and can be addressed in the planning process using R.E. and other K.L.As' values;
- the Catholicity of curriculum can be derived in the religious dimension of KLAS;
- links with other K.L.A. content and outcomes can express R.E. outcomes more deeply;
- often overlooked are topic and content links, the relevance of values across the curriculum and outcome links that exist especially in P.D. and Creative Arts;
- the education of the whole child can be promoted in the formal curriculum via sustained integration due to the regular variety of learning experiences;
- content and outcomes of other K.L.As are restored because K.L.A. tasks are identified within a sequence of linked tasks;
- a set unit is beneficial because programming is duplicated across the Diocese;
- a set unit presents the programme and assessment sample that can be applied or amended to include, delete and substitute learning tasks;
- a set unit therefore allows for ownership and can also reflect resourcing decisions, allow for extension and remediation, and include related school or class events such as liturgies;
- a quality R.E. programme is a priority and needs to consider outcomes, the explicit application of knowledge and skills and integration, as might be the tendency in other K.L.As;
- this style of programming maintains course requirements yet is innovative in its use of outcomes and integration.

#### **4.4 Recommendations of the Study**

As a result of careful consideration of literature and participants' evaluations, this study makes several recommendations.

##### **4.4.1 Recommendations related to Practice and Application**

###### **1. Review of current Diocesan R.E. units**

The Diocesan R.E. Curriculum writing team has developed several units for trial. It has also drafted a full overview of R.E. topics which cover the recurring themes (Church Seasons and Sacraments) and other grade-specific themes. The researcher has been invited to consult with the writing team.

The structure of units could be reviewed to include:

- values outcomes of other K.L.As;
- specific knowledge and skill outcomes of other K.L.A.s;
- the deliberate inclusion of a balance of learning activities from each K.L.A.;
- outcome statements (or reference numbers) for each of these activities in order to display the integration decisions;
- a unit title page that lists R.E. outcomes along with core outcomes of each other K.L.A.;
- the inclusion of this study's unit as an alternative or resource.

Additional units (applying the Integrated R.E. Outcomes Approach) could be written for the recurring themes and covering each Stage, initially. Matching of a topic or content area from another K.L.A., with the R.E. topic, is integral. Immediately, links are revealed between R.E. and another area of learning. (The process of

integration is then able to be expanded to include learning from other areas.)

For example:

<u>Recurring R.E. Topics</u>	<u>Related Topic / Content</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Mary	Families Past and Present (H.S.I.E.)	Year 2
	Protective Behaviours (P.D./Health)	K - 6
Jesus	Relationships (P.D./Health)	K - 6
Advent / Christmas	Celebrations (H.S.I.E.)	Year 2
	Values (P.D./Health)	K - 6
Lent / Easter	People and their Beliefs (H.S.I.E.)	Year 3
	Making Decisions (P.D./Health)	K - 6
Sacraments- Eucharist:	Living in Communities (H.S.I.E.)	Year 4
	Communication (P.D./Health)	K - 6
- Confirmation / Spirit:	Identity and Values (H.S.I.E.)	Year 5
	Personal Identity (P.D./Health)	K - 6
- Reconciliation :	Federal Government (H.S.I.E.)	Year 6
	Interpersonal Relationships (P.D./Health)	K - 6

( N.S.W. Board of Studies H.S.I.E. units are allocated per Stage, whereas P.D./Health is organised according to content areas that apply to each grade.)

## 2. Professional Development

Opportunities need to be provided, initiated by the Catholic Education Office and schools to further address curriculum and school issues:

- the place of R.E. as a K.L.A. within the total curriculum;

- the religious dimension of other K.L.As;
- educational benefits of integration;
- planning decisions and methodology of integration;
- outcomes-based education;
- basic and innovative uses of outcomes;
- the Catholic curriculum and its place within the description of the distinctiveness of Catholic schools.

In addition, ongoing reviews of quality learning and teaching practices need to occur. The recently launched document, 'Learning and Teaching in Diocese of Wollongong Schools' is part of a move to encourage such discussion and guide school decisions and initiatives. Formal monitoring of this process needs to occur at school, Regional Cluster and Diocesan levels to:

- direct schools' focus on teaching practices;
- initiate discussion on theories of learning in order to develop clear personal theory;
- develop a Diocesan response to the Catholic school curriculum;
- identify innovations (eg. associated with outcomes and integration) in programming and in the facilitation and assessment of learning;
- establish professional development requirements.

### 3. Involvement of Schools Leaders and CE.O. Personnel

In addition to the above, this study could be considered at Principals' meetings and Assistant Principals' networks. This would coincide with developments in the review of Diocesan Policy and Guidelines and the Learning and Teaching document. Assistant Principals are curriculum leaders of schools, along with the Principals.



Their supervision of programmes, expertise and mentor role are critical to the climate of quality learning and teaching. Religious Education must be the focus, so teachers' programmes and assessment practices need to reflect integration of a variety of learning and purposeful use of outcomes.

The Review of Literature would be a useful resource and the stimulus for discussion. The unit would need to be viewed in conjunction with the section, 'Research Findings and Discussion' which includes the study's questionnaire conclusions.

The study's recommendations would then need to be considered and are expected to attract close consideration by Diocesan R.E. personnel.

#### 4. Review of Diocesan Religious Education Policy and Curriculum Guidelines

Due for review, this document needs to make clear statements and provide guidelines regarding:

- integration of outcomes and content;
- the use of knowledge, skill and value outcomes when planning and assessing;
- religious dimension of other K.L.As;
- the relevance of the curriculum to the distinctiveness of Catholic schools;
- the nature of R.E. as a K.L.A.;
- classroom practice and assessment procedures.

#### 5. Considerations in the Review of the Diocesan Programming Policy

The policy is due for review by the end of 2001. Statements need to include clear guidelines that address:

- integration;
  - the function of outcomes;
  - the priority of R.E.;
  - the inclusion of the above in Statements of Organisation, and their relationship with other K.L.As' religious dimension;
  - the incorporation of formal assessment tasks that reflect a multi-outcome approach.
- Importantly, the Diocesan Assessment and Reporting Policy would then need to be revised in order to factor in a multi-outcome approach from a variety of K.L.As, including values.

#### **4.4.2 Recommendations for Further Research**

##### **1. The demonstrated effects on learning using such an approach**

This study essentially deals with teachers' practices of planning, facilitating and assessing learning, using a methodology based upon integration of outcomes and content, in the context of Catholic schools.

The extent to which such an approach actually benefits learning and the conditions under which this occurs, would form a significant study.

##### **2. Teachers' understanding of issues in Catholic education**

Closer examination of Research Questions or an expansion of Interview Questions would expose uncertainties and trends that affect teachers. Such questions, it could be expected, should elicit quite automatic responses from Catholic educators.

Similarly, the questions should invite: debate; innovative thought; a reflection

on personal theory; a grasp on Church teachings; discussion regarding the effectiveness of the Diocese in articulating or communicating its priorities; and its monitoring of the professional standards of its employees so they are able to express personal beliefs and theory based on Church and educational issues.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

The primary function of Catholic schools is to transmit Catholic values and truths, so it must be an expectation that the formal curriculum reflects this.

This study has sourced a wide range of literature that addresses the contemporary nature of the Catholic curriculum. It has explored the traits and interdependence of the distinctiveness of Catholic schools, Religious Education as a Key Learning Area, the religious dimension of other Key Learning Areas, integration and outcomes-based education. For teachers to facilitate a truly authentic Catholic curriculum, demonstrating these elements, units need to be provided and inservice needs to occur.

The research process allowed participants to challenge personal knowledge, articulate views, reflect upon practice and consider the merits of an alternative approach. Clearly, there was a great deal of interest. Class teachers perceived the study as a motivating opportunity to trial a unit approach that organised their grade's content and outcomes in a different way. Other participants were required to view the study as mainly an intellectual exercise and place it in context with

their role outside the classroom, as supervisors of teachers and overseers of schools' Religious Education programmes.

It is gratifying that class teachers accepted the approach as educationally well-founded and valid in terms of its Catholic character. Similarly, it very encouraging that Catholic Education Office personnel, Principals and school Religious Education Coordinators acknowledged the intention to integrate learning using outcomes and content, with the Religious Education topic as the generator of learning across all Key Learning Areas.

A trend of the findings was agreement that changes need to be considered in terms of the way teachers plan and assess Religious Education. Expectations of teachers to facilitate this process need to be reviewed, with practical and professional development support essential.

An overwhelming desire exists to provide and evaluate quality classroom practices. There is a perception that the unit's innovative approach complements this desire and actually enhances their facilitation of learning and allows them to develop new practices.

The intention of this study is reflected in Dwyer's review of Catholic schools. (1997, p.15) He observes that teachers are developing programmes with greater confidence, with some being integrated into the total curriculum, "although this is an area where there is much to be done."

The circulation of published findings, conclusions and recommendations will provide further feedback that will evoke discussion at Diocese and school levels. The researcher is confident that initiative and innovation will increasingly characterise the Catholic curriculum and be embraced.

Appendix 1 – Permission to conduct Research

13 Sandhurst St  
Bulli 2516  
Ph: 42683185  
Email: [longobardi@diocese.org.au](mailto:longobardi@diocese.org.au)

Mr John Gamble  
Acting Deputy Director of Schools  
Diocese of Wollongong

7 December, 2000

Dear John,

Re: Collection of Data – Master of Education (RE) degree.

I am at the stage where I need to begin various forms of data collection. The procedure, methodology and ethics have been approved by my supervisors, so I now seek permission to conduct this process.

Attached is an excerpt of my Research Thesis outlining the procedure.

I wish to begin formal interviews (with nominated St Mary's staff) before the year's end and continue during the holidays (with staff of other schools). Trials of units will occur during Term 1, 2001 once negotiated with the relevant personnel. Ongoing and summative evaluations will occur at appropriate stages during this time.

I have discussed my thesis with Mark Raue, the proposed data collection (and research methodology) and the study's relevance to, and potential for curriculum in Diocesan schools. Mark has a copy of my Research Thesis as it exists at the moment – rationale/ background, educational significance, theoretical framework, review of literature, research methodology and practical application to our schools.

We discussed my joining of the writing committee for Diocesan RE units. It is anticipated that my study will contribute to this group and similarly, others' expertise will assist me in developing my thesis.

Thankyou for your time in attending to my request, John, especially given the hectic nature of this time of the year. I am happy to discuss or elaborate upon any aspect.

Your interest and support are appreciated.  
Kind Regards,

Paul Longobardi

## Appendix 2 Trial Unit using the Integrated RE Outcomes Approach

**THEME:** **Reconciliation** **Grade:** 6 **Duration:** 5 weeks

**TOPICS:** RE- The Spirit of God comes to us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation  
 HSIE- Australian Democracy at Work ; Federal (and State Government)

**FOCUS:-** strengthening or weakening of relationships with God, self and others  
 - forgiveness and renewal within the Sacrament of Reconciliation  
 - Australian human rights issues; Aboriginal reconciliation; contribution of groups, policies and laws of social justice

### CORE Integrated RE VALUE OUTCOME

Throughout all learning experiences the students will:  
**desire to know God with increased maturity, by developing and maintaining a spiritual relationship with Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

### CORE KLA OUTCOMES

**RE : -Values:** desires to know God by developing and maintaining a spiritual relationship with Father, Son and Holy Spirit (V 3.2)

**-Skills:** relates to God, self and others reflecting Gospel values (S 3.4)

**-Knowledge:** displays a knowledge that Jesus challenges us to live out His laws of love, and gives us the Spirit to enable us to continue His mission (KU 3.2)

**HSIE**

- values a democratic process (V.1) by recognising social justice (V.4) and appreciating beliefs and moral codes (V.5)
- explains the development of principles of Australian democracy (CCS 3.2)
- examines the structures and decision making processes of government and explains why Australians value fairness and socially just principles (SSS 3.8)
- describes different actions and cultural influences and their contribution to the Australian identity (CUS 3.3) Link: CCS 3.1
- explains how various beliefs and practices influence the ways in which people interact, change and value (ENS 3.6)

**ENGLISH- Talking & Listening:** communicates effectively to express well developed ideas, orally, dealing with issues and topics (TS 3.1) Link: TS 3.4- organisation patterns

- *Reading:* analyses techniques used by writers to create certain effects, to position the reader and to construct different interpretations of experiences (RS 3.7) Link: RS 3.5- responses to themes and issues
- *Writing:* produces well structured factual texts using increasingly challenging topics, issues and written language features (WS 3.9)  
Links: RS 3.8-text structure;  
WS 3.13-effectiveness of own text; WS 3.14-structure of own text.

**MATHS** - organises and interprets data and presents as a variety of graphs (S 3.5)  
- uses mathematical terminology and conventions to explain and represent mathematical situations in a variety of ways (WM 3.3)  
Links: N 3.1, N 3.5, M 3.3

**SC/TECH** - selects and uses a range of computer-based technology and other resources to meet the requirements and constraints of a design task (UT S3.9)

**CR. ARTS** -values dance, drama, visual arts and/or music as a means of reflecting on meanings, beliefs and values (V.2)  
-investigates subject matter to represent likenesses of things (VisArts 3.2)  
-responds to a range of music, individually and in groups (Mus 3.1)  
-uses a range of expressive skills in playbuilding and scripted material(Dr3.1)

**PDHPE** - respects the right of others to hold different values and attitudes (V.1)  
- makes informed decisions when dealing with others, respecting components of self esteem ( DMS 3.2)  
- explains the consequences of personal lifestyle choices (PHS 3.12)  
- describes roles and responsibilities in developing and maintaining positive relationships ( IRS 3.11)



## Appendix 3

## Student Portfolio Assessment Sample

ASSESSMENT SAMPLE –Year 5/6 (Stage 3) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

THEME: **Reconciliation** (integrated with **Federal Government** HSIE topic)

TASK: The students were asked to reflect upon our relationship with God and others, personal renewal within the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and the development of Aboriginal reconciliation.

I can strengthen my relationships with my family by \_\_\_\_\_

I am able to develop friendships because I am \_\_\_\_\_

What the Sacrament of Reconciliation means to me:

(Acrostic)

(Symbol)

**R****E****N****E****W****A****L**

The Aboriginal reconciliation process.*Community events:**Government initiatives:*
*I believe* \_\_\_\_\_

'All forms of reconciliation are important in building community.'

*(Write an argument.)*

---

( School Outcome code: A= achieving beyond; E= established; D= developing; B= beginning )



*values a desire to know God by developing and maintaining a spiritual relationship with Father, Son and Holy Spirit:*

- ☐ relates to God, self and others reflecting Gospel values (R.E.)
- ☐ displays a knowledge that Jesus challenges us to continue His mission (R.E.)
- ☐ produces well structured factual texts (English)
- ☐ examines decision making processes of government and explains why we Australians value socially just principles (H.S.I.E.)
- ☐ values positive relationships and self esteem (P.D.)

**Teacher Comment:**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Student Self Evaluation of learning:**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Parent Comment:**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Year 6 Class Programme

Term:

Weeks:

***Integrated Unit : Reconciliation***

Learning Experience Sequence	Outcome	Resources	Amendment
<p><b>* Spelling</b></p> <p><u>Class list-</u> ( Week 1 )  reconcile/ation/iatory  historic/al/ly  sacrament/al/ly  renew/al  relationship  person/al/ly  interpersonal  esteem  strength/en/ed/ing  weaken/ed/ing</p> <p>( Week 2 )  principle  democracy/atic/ally  social justice  argue/ment/ative  opinion/ated  influence/ial/ly  significance/antly  contribute/ion  policy/political/ly  indicate/ative</p> <p>+ <u>Group list</u>  Connectives (egs.)</p> <p>+ <u>Personal list</u></p> <p><u>Class list-</u> ( Week 3 )  maintain/enance  explain/ nation/atory  interpret/ations  necessary/ity/arily  investigate/ative  indigenous  Aboriginality  intervene/ention  government/al/ly  civil action</p> <p>(Week 4)  dispossess, dislocation  mandatory  resolve/olution  apology/etic/ally  negligent/ence/ly  representatives  constituents  ministerial portfolio  initiate/iatives  parliament/ary/arian</p> <p>+ <u>Group list</u>  affect, effect/ive/ly  sub / con-sequently  apparently, allegedly</p> <p>+ <u>Personal list</u></p> <p>(Week 5) – full personal list</p>	Eng-W.3.2		-deletion -inclusion -amendment -extension -revision/ remediation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss definitions and identify <u>types of reconciliation</u>.</li> <li>List examples / life situations; justify choices; categorise types;</li> <li>Analyse elements of <i>renewal</i> and <i>forgiveness</i>.</li> <li>Make a <u>Loving Chain</u> using above examples.</li> </ul> <p>Discuss how/ why links break and identify consequences (in chains and relationships)-strain, maintenance, quality; conflict of interests, changing priorities, external pressures.</p>	Eng-TS 3.1	RE Curric- Year 6 Unit 7 (LE 4)	

- Mark 14:66-72 (Peter's denial of Jesus)
  - Mark 16:4-7 (the Risen Jesus' request)
- Relate both and compare significance to our lives by explaining examples and justifying decisions. RE- KU 3.2

• Consider the meanings of *damaged relationships, bad feelings, guiltiness, forgiveness, power of change, healing, peace.*

- Word bank- associated emotions.

- Luke 15:11-32 (The Prodigal Son)

- discuss, identifying and ranking the above emotions, as depicted in the scripture;

- prepare a group to perform a scripted version.

PDHPE-IRS 3.11

RE Curric.-Yr.6  
Unit 7 (Res. Sheet 1)

- Write a Narrative called 'The Power of Forgiveness' telling of a situation, incorporating the above meanings and emotions.

-Review narrative text plan - appropriate structure; vocab. eg. figures of speech, adverbs; variety of direct speech;

-Class joint construction to model both the plan and a cause v. effect theme.

Eng-WS 3.9, WS 3.14

Eng.Syllabus  
Modules p 297

- Graph a Plot Tension Profile (based on the narrative).

- Design a poster/ad/promo that promotes relationships.

CA-V.12

- Learn and sing 'The Trusting Psalm' by D.Bates

-identify concepts relevant to a process of reconciliation

- Groups devise their own, modelled as a verse poem.

CA- M 3.1; Eng- RS 3.8

Whispers -tape

- Make a class chain - depict the history of Aborigines since European settlement:

- identify issues involving non-Indigenous intervention that were/are ongoing issues today in the Aboriginal Reconciliation process;

- identify separate governmental policy intervention.

HSIE-CUS 3.3

Aust. Electoral Com  
study guide

- Establish students' knowledge / awareness of the Aboriginal Reconciliation process:

-historic and current issues and events.

HSIE-CCS 3.2

HSIE Syllabus  
Units p.132

HSIE Syllabus p. 84

- Role-play situations to demonstrate who the benefactors of Aboriginal Reconciliation are - teacher would lead initially, in order to:
  - portray Aborigines' self esteem, land, culture, tradition and their contributions via culture and folk heroes;
  - clearly portray benefits to all Australians of their culture, folk heroes (which we claim as part of the Aust.identity because of the attached pride);
  - portray relationships and a sense of Gospel values in the way all nationalities that make Australia, co-exist.

Eng-TS 3.1; RE- S 3.4

- Examine the purpose and results of the 1967 Referendum
  - collate data and represent as % (overall and per State and Territory );
  - represent data on a pie graph;
  - represent State / Territory results-bar graph. Maths- S 3.5

HSIE Syllabus p.84

- Identify events since 1967.  
Categorise as community and government initiatives.  
Research in groups (Information Report text):

— HSIE Syllabus p.87  
 - Aust. Electoral Com  
 study guides  
 -Eng. Syllabus  
 Modules p 317

eg. NAIDOC Week, National Sorry Day, Survival Day,  
 Walk for Reconciliation, Corroboree 2000, ATSIC,  
 Land Rights- Gov't Act, Mabo, Wik.

HSIE-CCS 3.2  
 Eng- WS 3.9; WS 3.14

www.reconciliation.  
 org.au or 1800060266

- Students evaluate their learning to date, articulating ' responses to core RE outcomes:
  - desires to know God by developing and maintaining a spiritual relationship...(V 3.2);
  - relates to God, self and others, reflecting Gospel values ( S 3.4);
  - displays a knowledge that Jesus challenges us to live out His laws of love, and gives us the Spirit to enable us to Continue His mission (KU 3.2).

### PROGRESSIVE EVALUATION:

- Draft Declaration of Reconciliation

Discuss -origins;

-implications;

-purpose.

- With reference to the declaration, consider the links between Dreaming and the Aboriginal Land Rights Movement.

RE-KU 3.2; HSIE- CCS 3.2

Native Title and Wik:  
A Classroom Guide.  
(Independent Ed.Mag.  
-NSW Ind.Ed.Union)

- Further develop these links by reading 'The Miracle of Spring'-ancestral past, material and spiritual elements, renewal of conversion of life, symbolism, metaphysical realities;

HSIE- ENS 3.6

Identify how text style and meaning are linked /influential

Eng- RS 3.8

- Analyse the consequences of European settlement for Aboriginal belief systems, culture and spirituality.

More Aborig. Stories  
of Aust. (A.W.Reed)

Aborig.Spirituality for  
Today's Austs.  
(Studies of Religion-  
NSW 2 Unit HSC text)

- Serial Novel- 'Yesterday's Child Today'

- Literature Journal tasks (progressive): Eng-RS 3.7, TS 3.4  
redesign front cover in abstract style using traditional art;  
plot tension profile; rewrite the blurb; write a dedication  
for the book; concept map; character profiles; write an  
epilogue; (plus levelled vocabulary and comprehension  
tasks using Blooms Taxonomy).

by Lill Ture (Penguin)

- Describe the author's style and the combination of  
text types used to construct her novel;

- Argue the merits of its style- identify examples of  
objectivity or bias;

- Explain significance of references to *cultural lifestyle  
choices, integration, assimilation, 'respect among our  
people', 'a people's self concept', cultural pride, 'a happy  
conviction', strong people.*

- Differentiate between personal lifestyle choices and  
those that are enforced. Identify reasons for the latter  
(from the book).

Eng-WS 3.14; PDHPE- PHS 3.12

PDHPE Syllabus  
p. 187

- Explore the intentions behind, and results of early-  
mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century 'Protection Policies';

Aborig.Spirituality for  
Today's Austs.

- dislocation from traditional land, Catholic Missions,  
the 'Stolen Generation', Assimilation, White Aust.Policy.  
Students write a Discussion text, outlining the perceived  
'fors' and 'againsts' of one Protection Policy.

Eng- WS 3.9; HSIE- V. 1,4,5; CUS 3.2

HSIE Syllabus  
p. 85,86

- Consider current policies of both the Federal Gov't and Opposition ( party policy-Coalition, Labor)

-Recap the initiatives (community and Gov't) since 1967, in terms of progress and cooperation in the Reconciliation Process.

- Identify key Aboriginal issues; cause / effect.
- Discuss health, education and land as general issues.-
- Identify relevant policies, action plans.
- Discuss, in light of these, the controversy surrounding 'mandatory sentencing' and 'deaths in custody'.

HSIE- CCS 3.2, V.4

- Discuss the presence of mixed feelings and mixed messages within society regarding :

- Governmental assistance and/or resistance;
- expectations of Aborigines;
- comparative needs of other groups / equity;
- the 'take v reciprocate' viewpoint;
- the sentiments of the One Nation Party.

Construct a 'Yes,but...' list of conditions to summarise. Discuss possible implications that are / may impede the Reconciliation Process.

HSIE- V 4,5

PDHPE- V 1, PHS 3.12

- Request an overview of each other political party regarding Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation policy.

Make judgements:

- according to what is communicated;
- in relation to the amount of feedback;
- in terms of quality of information.

HSIE- CCS 3.2

- Examine the roles of the:

- Federal Government;
- relevant Ministerial Portfolios (Departments of Ministers for Reconciliation and Aboriginal Affairs);
- Council for Reconciliation.

HSIE- SSS 3.8

Determine their complimentary nature, their 'watch dog' status, varying priorities and people that they represent. Discuss how the latter is an issue, since the gov't is meant to be representative of all, yet made up of 148 members nation wide of various political persuasions.

HSIE- CCS 3.2, ENS 3.6

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research the <u>Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation</u>:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-its beginnings and vision;</li> <li>-its development throughout the 1990s;</li> <li>-its role in the reconciliation process;</li> <li>-outcomes of the 1997 National Reconciliation Convention ie. its 5 'resolutions'. <b>RE- S 3.4; HSIE- V. 4,5</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>Write an Information Report. <b>Eng-WS 3.9</b></li> </ul>	<p>Aborig.Spirituality for Today's Australians</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retrieval Chart –organise information, personnel and outcomes of the <i>Freedom Rides</i> and the <i>Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody</i> as pre- and post-Council actions.</li> <li>- Revisit the initiatives and policies discussed earlier to evaluate the work of and need for the Council.</li> </ul>	<p>Eng. Syllabus Modules p 317</p> <p>HSIE Syllabus p.88, 94 ; Syllabus Units p.200, p. 133</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View the film '<u>Bababakiueria</u>', showing role reversal between Aboriginals and non.</li> </ul> <p>Discuss the purpose of satire and how it informs about life, culture, national identity.</p>	
<p>Elicit responses as to how the students might feel if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-others made decisions 'for their own good';</li> <li>-they were described as 'simple and uncomplicated';</li> <li>-their homes were described as 'surprisingly clean';</li> <li>-they were referred to as 'lazy', 'avoiding work', 'all the same' and 'dubiously intelligent.'</li> </ul> <p><b>HSIE- ENS 3.6</b> <b>Eng-TS 3.1; PDHPE- DMS 3.2</b></p>	<p>PDHPE Syllabus p236</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss the implications of such statements and the effect of generalisations.</li> </ul> <p>Revisit the notion of <i>self esteem</i> and how it is reflected in individuals and groups. <b>RE-V.3.4; PDHPE- DMS 3.2</b></p>	<p>PDHPE Syllabus p192</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine:- a general perception of Aborigines;             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- influences on our views;</li> <li>- others' perceptions (eg. bias, prejudice).</li> </ul> <b>RE- S 3.4; PDHPE- V.1</b> </li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate, by giving examples, how broad judgements and <u>generalisations about lifestyle choices</u> of Aborigines are linked to:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- media exposure/ representation;</li> <li>- personal experience;</li> <li>-parental opinion.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



- Discuss how these generalisations can / have impacted upon reconciliation. Explore the 'Catch 22' nature of the process. HSIE- ENS 3.6; PDHPE- PHS 3.12 PDHPE Syllabus p197
- View video 'Treasures of the Snow'. Discuss *struggle*, *hope* and *dignity* related to a process of reconciliation.
- Anticipate the effects on the characters' spirituality if certain situations had been different;
- Justify specific situations as being integral to their developing spirituality. RE-V. 3.2
- Write a Response text to the above. Eng-WS 3.9, RS 3.8 Eng. Syllabus Modules p.71
- Discuss the implications of Pope John Paul II's address (to Aborigines in Alice Springs in 1986 ) for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. RE- KU 3.2 St V.de Paul Socity. -'Reflections in Partnership' (Unit3)
- Luke 23: 39-43 (Someone who changed his heart)
- Matthew 18: 23-35 ( The Unforgiving Servant)
- Compare.  
Discuss our role within a forgiving community.  
RE- V 3.2; PDHPE- IRS 3.11
- Design a newspaper front page adapting the Scripture/s. Incorporate a Report text as part of the total template (observe front page layout).Eng- WS 3.9, 3.13 Eng. Syllabus Modules p. 320  
Sc.Tech. UT S 3.9
- Distinguish where and when democratic rights are upheld. Recap issues and events involving treatment of Aborigines.
- Summarise by representing in matrix form ( include headings:issue, proof, rights involved, outcome,viewpoint) HSIE Syllabus Units p. 133
- Students evaluate their learning to date, articulating responses to core RE outcomes: V 3.2, S 3.4, KU 3.2

**PROGRESSIVE EVALUATION:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In groups, read, discuss and interpret the <u>U.N. Declaration on Indigenous People's Rights</u>.</li> <li>- explain the content, relating it to implications for Indigenous people;</li> <li>- also consider, the implications for other Australians and the Government;</li> </ul>	'Reflections in Partnership'
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (Write an Explanation text)</li> <li>- share and assess responses.</li> </ul>	HSIE- ENS 3.6 Eng- WS 3.9, WS 3.14 Eng. Syllabus Modules p. 325
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect print media articles that depict in action: <i>moral codes and beliefs, a democratic process, justice</i>. Express the 'for' and 'against' view of each in:</li> <li>- symbolic art form;</li> <li>- as a reporter or news presenter (Recount text)</li> </ul>	CA-VA 3.2 HSIE- V.1,4,5 Eng-WS 3.9, RS 3.8 Eng. Syllabus Modules p. 287
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the purpose of scenarios when considering <u>moral dilemmas</u>. In pairs, write a moral dilemma (form of Narrative /Play Script) relating to one of the articles, offering two possible scenarios to the situation (one likely, one possible).</li> </ul>	HSIE Syllabus (Units) p. 192 Eng. Syllabus Modules p. 297 Eng- WS 3.9, 3.13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Role play in order to demonstrate the factors that often contribute to a resolution or a decision that reflects moral codes, democracy or justice.</li> <li>-Conclude whether such factors exist (or are implied) in the UN's Indigenous Rights.</li> </ul>	CA- D 3.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research data and background information on several <u>main Aboriginal issues</u>: welfare, substance abuse, funding of groups (eg. ATSIC), general health, education.</li> </ul>	-Council for Aborig. Reconciliation -Federal Gov't Depts. - fedgov.com.au
Write an Information Report text in point form on each to assess why these issues are central to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the public's perception of reconciliation;</li> <li>-Aboriginal leaders' cause;</li> <li>-which associated Federal Government departments?</li> </ul>	Eng. Syllabus Modules p. 317 HSIE- SSS 3.8 Eng- WS 3.9, RS 3.8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyse the statistics/ data that show comparisons:</li> <li>- between regions;</li> <li>- between Indigenous and other population;</li> <li>- between decades.</li> </ul> Represent in separate graphs. Make conclusions. Introduce 'exponential graphs' as a maths term; identify its purpose in communicating specific information.	HSIE- ENS 3.6; Maths- S. 3.5

- Explore self esteem as an element within the process.
- Read the media text, 'Giving Aborigines Self Esteem' and discuss issues and elements raised.  
Read the media text, 'Bringing Us All Together'.  
Discuss the writer's views. **PDHPE- DMS 3.2**  
Write a Response text. **Eng- RS 3.8, WS 3.9, 3.14**
- Read Nelson Mandela's speech, 'Our March to Freedom', and Martin Luther King's 'I Have a Dream'.  
- Discuss: content; strategies of persuasion; language; effect on emotions; verbal images.  
- Some students select a short passage to prepare a reading for the class. Each has a group to assist with presentation (modality, pace, pause, etc.) **Eng-RS 3.7, WS 3.9, TS 3.4**  
- Parallel each speech to Aboriginal reconciliation.  
- Groups present these parallels in visual art form (slogans and symbols presented in graffiti style). **CA- VA 3.2**  
- Groups develop a sound sequence (using tuned and untuned instruments) to accompany the reading of their excerpt whilst displaying/ hanging their art. **CA- M 3.1**
- Consider the role of Indigenous folk heroes and their part in promoting Aboriginality (community, sport, politics, the arts) - matrix form. **HSIE- ENS 3.6**
- Discuss the significance of a statement made by former Aboriginal politician and activist, Charlie Perkins: "Government policies of Aboriginal issues must respond to the need to maintain Aboriginal culture. At last we seem to be getting somewhere."  
• Time line his life and devotion to Aboriginal justice.
- Interview /guest speaker- local Aboriginal identities. Compile a set of open-ended questions. **Eng- TS 3.1**
- Tell a traditional story- 'The Rock and the Tree'.  
Students retell as an Explanation text, how it relates to:  
- the importance of supporting one another; and  
- listening with empathy to others. **Eng- TS 3.4, WS 3.9**  
**PDHPE- IRS 3.11; RE S 3.4**

'The First Australians'  
Daily Telegraph

Eng. Syllabus  
Modules p. 371

The Penguin Book of  
20<sup>th</sup> Cent. Speeches

Eng. Syllabus  
Modules p.325

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cardinal Clancy's <u>meeting with other Church leaders in 1988</u> that identified four requirements for just and proper co-existence:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a secure land base for dispossessed communities;</li> <li>- a just process for resolving conflicting land claims;</li> <li>- a place for Aboriginal representation at each level of government;</li> <li>- a guaranteed future for Aboriginal culture and tradition with legal protection of heritage and school education.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">RE- KU 3.2; PDHPE- IRS 3.11</p>	<p>'Reflections in Partnership' (Unit 5a)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Grade Reconciliation</u>- focus upon the above and incorporate unit themes.</li> </ul> <p>Select an appropriate reading; write Prayers of Intercession that reflect upon the relationship between these requirements and our part in the process.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">RE- V 3.2</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine how each is being addressed by society through civil action or government – email Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation or phone/ write to the local Federal Member, Federal Minister for Reconciliation, State Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.</li> </ul>	<p>fedgov.com.au nsw.parl@maq.au</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact the Council's web site to inquire:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- number of hits per day;</li> <li>- demographic data (ages, regions, sources, nationalities);</li> <li>- information sought.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Sc.Tech.-UT S 3.9</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyse and work with the data:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-represent various data as a % of total (or sample);</li> <li>-make observations; decide how to record succinctly using mathematical conventions;</li> <li>-convert % to decimals;</li> <li>-convert each to fractions (hundredths);</li> <li>-round off to the nearest 20<sup>th</sup>, then convert each to a fraction in its lowest terms.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Maths- N 3.5</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collate selected information and represent mathematically, using:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-a specific focus; a visual form of collation eg.table, graph; set of observations, conclusions and hypotheses about the population who access the web site;</li> <li>-identify how these then, may have/ reflect implications for the Aboriginal Reconciliation process or issue.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Maths-WM 3.3</p>	

- Locate songs that address Aboriginality and issues.  
eg. Christine Arnu, Midnight Oil, Yothu Yindi, Savage Garden. In groups:

- select a song and list themes that occur; CA- M 3.1
- depict these themes via movement; CA- V 2
- explore the modality of the lyrics and how the singer's voice and instrument/s emphasise the themes and meanings; CA- V 2
- choose a dominant word and represent how it sounds in the song, using paint. Combine each group's art work to display as a mural. CA- VA 3.2

- Consider the value of the singers / bands.  
Review earlier discussion about Aboriginal folk heroes.

- Write a Class Prayer giving thanks for our gifts.  
Analyse personal qualities of these folk heroes and how / why they impact upon us. Eng- TS 3.8; RE- S 3.2

Recap or explore the Sacrament of Confirmation:  
its significance as Catholics; its relevance in our lives.

- Research the life / contributions of one Indigenous folk hero. HSIE-CUS 3.3

- Write an Information Report. Eng-TS 3.4, WS 3.9 Eng. Syllabus Modules p. 317

- Read- Acts 2: 1-12 (Gifts of the Spirit)  
- Galatians 2:22 (Fruits of the Spirit)

Explain the relevance between the above and how they are manifest in relationships. RE- V 3.2

Explore the links between our role in continuing Jesus' mission and reconciliation within the community.

Design a poster to depict common / interdependent themes of *mission* and *reconciliation*. CA- VA 3.2

- Students evaluate their learning to date, articulating responses to core RE outcomes: V 3.2, S 3.4, KU 3.2

### PROGRESSIVE EVALUATION:

• Evaluate, as consumers, the differences between the contributions made by singers, and those involved in sport to:- our recreation;

- the economy;
- our Australian identity and kudos;
- profile of Aborigines; Aboriginality; Eng- TS 3.1

• Assess what their goals and priorities might be. Discuss how / when these might alter or differ from one another within the same group, or between .

• Read 'Prayer of St Francis'.

- innovate the text (in groups) by including examples and situations that relate to Aboriginal Reconciliation;
- pray as a form of Prayers of Intercession;
- groups present interpretations as a Liquid Picture or Readers' Theatre. Eng- RS 3.8; CA- D 3.1

• As a community, consider how we develop our relationships by dealing with disappointment, hurt, hardship, responsibility, etc.

- Build on the list to include others.
- Discuss the relevance of reconciling with others (in order to build relationships) and the many forms that reconciliation can take- relate to the above list.

RE S 3.4; PDHPE- V 1 PDHPE Syllabus p191

• Compare the different Rites of Reconciliation.

Consider how these 'forums' relate to situations in our lives.

• Review the messages and symbols of Aboriginality and reconciliation conveyed in the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the Olympics:

- depict in art form; CA- VA 3.2
- significance and relevance of these.

'Reflections in Partnership' (p24)

• List the types of words used for apologies.

• Conduct a Polarised Debate: 'The Prime Minister should / should not say 'Sorry'...'

Eng- TS 3.1

• Students write an argument (Exposition text).

• Select teams for a formal debate.

Eng- TS 3.1; WS 3.9, 3.13

Eng. Syllabus  
Modules p. 345

- As a class write an apology that might be acceptable to Aborigines as a major step towards reconciliation.

Eng- TS 3.4

Predict the response to an official apology:

- Design a newspaper front page- template design, headline, sub head and brief article (Recount text); or
- Write an editorial (Exposition text).

Eng- WS 3.9; Sc.Tech.- UT S 3.9

- Explain the significance of why there is an expectation that the Prime Minister apologises:

- constitutional role and purpose of Federal Government;
- systems of government;
- democracy; voting in Australian elections;
- elected representatives and their constituents;
- structure of the House of Representatives.

Eng. Syllabus  
-Modules p.287  
-Modules p.345

HSIE Syllabus Units  
p.124

HSIE- CCS 3.2, SSS 3.8

- Review the controversy and development of the Preamble's content.

Read, analyse and categorise elements.

Students write their own, maintaining the key elements.

Eng- TS 3.1, WS 3.13

- Examine the specific role of government in policy.  
Identify influences:

- electoral promises/commitments;
- changing priorities of various groups;
- role of the Opposition in Parliament;
- community and action groups;
- electronic and print media.

HSIE Syllabus Units  
p. 125

Assess each group's role in the 'apology' issue.

HSIE- CCS 3.2

- Symbolise Aboriginal Reconciliation in traditional art form -examine techniques, colour, shapes, symbols.

CA- VA 3.2

i.N.K. ( Interactive  
News for Kids )  
<http://ink.news.com.au>

- Grade Liturgy: 'The Noble Purpose of Reconciliation'- Patrick Dobson's viewpoints. Discuss his priorities in light of the future.

RE- V 3.2; HSIE- V1,5

Prayer Liturgy:  
'Reflections in  
Partnership' (Unit 5c)

- Read media text, 'Waiting for Dinosaurs to Die'.
- Analyse Mr Dobson's optimism expressed in the article and identify the conditions as his main issues.

Eng- RS 3.7, TS 3.4

Sydney Morning  
Herald, 24/7/99

- Review the themes of Jubilee, to establish the relevance of Reconciliation.

Reflect upon a meditation text, depicting Jubilee themes within our lives. RE- V 3.2, KU 3.2

Guided Meditations 2  
p.32

- Read 'Jonathon Livingstone Seagull'.
- Analyse how his tale may be seen as an analogy of Aboriginal existence from pre-European settlement to today;
- link his experiences and emotions to Romans 12:2;
- examine the implications of Jonathon's story and that presented in the scripture. RE- V 3.2; PDHPE- IRS 3.1

Richard Bach (author)

- Write a Stations of the Cross for today's Australia
- maintain themes/ events of Aboriginal Reconciliation. RE- V 3.2, S 3.4, KU 3.2

RE Curric- Year 6  
Unit 7 (Resource 3)

- Grade Reconciliation
- Write a prayer service and reflection for the Sacrament
- based on Luke 18:35-43 (The Blind Man);
- incorporating:- reconciliation themes within our lives;
  - themes for Aboriginal Reconciliation;
  - Prayers written, adapted from St Francis;
- sing 'Peacemaker' by P. Kearney. Eng- WS 3.14; RE- S 3.4; CA- V 2

Celebration-tape

- Learning Portfolio assessment task (attached)
- Design a 'powerpoint' presentation that:
  - depicts a personal (group) view of the Aboriginal Rec. Process;
  - includes past and present events and issues;
  - predicts a future;
  - responds to their learning via specific outcomes (use as a stimulus to structure, the RE, English, HSIE core outcomes);
  - incorporates aspects of learning/ learning experiences.

Sc.Tech UT S3.9  
Eng-TS 3.4, WS 3.13

- Students evaluate their learning to date, articulating Responses to core RE outcomes: V 3.2, S 3.4, KU 3.2

### PROGRESSIVE EVALUATION:



Unit:

Teacher:

**Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

Signature:

Date:

**UNIT EVALUATION:**

## Appendix 4

## QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ trialled the unit ☐ read the unit**Unit Evaluation**

The unit, based on the Integrated RE Outcomes Approach, can be evaluated in terms of the following elements. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each statement?

Strongly Agree Unsure Disagree

*Distinctiveness of the Catholic Curriculum*

The structure and content:

- exposes Catholic values and perspectives .....
- clarifies RE connections within the total curriculum .....
- addresses personal growth and interpersonal relations .....
- represents the education of the whole child .....
- presents diverse implicit learning via values .....

*Integration*

The sequence of mixed KLA activities:

- is an effective method of integration .....
- is unfamiliar to personal practice .....
- benefits students by linking and blending learning .....
- proves that many links can be found and organised .....
- is received positively by students .....
- is preferred to organising learning in KLA blocks .....

*Outcomes-based Methodology*

The integration and sequence of outcomes:

- improves awareness of outcomes' potential to planning .....
- heightens teachers' knowledge of outcome statements .....
- provides improved assessment data .....
- did not complicate assessment procedures .....
- creates depth and meaning to tasks .....
- shows how a task links with different KLAs' outcomes .....
- maintains a focus on the topic .....
- achieves consistent links to RE outcomes .....

*Religious Dimension of KLAs*

The presentation of outcomes and learning experiences:

- helps to focus on values .....
- articulates the relationship of RE to other KLAs .....
- links other learning to an RE topic .....
- helps to clarify the religious dimension of each KLA .....
- helps teachers to plan an authentic Catholic curriculum .....

*Religious Education as a KLA*

The unit:

- maintained links with RE outcomes .....
- presented explicit RE knowledge and skills .....
- linked RE values with other KLA values .....
- was structured on connections with RE .....

### Review of Interview Questions

Refer to the enclosed copy of their interview responses.

Please indicate if your response per question had:

- been clarified as a Catholic educator, and
- provided increased insight.

Question	Clarified			Increased Insight
	No	Unsure	Yes	Yes / No
1				
2				
3				
4a				
4b				
5				
6				

### Potential of the Integrated RE Outcomes Approach

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Statement	Strongly Agree	Unsure	Disagree
1. The integrated style addresses time-management issues related to meeting each KLA's course requirements.			
2. This integrative approach is generally uncommon and has specific intentions so planned units would assist.			
3. Whilst many experiment with some RE integration there is a need to demonstrate integration beyond this.			
4. Teachers, generally, are still coming to terms with planning to outcomes, therefore little innovation is occurring such as outcomes-based integration.			
5. This approach improve teachers' application of outcomes to planning and assessment.			
6. It is important to identify a variety of different KLAs' outcomes when planning and assessing			
7. The linking of outcomes assists teachers to identify various connections between KLAs			
8. The assessment of different KLAs' outcomes in one assessment sample enhances students' and parents' understanding of achievement.			
9. By organising units based on RE topics, other KLSs' topics, content and outcomes can be incorporated without losing their integrity.			

Strongly Agree Unsure Disagree

10. Professional development needs to occur to demonstrate the integrative capacity of RE and its significance in a Catholic curriculum.
11. The approach assists the vitality and relevance of the curriculum to broad Christian formation.
12. The unit provides a scaffold from which other grade/Stage-specific units can be written.
13. RE Values' outcomes can be effectively linked to, and supported by, other KLA values.
14. The education of the whole child is an integral consideration when planning the formal curriculum.
15. The integrative potential of Personal Development has been overlooked generally, especially in relation to RE.
16. Integration of RE needs to be explicit, acknowledging RE as a learning discipline.
17. There is great potential to streamline and develop the programming process, especially the delivery of quality RE.
18. Promotion of other KLAs' religious dimension is critical.
19. The majority of NSW Board of Studies' syllabus topics can be linked to Wollongong Diocese RE topics.
20. Quality learning programmes can be developed by combining other KLAs' Knowledge, Skills and Values outcomes with those of RE.

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### General Remarks

Participant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your involvement is greatly appreciated. I wish you will in you ongoing commitment to Catholic education in this Diocese.

Kind Regards,  
Paul

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