



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

FEEDBACK FROM SCHOOLS ON THE
DRAFT DOCUMENT *GERMAN IN THE NEW
ZEALAND CURRICULUM*: A RESEARCH
REPORT

Final Report

Ministry of Education Research Division Wellington

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INTRODUCTION

All students benefit from learning another language from the earliest practicable age. Such learning broadens students' general language abilities and brings their own language into sharper focus. It enriches them intellectually, socially, and culturally, offers an understanding of the ways in which other people think and behave, and furthers international relations and trade. Students will be able to choose from a range of Pacific, Asian, and European languages, all of which are important to New Zealand's regional and international interests.

The New Zealand Curriculum Framework (1993), page 10.

Language and Languages is one of the seven essential learning areas of *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework*. German is included in this essential learning area.

New Zealand benefits by having young New Zealanders learn European languages. People within the country who are fluent in foreign languages are necessary in order for New Zealand to participate successfully in cultural exchanges, diplomacy, education, trade, and tourism. Learning German can make a valuable contribution to the education of young New Zealanders. The draft guidelines, *German in the New Zealand Curriculum*, reinforce the commitment to quality German-language teaching and learning in New Zealand schools.

The draft guidelines for German have been designed to assist and support teachers in the planning and delivery of effective German-language programmes. They outline a clear progression of achievement and include suggested topics, structures, vocabulary, and learning and assessment activities appropriate to each of eight levels. They are intended to replace the existing German syllabus, first published in 1988.

In 1999, the Ministry of Education started work on developing guidelines for both *German in the New Zealand Curriculum* and *French in the New Zealand Curriculum*. The development of the guidelines involved consultation with many interested parties, including language educators in schools and tertiary institutions, both in New Zealand and overseas. In February 2001, draft national curriculum guidelines for German and French were released for discussion and comment. Copies of *German in the New Zealand Curriculum* were sent to all schools known to have been offering German-language programmes the previous year. Similarly, copies of *French in the New Zealand Curriculum* were sent to all schools that had offered French-language programmes in 2000. Copies of each document were also distributed to other interested parties and key organisations.

To assist in finding out how well the draft guidelines assist and support teachers in the planning and delivery of effective German-language and French-language programmes, people had the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft curricula in a number of ways. In particular, schools could provide feedback by means of the response forms included in each of the draft curriculum guidelines documents.

Open invitations to provide feedback are likely to attract responses only from those who have particularly strong positive or negative views about the issue at hand. For this reason, to supplement the above feedback, the Ministry's Curriculum Division engaged the Research Division to survey schools that had taught German- and/or French-language programmes in 2000. Two separate surveys took place in Term 3, 2001. This report summarises the findings only from the survey of schools that taught German¹.

¹ Results from the survey of schools where French was taught are provided in a separate report entitled 'Feedback from Schools on the Draft Document *French in the New Zealand Curriculum: A Research Report*'.

THE SURVEY

The Research Aim and Objectives

The aim of the research was to gain feedback from schools on *German in the New Zealand Curriculum: Draft*, so that the information provided could be taken into account in the writing of the final curriculum document.

The objectives were:

- to establish the extent of support for the draft curriculum guidelines as a whole and for various aspects of the draft guidelines;
- to obtain feedback on various qualities of the achievement objectives, learning and assessment activities, and the glossary;
- to establish whether teachers felt the draft guidelines provided a suitable basis on which to structure effective German-language teaching and learning programmes; and
- to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the draft curriculum guidelines and identify issues for schools in implementing programmes in German based on the draft curriculum guidelines.

Methodology

The study consisted of surveying all composite and secondary schools known to have offered German-language programmes in 2000 (N=110). A letter inviting the schools to participate in a survey which was to take place in July 2001 was sent out to schools in April the same year, soon after the draft guidelines were distributed to schools.

A covering letter and questionnaire were then sent to the principal of each selected school in early May, with a request that they pass them on to the teacher nominated to coordinate their school's response to the questionnaire. Although questionnaires were sent out in May, schools were asked not to complete them until July, to allow a period of time for teachers to familiarise themselves with the document. The delay was also to allow the school coordinator to fulfil the suggestion at the beginning of the questionnaire which stated: '*Before completing this questionnaire, please arrange for group discussions with appropriate staff and submit a response that takes account of these views.*'

Because of the long lead-in time, a reminder letter was sent in July, and, in August, a follow-up letter was mailed to schools where a completed questionnaire had not yet been received.

Response Rate

The response rate to the survey was good². Seventy-six schools (69%) returned fully- or partially-completed questionnaires.

Note about the response rate

Of the 76 schools that responded, seven schools indicated that they were no longer offering German in 2001 and did not provide feedback on the curriculum document itself. These schools are therefore not included in any analysis of data presented in the remainder of this report.

² Schools had the opportunity to provide feedback on the document in a number of ways. It is possible that some of the schools surveyed had already provided feedback on the draft guidelines at some other stage of the consultation process and did not wish to provide further feedback via the present study. In other words, the overall response rate achieved for the present survey may have been lower than would otherwise have been achieved.

In addition, although the background data presented in the next section of this report are based on questionnaires from the 69 schools that offered German in 2001, subsequent sections, presenting analyses of information relating to various aspects of the draft curriculum guidelines, are based on information provided by 65 schools only. Respondents from the remaining four schools did not feel that they or others in their school were sufficiently familiar with the draft guidelines to be able to provide valid feedback.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS AND THOSE WHO COMPLETED THE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES

This section provides information on the positions held by those who completed the questionnaires and the year level(s) of the students being offered German-language programmes. Information on the extent to which participating schools were familiar with the draft curriculum guidelines for German and whether teachers had received outside support in relation to them are also presented.

The Positions held by Respondents

The 'person nominated to coordinate their school's response' was asked to indicate (from a list provided in the questionnaire) the position(s) they held within the school. The data in Table 1 show the position 'typically' held by respondents was 'person responsible for German' (83%) or teacher of German (81%), clearly often one and the same person.

TABLE 1: *The position(s) that respondents held within the school*

Position held by respondent	Number of responses	Proportion of responses
	N	% ^a
Person responsible for overall curriculum planning	5	7.2
Person responsible for languages	31	44.9
Person responsible for German	57	82.6
Principal	1	1.4
Teacher of German	56	81.2
Other ^b	7	10.1
Total	N = 69	

a Percentages in this table add to more than 100 percent as respondents could indicate more than one position.

b The 'other' category included curriculum coordinator, HOD English, HOD Languages, person responsible for French and person responsible for English.

Year Levels of Students Receiving German-language Programmes

When asked to indicate the year level(s) of students to whom German was being taught, the majority of respondents indicated that their school was teaching German to Year 9 (86%), Year 10 (87%), Year 11 (84%), and Year 12 (71%) students (Table 2).

TABLE 2: *The year levels of students receiving German-language programmes*

Year level	Number of responses	Proportion of responses
	N	% ^a
Below Year 7	2	2.9
Year 7	11	15.9
Year 8	14	20.3
Year 9	59	85.5
Year 10	60	87.0
Year 11	58	84.1
Year 12	49	71.0
Year 13+	44	63.8
Total	N = 69	

a Percentages in this table add to more than 100 percent as respondents could indicate more than one year level where German was being taught.

Whether Schools in the Study had Received any Outside Support in Relation to the Draft Curriculum Guidelines for German

When asked ‘*Has your school received outside support (eg, visits from advisers) or consulted with others with respect to the draft German curriculum guidelines?*’ over half of the respondents (57%) answered ‘Yes’. They went on to explain that the support or input received had mainly involved consulting German-language teacher colleagues from other schools. Others had consulted or received support from organisations such as the Goethe-Institut and the New Zealand Association of Language Teachers (NZALT), or from language advisers.

The Basis on Which Respondents Answered the Questionnaire about the Draft Curriculum Guidelines for German

Respondents were asked to indicate, by means of one or more of the three options listed in Table 3 below, the basis on which they had formed their response to the draft curriculum guidelines — that is, the extent to which they were familiar with the draft document. A large majority of respondents indicated that they had both read the document and formed an overall impression, and ‘related or compared material contained in the draft document with existing programmes’.

Only a few respondents (7%), however, indicated at the time of the survey that they had used the document to ‘plan (and trial) lessons in the classroom’.

TABLE 3: *The basis of respondents’ feedback on the draft document German in the New Zealand Curriculum*

The basis on which respondents had formed their opinion of the draft curriculum guidelines	Number of responses N	Proportion of responses % ^a
Read through the draft document and formed an overall impression	62	89.9
Related and compared material contained in the draft document with existing programmes	57	82.6
Used the draft document to plan (and trial) lessons in the classroom	5	7.2
Total	N = 69	

a Percentages in this table add to more than 100 percent as respondents could select more than one option.

The remainder of this report is based on data from the 65 schools where respondents felt they — and, where relevant, others in the school with whom they had consulted — had looked at the document sufficiently to be able to comment on it.

VIEWS ON THE DRAFT GUIDELINES FOR *GERMAN IN THE NEW ZEALAND CURRICULUM*: RESPONDENTS’ FEEDBACK

This broad section discusses respondents’ views on various parts of the draft curriculum guidelines and on aspects associated with implementing a curriculum for German-language learning. It also presents more in-depth opinion on the *achievement objectives*, *suggested learning and assessment activities*, and the *Glossary of Terms*.

Extent of Support for Specified Aspects of the Overall Structure or Framework Proposed for *German in the New Zealand Curriculum*

Data on the extent to which respondents supported various concepts and philosophical stances described in the draft curriculum guidelines are presented in Table 4. Although, overall, most of the broad aspects of the curriculum guidelines on which feedback was sought received a good level of support, one aspect attracted a noticeably lower level of support, namely, the suggested approach to vocabulary lists.

A discussion of the main findings indicated by the data in Table 4, along with a brief description of each aspect of the curriculum guidelines referred to in the table, follows. The discussion includes a summary of the sorts of comments made by those who supported ‘about half’ or less of each aspect.

- A large majority (86%) of respondents supported ‘all or most’ of the section on *language-specific aims* (p.19³ in the draft curriculum guidelines document for German). The *language-specific aims* were explained in the curriculum guidelines document as follows. ‘*Students should be encouraged to: listen for understanding, interest, and enjoyment; speak to be understood; read for meaning and for appreciation of the language and culture; and write for a purpose and to be understood.*’
- Students progress through eight curriculum *levels*⁴ (pp.19-20). The range and complexity of the achievement objectives increase from level to level. As they progress through the levels, students become familiar with a broadening range of vocabulary, increasingly complex language structures, and more challenging contexts for language use. When asked to indicate their support for the section on *levels*, just over half (52%) of the respondents gave a rating of ‘support all or most of this section’ and a further 23 percent indicated that they supported ‘about half’ of this section.
- Nine of 21 teachers who commented on why they supported half or less of the section on *levels* within the draft curriculum guidelines for German reported that the levels were “too difficult” or “too much”, while a small number of other respondents said that the correlation between levels of the curriculum and NCEA⁵ levels was unclear.

³ This and further page references given in this section of the present report refer to the page numbers in the draft document *German in the New Zealand Curriculum*.

⁴ The draft document *German in the New Zealand Curriculum* states (p.20) that: ‘*The levels described in these draft curriculum guidelines do not coincide with traditional form levels or with students’ years of schooling. The age at which students begin learning a language will be one factor in determining what level or levels a class might work within in the course of one year. For example, many students in a Year 7 class might work towards level 1 objectives only, but many students beginning to learn German in Year 9 might be able to meet the achievement objectives for levels 1 and 2 within one year.*’

⁵ NCEA = National Certificate in Educational Achievement.

TABLE 4: The extent to which respondents supported specific aspects of the draft curriculum guidelines for German

Aspect of the draft curriculum guidelines	Support all or most of this section	Support about half of this section	Support none or less than half of this section	Have no opinion on this section	Cannot make a single rating because opinions are too diverse ^a	No response
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Language-specific Aims (p.19)	86.2	3.1	3.1	3.1	–	4.6
Levels (pp.19–20)	52.3	23.1	18.5	1.5	–	4.6
Proficiency Target Statements (pp.20–21)	52.3	21.5	15.4	4.6	–	6.2
Grouping the Language Skills (p.21)	78.5	7.7	4.6	3.1	–	6.2
Achievement Objectives (p.22)	43.1	23.1	21.5	3.1	3.1	6.2
Suggested Sociocultural Aspects (p.23)	56.9	18.5	15.4	1.5	1.5	6.2
Suggested Topics (p.23)	52.3	18.5	18.5	1.5	–	9.2
Suggested Text Types (p.23)	61.5	16.9	9.2	1.5	–	10.8
Suggested Structures and Examples (p.24)	56.9	20.0	12.3	1.5	–	9.2
Suggested Vocabulary (p.25)	21.5	27.7	40.0	1.5	3.1	6.2
Communicative Grammar Activities (pp.25–26)	67.7	15.4	6.2	3.1	1.5	6.2
Assessment and Assessment Activities (pp.26–27)	67.7	9.2	13.8	3.1	–	6.2

a This response category was included because of the suggestion at the beginning of the questionnaire that the person in each school nominated to complete the questionnaire should arrange for group discussions with appropriate staff and submit a response that took account of the views expressed.

- A sentence describing the general level of language proficiency that students will need in order to meet the achievement objectives at that level introduces each curriculum level. These are referred to as **proficiency target statements** (pp.20–21). When asked for their views on the section outlining the nature and purpose of the *proficiency target statements*, just over half of the respondents said that they supported ‘all or most’ of this section and a further 22 percent supported ‘about half’ of it.

The degree of difficulty was the main concern for 16 teachers who commented on why they supported half or less of the section on *proficiency target statements*. Five of these respondents felt that reaching the ‘personal independence target’, (ie, successfully achieving at levels 7 and 8 of the curriculum guidelines) was not achievable for school students.

- The section on **grouping the language skills** (p.21) refers to how the language skills can be grouped as oral language skills (listening and speaking) and written language skills (reading and writing). Results showed a high level of support, with 78 percent of respondents supporting ‘all or most’ of this section.

- The **achievement objectives**⁶ (p.22) describe what learners are expected to achieve at each level. Support for this section was low with under half of respondents (43%) indicating that they supported ‘all or most’ of this section. However, 23 percent of respondents indicated that they supported ‘about half’ of this section.

Fifteen of the 29 respondents who commented on why they supported half or less of this aspect of the curriculum described the *achievement objectives* as wordy, using too much jargon, and not being user-friendly.

- The **suggested sociocultural aspects** (p.23) propose that learning about historical and social aspects of German-speaking societies will enable students to make comparisons with the cultures of New Zealand. Around three out of five respondents (57%) supported ‘all or most’ of the section on the suggested sociocultural framework, while a further 18 percent agreed with ‘about half’ of it.

Eight of the comments made by the 21 teachers who commented suggested that the *sociocultural aspects* of the curriculum needed to be more closely related to the topics of study, with a few saying that they should be prescribed.

- The section on **suggested topics** (p.23) defines the study topics through which students could meet the achievement objectives within the curriculum. The *suggested topics* are listed for each curriculum level. When asked to what extent they supported this section of the curriculum document, approximately half (52%) of the respondents said they agreed with ‘all or most’ of it and a further 18 percent that they agreed with ‘about half’.

The need for topics of study to be guided by NCEA requirements was a concern for one in four (of the 20) respondents who commented on why they supported only half or less of this aspect of the curriculum.

- The draft curriculum guidelines for German state that: *‘Different cultures recognise distinct text types. Examples of written text types are personal and business letters, forms, manuals, and reviews. Spoken text types include weather forecasts, lectures, sports commentaries, and news bulletins. At each level, these curriculum guidelines suggest a range of text types to which students may be introduced in the course of their learning. ... Teachers may [also] decide to focus on other text types.’* When asked for their views on **suggested text types** (p.23), three in five respondents (62%) indicated that they supported ‘all or most’ of this section. Another 17 percent said they supported ‘about half’ of it.

- The **suggested structures and examples** (p.24) section outlines the philosophy behind the curriculum guidelines document. For example, the draft curriculum guidelines state that *‘Learners can assimilate language structures more readily when the structures are introduced and used in the context of meaningful communication. As they communicate, they will discover that some structures have different meanings when they are used in different contexts.’* The guidelines also suggest that certain language structures can be learned at more than one level, and acknowledge that it is generally best to introduce simple structures first, building gradually towards more complex ones. Over half (57%) of the respondents chose the rating ‘support all or most of this section’ and a further 20 percent chose the rating ‘support about half’.

Fifteen teachers who supported half or less of the section gave reasons for their answer. The main issue for five of these respondents was that the *structures and examples* were not always

⁶ Achievement objectives are developed at eight levels. Within any one unit of work or activity, students will generally work towards objectives from more than one strand. Descriptors accompany every achievement objective, providing examples of learning experiences in which students must demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding that are in keeping with meeting a particular achievement objective.

appropriately placed, with several others noting that the distinction between the receptive and productive use of structures should be stated.

- Of all the sections of the curriculum guidelines document listed in Table 4, support was lowest for **suggested vocabulary** (p.25) with only 22 percent of respondents supporting ‘all or most’ of this section, and 28 percent supporting ‘about half’. Forty percent of respondents supported ‘none or less than half’ of the section.

The draft curriculum guidelines state that *‘The vocabulary lists at each level are not intended to be exhaustive or exclusive. They indicate the types of vocabulary that students are likely to need to meet their achievement objectives. Teachers should add vocabulary that relates to the interests and capabilities of their students and to the specific requirements of their programmes.’* The main concern for 32 of the 45 teachers who provided comment related to the need for prescribed or specific lists, with more than half of these teachers adding that specified lists were necessary for NCEA or external examination requirements. Several other respondents said that the *suggested vocabulary* was vague and the range too broad, and some thought that many of the words were not appropriate or relevant to teenagers. As one teacher put it:

“Some/many words fail to reflect modern, everyday language use. They are not relevant to our students.”

- The purpose of the **communicative grammar activities** (pp.25–26) in the curriculum guidelines is to allow students to practise grammar in realistic contexts. There was general support for this section, with approximately two-thirds of respondents indicating that they supported ‘all or most’ of this section and another 15 percent supporting ‘about half’.
- The section on **assessment and assessment activities** (pp.26–27) also attracted a considerable level of support, with 68 percent of respondents supporting ‘all or most’ of this section and a further nine percent supporting ‘about half’ of it.

Support for Specific Aspects of the Eight Levels of Learning within the Draft Document *German in the New Zealand Curriculum*

As mentioned earlier in the report, there are eight progressive levels of learning specified in the draft curriculum guidelines, each containing a number of aspects. Respondents were asked to indicate whether their school either supported or had concerns about specific aspects within each level. Table 5 summarises responses to this question. It should be noted that respondents were asked to refrain from giving an estimate of support if they, and others in the school with whom they had consulted, had not yet considered a particular aspect or level, had no opinion about them or were not sure, or the level in question was not being taught in their school.

As can be seen in Table 5, the rate of non-response for each aspect is marked, increasing from approximately 20 percent of respondents who did not give an opinion about aspects of the lower levels to over 50 percent who did not rate aspects of higher levels⁷. The consequence of this is that there are only limited data available upon which to base an evaluation of aspects of each level. However, with the exception of ‘recycled achievement objectives’ and ‘suggested sociocultural aspects, topics, and text types’, responses generally followed a pattern of decreasing support/increasing concern through to levels 5 or 6, where the direction of support changed or levelled off.

⁷ Refer to footnote 4 on page 6 for an explanation of ‘levels’ within the curriculum guidelines for German and how they relate to the year/class levels of students.

TABLE 5: The extent to which respondents expressed support for or concern about aspects of the eight levels of learning within the draft curriculum guidelines for German

Aspect of each level	Support or concern for objectives?	Levels 1 – 8 of the curriculum guidelines							
		1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %	6 %	7 %	8 %
Proficiency Target Statements	Support	75.4	64.6	46.2	43.1	24.6	20.0	20.0	21.5
	Concern	3.1	9.2	18.5	20.0	32.3	32.3	27.7	24.6
	No response	21.5	26.2	35.4	36.9	43.1	47.7	52.3	53.8
Achievement Objectives	Support	64.6	58.5	49.2	43.1	21.5	23.1	24.6	26.2
	Concern	13.8	15.4	15.4	21.5	36.9	30.8	23.1	21.5
	No response	21.5	26.2	35.4	35.4	41.5	46.2	52.3	52.3
Suggested Sociocultural Aspects, Topics, and Text Types	Support	60.0	55.4	43.1	41.5	36.9	30.8	29.2	23.1
	Concern	16.9	15.4	21.5	20.0	20.0	20.0	16.9	21.5
	No response	23.1	29.2	35.4	38.5	43.1	49.2	53.8	55.4
Suggested Structures and Examples	Support	58.4	44.6	33.8	32.3	15.4	18.5	21.5	21.5
	Concern	20.0	26.2	30.8	32.3	43.1	35.4	29.2	27.7
	No response	21.5	29.2	35.4	35.4	41.5	46.2	49.2	50.8
Recycled Achievement Objectives	Support		35.4	27.7	35.4	29.2	30.8	26.2	16.9
	Concern	N/a	29.2	30.8	23.1	24.6	18.5	20.0	15.4
	No response		35.4	41.5	41.5	46.2	50.8	53.8	67.7
Suggested Vocabulary	Support	44.6	29.2	32.3	26.2	16.9	15.4	16.9	20.0
	Concern	30.8	41.5	30.8	36.9	41.5	36.9	30.8	26.2
	No response	24.6	29.2	36.9	36.9	41.5	47.7	52.3	53.8
Suggested Learning and Assessment Activities	Support	67.7	56.9	43.1	35.4	20.0	21.5	24.6	21.5
	Concern	9.2	13.8	20.0	24.6	36.9	30.8	20.0	21.5
	No response	23.1	29.2	36.9	40.0	43.1	47.7	55.4	56.9

In the case of ‘suggested sociocultural aspects, topics, and text types’, support consistently fell from Levels 1 through 8.

Respondents who had concerns were asked to outline what those concerns were, linking their comments to specific levels and aspects. The observations made were quite detailed and specific and have been passed on to the Curriculum Division within the Ministry of Education so that they can be considered when the curriculum guidelines are being finalised.

Further Views on the Achievement Objectives

Additional information about the achievement objectives was sought. Specifically, respondents were asked whether they felt the achievement objectives were (a) expressed in a way that enabled them to be easily assessed, (b) clearly specified, (c) clearly differentiated from one level to another, and (d) appropriate for their level.

Table 6 shows that the only just over one-fifth of respondents felt that the achievement objectives were at the appropriate level for which they were specified. Furthermore, considerably fewer than half felt that the objectives were either able to be assessed easily (40%) or were clearly specified (42%). Half (51%) of the respondents, however, felt that the achievement objectives clearly differentiated from one level to another.

Respondents who answered ‘No’ in relation to any of the four statements listed in Table 6 were asked to comment on their responses, linking their comments to the specific achievement objectives/levels about which they had concerns. Few respondents commented on why they felt the objectives were not expressed in ways that could easily be assessed and comments about the other three aspects of the achievement objectives were primarily of a diverse, ‘one-off’ nature.

TABLE 6: Views on the achievement objectives within the draft curriculum guidelines for German

Are the achievement objectives...	Yes		No		Not answered	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
...expressed in ways that can easily be assessed?	26	40.0	33	50.8	6	9.2
...clearly specified?	27	41.5	32	49.2	6	9.2
...clearly differentiated from one level to another?	33	50.8	25	38.5	7	10.8
...appropriate at the level for which they are specified?	14	21.5	45	69.2	6	9.2

Further Views on the Suggested Learning and Assessment Activities

In addition to the information summarised in Table 5 above on the *suggested learning and assessment activities*, respondents were also asked whether they (and others in the school with whom they had consulted) felt that the activities provided were (a) helpful in achieving the learning outcomes, (b) sufficiently varied, and (c) at the appropriate level.

Table 7 shows that considerable proportions of respondents considered that the learning and assessment examples were helpful (63%) and that the examples given were sufficiently varied (71%). In contrast, only just over a quarter (28%) felt that they were specified at the appropriate levels.

Those who did not feel that the learning and assessment activities were helpful, sufficiently varied or specified at the appropriate level were invited to elaborate on their answers. Overall, only quite small numbers of respondents did so. But of those who did comment, several stated that some activities were not relevant to the target group, five respondents specifically indicating that some of the activities for levels 5 and 6 were not appropriately placed.

TABLE 7: Views on the suggested learning and assessment activities within the draft curriculum guidelines for German

With regard to the learning and assessment activities...	Yes		No		Not answered	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
...are they helpful in achieving the learning outcome?	41	63.1	12	18.5	12	18.5
...are there sufficiently varied examples?	46	70.8	9	13.8	10	15.4
...are they appropriate at the levels for which they are specified?	18	27.7	36	55.4	11	16.9

Views on including additional learning and assessment activities in the curriculum guidelines

To a question which asked if they felt there were additional learning and assessment activities that they would find useful in helping students meet the objectives in the curriculum, 42 percent of respondents felt there were not. However, a sizeable minority (28%) of respondents felt that there were⁸.

Views on the *Glossary of Terms*

When asked whether the definitions provided in the *Glossary of Terms* within the draft document were appropriate, approximately two-thirds (65%) considered that all of them were⁹.

Views on extending the glossary

Respondents were further asked if they felt there were other terms that should be included in the *Glossary of Terms*. Only few respondents (12%) felt that there were¹⁰, while 58 percent of respondents answered ‘No’.

⁸ Respondents who felt that there were additional learning and assessment activities that they would find useful were asked to outline them and specify at what levels they would be appropriate. A list of the specific activities suggested has been passed on to the Curriculum Division within the Ministry.

⁹ Some respondents who felt that a number of the definitions were not appropriate provided what they considered to be more appropriate terms and definitions. These have been passed on to the Curriculum Division for consideration when the curriculum guidelines for German are being finalised.

¹⁰ The suggestions for additional entries in the *Glossary of Terms* have also been passed on to the Curriculum Division for consideration.

Views on the Usefulness of the Draft Curriculum Guidelines for German as a Guide to Planning, Classroom Practice, Assessment, and Reporting

The first of a series of more general questions about the draft curriculum guidelines asked if teachers found the draft document easy to come to grips with as a guide to planning, classroom practice, assessment, and reporting. Responses to this question are presented in Table 8.

Overall, few respondents gave a positive response. More specifically, only 17–18 percent found the draft curriculum easy to come to grips with as a guide to planning or assessment purposes, and only 22 percent had found it helpful as a guide to classroom practice. An even lower proportion of respondents (11%) had found the draft curriculum easy to come to grips with as a guide to reporting.

Only one or two of those who responded positively gave reasons for their answer, but many of the 28 teachers who said they had not found the draft document easy to follow commented on the difficulty of the language or format of the document. A few also said that they had found the curriculum levels to be uneven, mixed up, or lacking in momentum.

TABLE 8: Views on the draft curriculum guidelines for German as a guide for planning, classroom practice, assessment, and reporting

Is the draft easy to come to grips with...	Yes		No		Cannot comment, opinions are too diverse ^a		Not applicable, not used		Not answered	
	N	%	N	N	N	%	%	%	N	%
...as a guide to planning?	11	16.9	32	49.2	1	1.5	12	18.5	9	13.8
...as a guide to classroom practice?	14	21.5	31	47.7	1	1.5	9	13.8	10	15.4
...as a guide to assessment?	12	18.5	31	47.7	1	1.5	12	18.5	9	13.8
...as a guide to reporting?	7	10.8	30	46.2	2	3.1	17	26.2	9	13.8

a This response category was included because of the suggestion at the beginning of the questionnaire that the person in each school nominated to complete the questionnaire should arrange for group discussions with appropriate staff and submit a response that took account of the views expressed.

Views on Whether the Draft Curriculum Guidelines were a Suitable Basis for Effective Teaching and Learning Programmes in German

To the question ‘Do you feel that the draft document provides a suitable base on which to structure effective teaching and learning programmes?’ just over a quarter (26%) of respondents answered ‘Yes’, while more than twice this number (57%) said ‘No’. Table 9 provides further details.

The level of difficulty of the curriculum content was a concern for 36 of the teachers who gave reasons for their answer and 11 respondents said that they felt the draft document needed to be rewritten or reworked. Some teachers said it was important to ensure that that the document came across as user-friendly, with a few saying it should follow the format of the Spanish Curriculum.

TABLE 9: *Views on whether the draft curriculum document provided a suitable basis for effective teaching and learning programmes in German*

Whether the draft provided a suitable basis for effective teaching and learning programmes	Number of responses	Proportion of responses
	N	%
Yes	17	26.2
No	37	56.9
Cannot comment, opinions are too diverse ^a	3	4.6
Not applicable, not familiar enough with this to be able to judge	1	1.5
No reply	7	10.8
Total	65	100.0

a This response category was included because of the suggestion at the beginning of the questionnaire that the person in each school nominated to complete the questionnaire should arrange for group discussions with appropriate staff and submit a response that took account of the views expressed.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, CRITICAL ISSUES, AND OVERALL RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT CURRICULUM GUIDELINES FOR GERMAN

This section presents information from four ‘summing up’ questions which asked respondents about their (and their school’s) overall response to the draft guidelines, and for their views of the strengths, weaknesses and critical issues of the draft curriculum guidelines.

Respondents’ Ratings of their School’s Overall Response to the Draft Document *German in the New Zealand Curriculum*

Asked to rate how favourable the overall response within their school was to the draft curriculum document for German, a majority (60%) of respondents indicated that it was ‘not favourable’. Table 10 provides further details.

TABLE 10: *Respondents’ views on how favourable they thought their school’s overall response was to the draft curriculum guidelines for German*

Rating of school’s overall response	Number of responses	Proportion of responses
	N	%
Favourable	12	18.5
Neither favourable nor unfavourable	10	15.4
Not favourable	39	60.0
Cannot comment, opinions are too diverse ^a	–	–
No reply	4	6.2
Total	65	100.0

a This response category was included because of the suggestion at the beginning of the questionnaire that the person in each school nominated to complete the questionnaire should arrange for group discussions with appropriate staff and submit a response that took account of the views expressed.

Views on *Strengths* of the Draft Curriculum Guidelines for German

The second of four ‘summing up’ questions requested respondents (and those with whom they had consulted) to nominate what they considered were the three significant strengths of the draft curriculum guidelines. The responses fell into two main categories: comments about specific aspects of the curriculum guidelines (these were the most numerous); and more general comments, such as that the format of the document was clear and easy to follow (Table 11).

The data in Table 11 show that the *suggested learning and assessment activities* was the specific aspect of the curriculum guidelines most often identified as a significant strength. Teachers particularly liked the range and number of suggested activities provided.

The *Introduction* to the draft curriculum document, in particular the rationale given for learning German, was also considered to be a significant strength by over a quarter of teachers.

TABLE 11: Significant *strengths* of the draft curriculum guidelines for German according to respondents

Strengths	Number of responses	Proportion of responses
	N	% ^a
Suggested Learning and Assessment Activities	23	35.4
Introduction to the document	18	27.7
The document itself: general positive comments	16	24.6
Achievement Objectives	9	13.8
Suggested Structures and Examples	5	7.7
Suggested Topics	3	4.6
Suggested Vocabulary	3	4.6
Sociocultural Aspects	3	4.6
Format of the document	11	12.3
Index to the document	3	4.6
Total	N = 65	

a Percentages in this table add to more than 100 percent as respondents could select more than one option.

Views on *Weaknesses* of the Draft Curriculum Guidelines for German

The third of the ‘summing up’ questions asked respondents to list what they felt to be three significant weaknesses of the draft curriculum guidelines.

As shown in Table 12, the most common weakness reported by teachers concerned the language of the document. Thirty-eight respondents said the language needed to be simpler, more concise, and free of jargon — in other words, they wanted more “user-friendly” language.

Of the 29 teachers who said that the curriculum content was too difficult, 11 mentioned specific levels that they thought were too advanced or not appropriate to their target group. There was no particular pattern in the levels specified (except that no one mentioned any concerns about the difficulty of level 1).

Twenty-one of the 26 teachers who identified the *suggested vocabulary* as a significant weakness said they would like to see prescribed or specific vocabulary lists. Some of these teachers said that such lists were necessary in order to meet external assessment requirements. The lack of correlation between levels of the curriculum and NCEA levels was an issue raised by 10 respondents.

Half of those who noted that the *achievement objectives* were a significant weakness of the draft curriculum guidelines felt that some objectives were too advanced for the curriculum level with which they were linked. Five teachers also said that many of the *suggested structures and examples* did not correspond well to the achievement objectives, suggested vocabulary, or suggested topics.

Other weaknesses listed in Table 12 were each identified by fewer than 10 percent of respondents.

TABLE 12: *Significant weaknesses of the draft curriculum guidelines for German according to respondents*

Weaknesses	Number of responses	Proportion of responses
	N	% ^a
Language of document	38	58.5
Poor correlation with NCEA	10	15.4
Content too difficult	29	44.6
Suggested Vocabulary	26	40.0
Suggested Structures and Examples	12	18.5
Achievement Objectives	12	18.5
Suggested Topics	6	9.2
Suggested Learning and Assessment Activities	4	6.2
Total	N = 65	

a Percentages in this table add to more than 100 percent as respondents could select more than one option.

Views on Critical Issues Facing Schools in Implementing Programmes Based on the Draft Curriculum Guidelines for German

The fourth of the ‘summing up’ questions asked *What are the three most critical issues for you and your school in implementing programmes based on the draft curriculum guidelines?*. Respondents’ answers fell into three main groupings. Most often the issues identified concerned the need for more time, professional development, and resources in order to implement the curriculum. The second main grouping concerned particular aspects of the curriculum guidelines document itself. The third grouping concerned ‘context’ for the curriculum guidelines, both at a national level and at the school level — for example, how the proposed curriculum guidelines relate to the NCEA and how student retention impacts on the implementation of the curriculum guidelines for German. Table 13 provides further details.

Having sufficient time to teach the content of the curriculum was the most common concern for the teachers who reported time as a critical issue. As well, some said it was important to have time to prepare for implementing the new curriculum. Thirteen teachers considered that professional development opportunities were critical in order for teachers to successfully implement the proposed curriculum guidelines, while 10 identified a need for more or improved resources to support the guidelines.

While a number of teachers identified issues with particular aspects of the guidelines, such as *vocabulary*, more than a quarter (26%) made much broader comments. For example, they simply stated that the content was too difficult for the curriculum levels, without going into any detail.

TABLE 13: *Critical issues for schools in implementing programmes based on the draft curriculum guidelines for German*

Critical issues in implementing the draft curriculum guidelines	Number of responses	Proportion of responses
	N	% ^a
Time	28	43.1
Professional development/support	13	24.6
Resources	10	15.4
Nature of text books available	6	9.2
Level of difficulty of content	17	26.2
Suggested Vocabulary	12	18.5
The nature of the document itself (eg, not user-friendly)	9	13.8
Achievement Objectives	7	10.8
Lack of correlation with NCEA	8	12.3
Student retention	8	12.3
Total	N = 65	

a Percentages in this table add to more than 100 percent as respondents could select more than one option.

SOME CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The large majority of respondents who responded to the questionnaire indicated that their response (and, where relevant, that of others in the school with whom they had consulted) was based on reading the draft document *German in the New Zealand Curriculum*, forming an overall impression, and relating and comparing the draft document with their existing programmes. Only a small number responded on the basis of having used the draft document to ‘plan (and trial) lessons in the classroom’.

While respondents’ overall response to the draft curriculum guidelines for German was not favourable, they did identify a number of strengths, for example, the section on *Language Specific Aims*.

Some of the particular areas of concern identified by respondents related directly to the format of the draft curriculum document and to the perceived difficulty of the successive levels of learning proposed within the curriculum. Other concerns, however, were to do with the wider context for the curriculum guidelines and assessment considerations. For example, some teachers felt there was a need for prescribed vocabulary lists within the curriculum guidelines to assist in meeting requirements of external examinations and the National Certificate in Educational Achievement (NCEA).

In addition to the findings presented in this report, many more specific or detailed comments and suggestions made by respondents have been passed on to the Curriculum Division within the Ministry of Education, to those responsible for reviewing the draft document. These comments, along with present data and feedback received from other forms of consultation with the sector about the draft curriculum guidelines, will be taken into account when finalising *German in the New Zealand Curriculum*.