



# St. Martin de Porres School

Avondale Heights

## HUMANITIES POLICY

### RATIONALE

The Humanities involve the study of human societies and environments, people and their cultures in the past and the present. The Humanities provide a framework for developing in students the key ideas and concepts that enable them to understand the way in which people and societies have organised their world under particular conditions and made meaning of it.

The Humanities take as their subject matter human behaviour. They provide unique ways to understand how and why groups of people have settled where they have, organised their societies, developed means of generating and distributing wealth, developed codes, laws and belief systems, related to other groups of people and interacted with their physical environment.

The Humanities encourage use of research skills and inquiry processes. Students learn to plan an investigation and ask key questions. They question and analyse a range of data and sources including artefacts, photographs, maps, stories, special events, interviews, site visits and electronic media. They form conclusions supported by evidence and present information in a variety of ways.

The Humanities Curriculum Area is organised as follows:

The Humanities: Foundation to Level 4 (includes History)

The Humanities: History - Levels 1 - 10

The Humanities: Geography - Levels 1 - 10

The Humanities: Economics & Business - Not assessed until Year 10

The Humanities (Foundation to Level 2)

At Foundation to Level 2, students are introduced to basic concepts related to history, geography and economics. These concepts are set out in discrete content descriptions and achievement standards for History and under the general umbrella of 'The Humanities' for Geography and Economics. Achievement standards for History are introduced from Foundation. Standards for the rest of the Humanities are introduced from Level 3.

The Humanities (Levels 3-4)

The Humanities at levels 3-4 includes the History content descriptions and achievement standards. The learning focus and standards for Geography and Economics continue to be set out under the general umbrella of 'The Humanities'.

The Humanities (Levels 5-10)

The Humanities from level 5 onward are structured into the separate domains of History, Geography and Economics. The domains of Geography and Economics includes learning focus statements and standards for levels 5-10. The domain of History includes content descriptions and achievement standards for levels 5-10.

The standards for the Humanities domain (Geography, Economics & History) are broken up into dimensions which cover acquisition of knowledge, understanding and thirdly, skills.

## **CURRICULUM AREAS & STRANDS**

**Geography** is the study of physical and human environments from a spatial perspective. It provides students with the knowledge and skills to observe and describe places on the surface of the Earth and to analyse and provide explanations from a spatial perspective of human and physical phenomena and their complex interactions. Students' evolving understanding of their world provides a basis for evaluating strategies for the sustainable use and management of the world's resources.

Geographers use a number of spatial concepts (such as location, distribution, spatial interaction and scale) as tools to help them to investigate, interpret and explain patterns on the surface of the Earth and the processes that created them. These spatial concepts provide a unique conceptual structure and framework of ideas for a geographic investigation of phenomena and provide the key to determining measures of the spatial variation between places. The essence of the Geography domain is that it is an inquiry-based approach which focuses on questions of what, where, how, why, what impact, what ought.

The fundamental tool of geography is the map, and in a world where over 75 per cent of data is referenced spatially to a location, geographic understanding is a vital skill.

**The essential students develop in Geography are the ability to identify and collect evidence from :**

- ◆ primary sources through fieldwork
- ◆ secondary sources, including maps at a variety of scales, photographs, satellite images, statistical data
- ◆ information and communications technology based resources
- ◆ record, represent and interpret data in different types of maps, graphs, tables, sketches, diagrams and photographs.

**Economics** is the study of how different societies allocate scarce resources to satisfy the wants and needs of its members. As with any social science, economics is concerned with human social behaviour: the behaviour of individuals and the interaction among them. Economics is also concerned with how to best manage resource scarcity and addresses the requirements for human survival and economic sustainability.

Economic decisions taken by individuals, groups, businesses and governments have implications for the welfare of individuals, families, communities, countries, regions and geopolitical unions of nations. All people are touched by economic decisions on multiple occasions every day. Economics plays a critical and, often, contested role in local, state, national and international public policy. Life globally is dominated by economic transactions and it is the quality of economic decision making at all levels of society that significantly determines the wellbeing of individuals and nations.

**The study of Economics assists students to better understand how wealth is generated and distributed, and to understand :**

- ◆ microeconomic concepts that explain how businesses and markets operate
- ◆ macroeconomic concepts that help to explain how a nation's economy works.
- ◆ the importance of entrepreneurship and enterprise in generating a healthy economy.

Economics provides students with the knowledge and skills to engage with economic matters and to consider the effects of alternative economic decisions on themselves and others. They are then in a better position to:

- ◆ act rationally and ethically when making economic and personal financial decisions
- ◆ appreciate the complexity of economic decision making
- ◆ understand the economic decisions made by others.

**History** is a disciplined process of inquiry into the past that develops students' curiosity and imagination. Awareness of history is an essential characteristic of any society, and historical knowledge is fundamental to understanding ourselves and others. It promotes the understanding of societies, events, movements and developments that have shaped humanity from earliest times. It helps students appreciate how the world and its people have changed, as well as the significant continuities that exist to the present day. History, as a discipline, has its own methods and procedures which make it different from other ways of understanding human experience. The study of history is based on evidence derived from remains of the past. It is interpretative by nature, promotes debate and encourages thinking about human values, including present and future challenges.

The curriculum generally takes a world history approach within which the history of Australia is taught. It does this in order to equip students for the world (local, regional and global) in which they live.

**History aims to ensure that students develop :**

- ◆ interest in, and enjoyment of, historical study for lifelong learning and work, including their capacity and willingness to be informed and active citizens
- ◆ knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the past and the forces that shape societies, including Australian society
- ◆ understanding and use of historical concepts, such as evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives, empathy, significance and contestability
- ◆ capacity to undertake historical inquiry, including skills in the analysis and use of sources, and in explanation and communication.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

Please see the St. Martin de Porres' scope and sequence charts for Geography, Economics, History, Science and Civics & Citizenship which are developed at each year level as Units of Inquiry.

Each Curriculum Area is developed as a unit of Inquiry each Term and the dimensions of each developed into learning intentions with the essential content of each domain covered over a two year period.

**ASSESSMENT & REPORTING**

Students and Staff are involved in identifying essential and preferred learning intentions for each unit of inquiry, from which success criteria for each is articulated, as a basis for assessment in each Inquiry.

The identified learning intentions are placed in the Termly report and parents are informed as to whether their child's work and progress has been judged as 'Below', 'At' or 'Above' the Standard expected at a particular time of year.

**EVALUATION**

*Policy review on an annual basis – reviewed in 2017, 2018.*