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Using the Victorian Curriculum and Standards Framework in Music Education

By Andrew Blyth
BEd Melbourne State College, MA La Trobe,
GradDipCompSci Deakin

A Research Folio submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education,
Deakin University, June, 2004
I certify that this research folio, entitled *Using the Victorian Curriculum and Standards Framework in Music Education*, submitted for the degree of Doctor of Education is the result of my own work and that where reference is made to the work of others, due acknowledgment is given.

I also certify that any material in the research folio which has been accepted for a degree or diploma by any other university or institution is identified in the text.

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I would like to thank my supervisor, Associate Professor Robin Stevens, for his guidance and support over the seven years of my candidacy. His knowledge, understanding and encouragement helped to shape this work. I must also thank Dr. Dawn Joseph for her advice and assistance in her role as Associate Supervisor.

I would also like to pay tribute to my wife, Trudyanne, for her encouragement, assistance and patience in allowing me to spend so much time on this project.
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Abstract

This research examines the usefulness of the Curriculum and Standards Framework as the basis for school music education in Victoria. The thesis consists of a folio of four short research tasks and a Dissertation that examine the question in different ways.

The first of the short research tasks uses document and discourse analysis to examine and critique the philosophies of music education and aesthetic education that inform the Curriculum and Standards Framework. The same techniques are used in the second research task to trace the adoption and dissemination of the philosophy of music education as aesthetic education in a range of curriculum documents from around Australia. These two tasks show how centralised curriculum development often produces abstract and impractical goals and strategies.

Research tasks three and four use interview and participant observation with teachers based in one Melbourne secondary school to illuminate the highly contextual nature of teaching practice. The theoretical formulations of learning presented in Victorian curriculum materials and policy documents is contrasted with the practical approaches that teachers take in developing educational programmes. These tasks show how school education is always developed in relation to students and resources and not according to abstract standards.

The Dissertation reports on a major research project with thirty-two experienced music teachers working in the northern metropolitan region of Melbourne. Interviews with both primary and secondary teachers sought to determine the extent to which the Curriculum and Standards Framework had impacted upon their classroom teaching practice. The research was guided by Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967) principles and it showed that the Framework and the associated process of centralising curriculum production failed to deliver any measurable gains or changes in music education in schools.
List of acronyms and abbreviations

CSF  Curriculum and Standards Framework
MEAE  Music Education as Aesthetic Education
Statement  A Statement on the Arts for Australian Schools
Profile  The Arts—A Curriculum Profile for Australian Schools
SACSAF  South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework
C(L)A(S)P  Composition, Literature studies, Audition, Skill development, Performance
DBME  Discipline-Based Music Education
MEAE  Music Education as Aesthetic Education
AEC  Australian Education Council
KLA  Key Learning Areas
AC&A  Art criticism and Aesthetics
CM&P  Creating, making and presenting
P&PC  Past and present contexts
ODE  outcome-based education
EDI  Exploring and Developing Ideas
USTIP  Using skills techniques and processes
P  Presenting
NESC  North Eastern Secondary College
ACOT  Apple Classrooms of Tomorrow
DEETYA  Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs
SOSE  Studies of Society and Environment
LOTE  Languages other than English
ACT  Australian Capital Territory
VCE  Victorian Certificate of Education
The structure of the research folio

My Doctor of Education research folio examines the theory and practice of music education from a range of perspectives. I have focussed on the music education ideas embodied in the Curriculum and Standards Framework in Victoria and have examined the value of these ideas as a contribution to music education practices in schools in Victoria. More widely, I have examined broader issues relating to curriculum development practices in Australia, in order to consider the value of system-mandated curriculum development and change.

The Curriculum and Standards Framework (CSF) is ‘the basis on which Victorian schools plan and deliver curriculum and monitor student achievements’ (Victorian Board of Studies 1999, p.1). It was produced by professional curriculum writers and represents a concerted effort by educational administrators and politicians to manage and direct the work of Victorian teachers and students. As a teacher of music and of information technology, my interest in this issue is motivated by the need to reaffirm the professionalism and practical knowledge of teachers at a time when this has been questioned and marginalised. The focus of the research is the practice of centralising curriculum development in the hands of system administrators that has been a feature of Australian education for more than a decade. Although, as a teacher, I have an opinion about this (as do many teachers), as a researcher I wished to investigate and critique the ideas underlying the process. I also wanted to know whether my personal response to this process could be justified as being more than purely reactionary.

The structure of the EdD Research Folio has permitted me to examine these issues from a variety of perspectives. The approach that I have taken is a qualitative and critical one that accesses and validates teachers’ knowledge and understanding. The Research Folio consists of five separate Research Studies which I have conceived of as an integrated research project. Four of the Research Studies are short ones in which I examine the context and philosophy of the Curriculum and Standards Framework as well as some of its leading
ideas. Also examined in these Research Studies are associated curriculum policies and issues that impact on teachers’ work generally. The ideas explored in the Research Studies form the basis for contentions that are further explored in the Dissertation.

Elective Research Study One examines two philosophies of music education prevalent in the English-speaking world. The analysis of these philosophies uses discourse analysis procedures developed from the ideas of Michel Foucault. My purpose in this study was to survey current thinking and debates about music education and to give some background on the thinking that has informed recent Australian curriculum development in music education. In the adoption of a rigorous discourse of Aesthetic Education as the basis for arts education in schools, it can be shown that Victoria has drawn on some contentious and questionable arts education practices.

Elective Research Study Two examines in more detail the formulation of a national curriculum for the arts in Australia. This national curriculum combined two incompatible ideas—Aesthetic Education and outcome-based education—in a single framework. The legacy of this national curriculum is then traced in the development of music education curriculum materials in each Australian state. This analysis of the genealogy of this arts education discourse, again using the ideas of Michel Foucault, shows how curriculum development in music in some states has become a process of speculative theorising with little basis in practice.

Elective Research Study Three looks at the difficulties of using the CSF for Music at one level (Level Five or Years Seven and Eight) in one year for one particular group of students in one secondary school. This was my own class. The assumptions and expectations built into the CSF, particularly those relating to individualised learning and continuous development, are contrasted with the realities of a specific context. The purpose of the study was to critique the idealisation of learning presented in the CSF. Data on students’ educational background, their learning progress throughout the year recorded in my markbook, and the way in which I taught has been used to elucidate the various problems that music teachers might encounter in trying to use the CSF.
In Elective Research Study Four, I report on a case study of a group of teachers in one school who were investigating the potential of new technology for their work. The focus of the research is not on music education but on teachers' work generally and teachers' response to educational innovation. Twenty-nine teachers from all key learning areas (subjects) were interviewed about the extent to which using a computer altered their practice as teachers. The purpose of the study was provide some insight into the complexity of the change process in a large school and the way in which teachers respond to demands for change to their practice. Teachers' responses to demands for change are shown to be diverse and mediated by the many other demands that they have to meet as a part of the normal routine of teaching.

The Dissertation is an interview study involving thirty-two primary and secondary music teachers from schools in the northern education region of Melbourne in which I investigate the use of the CSF and the music education practices of individual teachers in a diverse range of school situations. The sociological theories of Anthony Giddens and Pierre Bourdieu were used to frame this research which I undertook as a grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967) study of teachers' practical knowledge and understandings. Four contentions, derived from the four Elective Research Studies, are proposed and examined as a way of organising teachers' responses to the interview questions. My purpose in this research was to examine the breadth of music teaching practices and to contrast it with the narrow theorisation embedded in the CSF.
Elective Research Study One—
The discourse of music education philosophy

Introduction
Curriculum development in music draws on philosophy and practice for its ideas. My objective in this study is to examine the value of the Victorian CSF by analyzing some of the philosophical ideas that underpin it. This includes considering some of the 'theoretical choices' (Foucault 1972, Chapter Six) or philosophical options that are available to music educators. In recent years, there has been a philosophical debate in texts and scholarly journals that has sought to define foundational goals for school music education and to then outline the best means for achieving those goals (Reimer 1996, Elliott 1997). For almost half a century, music education had been informed primarily by one philosophy---Music Education as Aesthetic Education (MEAE). This philosophy located the purpose of music education (as well as education in all other art forms) in the development of an ability to understand and respond to the aesthetic qualities of musical or artistic experience. Although recently challenged by the ideas of David Elliott (1995), MEAE continues to have many adherents and its ideas continue to influence music education theory in Australia. As discussed in Elective Research Study Two, the nationally developed Statement on the Arts for Australian Schools (the Statement) (Curriculum Corporation 1994a) and The Arts---A Curriculum Profile for Australian Schools (the Profile) (Curriculum Corporation 1994b), the Victorian CSF (Victorian Board of Studies 2000), Western Australia's Student Outcome Statements for the Arts (Western Australia 1998), and the South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework for the Arts (South Australia 2000) are essentially built on the ideas of aesthetic development.

The recent alternative philosophy of music education put forward by David Elliott is, in part, framed in terms of a challenge to the principles of MEAE (Elliott 1995, Chapter 2). The sustained re-evaluation of the purposes and methods of music education that has followed in the research literature has seen many respected music educators line up in opposing camps to defend their preferred philosophy or to attack the other side (see, for example, Daugherty
1997, Koopman 1998, Roberts 1995, Swanwick 1996 and Walker 1996 among others). The increasingly adversarial nature of much of this (Elliott 1996, Reimer 1996, Elliott 1997) would appear to offer little possibility of resolution. It is unlikely that, at the level of philosophical discussion, there can be found any criteria which will determine the truth or falsity of claims being made by either side.

In this research study, I use analytical procedures outlined by Michel Foucault (1972) to demonstrate in what ways aesthetic and praxial philosophies are essentially the same argument and grow out of a similar conception of music education. A central focus in Foucaultian analysis is to identify the manner in which we construct our knowledge of the world and of ourselves through language and the definition of meaning (Foucault 1972, pp.6-8). Consequently, most of this study will focus on how concepts have been developed by drawing on an existing archive of theory. Aesthetic and praxial philosophies are regarded not as the products of specific authors but as a product resulting from the collective writings of all those who subscribe to their principles, the theories on which they base their ideas, and the teaching materials and practices linked to the philosophy.

Research methodology and procedure

Philosophy as discourse
Michel Foucault’s (1972) “archaeological” procedures for critical discourse analysis were developed over a number of publications and examine the foundations of knowledge as theory. In The Order of Things (1970) and Archaeology of Knowledge (1972), Foucault challenged the idea that knowledge develops scientifically, naturally or logically. Foucault’s analyses examined how knowledge is constructed by establishing concepts, structures, rules and procedures that define the boundaries of a particular discipline and therefore set it apart from others. These boundaries are established by (often unstated) rules that determine what can and cannot be said within a discourse at a particular time. In this way, discourses fix meanings and establish patterns for understanding the world in a way that often preempts alternative representations
from appearing. In effect, discourses create our knowledge of the world and define what counts as knowledge. Foucault's statement that discourses are 'practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak' (Foucault 1972, p.54) implies that the world and everything in it does not have an existence that is separate to our knowledge and use of them. In the human sciences in particular, discourse is the means through which our knowledge of the world and the meaning we attach to it is produced and reproduced. All discourses are structured by assumptions within which any speaker must operate in order to be heard as meaningful within the discursive field.

**Research procedure**

Foucault (1972) has suggested that discourse analysis should proceed in terms of an examination of how the four basic components of a discourse are formed—its objects (the things that are to be studied), its operations (methods and techniques appropriate to these objects), its concepts (routine terms and ideas which constitute the unique language of a discipline), and the related strategies (available assumptions, theories, hypotheses which can be chosen from and which may provide the basis for an alternative discourse). This last component assumes that even within a discourse which presents itself as 'truth' there will be competing ideas. The discursive object can be examined in a variety of ways. It is possible to examine its status and the reason for this status. Also relevant is the context in which the object is important and the authorities, such as teachers, theorists, musicians, to whom it is relevant. In examining the operations relevant to the object, it is also necessary to consider also the role of those qualified to carry out these operations and the sites in which they operate (Foucault 1972, pp.51-59). These operations will involve a range of privileged concepts that are organised in a particular way. It is possible to identify concepts that are acknowledged as truthful and those that have been borrowed from other domains of knowledge. It is also possible to identify how concepts have varied or changed over time. An examination of discursive strategies deals with how the objects, procedures and concepts are developed into a theory. It is assumed that there will be a range of theories relevant in any domain of knowledge. Consequently, it is possible to identify points of disagreement, agreement, or borrowings from other domains.
In this analysis, I focus primarily on the last component of discourse—how competing theories are developed and distinguished. Foucault (1972, p.84) suggests that ‘behind the visible façade of the system, one posits a rich uncertainty of disorder…discourse and system produce each other’. What is being examined is the systematic production of a discourse of music education.

For the sake of brevity in this study, I propose to select from the works of two representatives from each philosophical side. Bennett Reimer and Keith Swanwick have been chosen as representing an Aesthetic philosophy, while David Elliott and Thomas Regelski are seen to be offering a Praxial philosophy. These pairings are not intended to suggest that each writer agrees and disagrees with the others in a consistent way or that the similarities and differences are fixed. What should become increasingly clear is that ideas presented as foundational are much more fluid and open to interpretation, and that differences that are presented as categorical are usually little more than interpretive. A range of writings has been selected for each author. Foucaultian discourse analysis treats all discursive utterances—documents, theories, rules of procedure, opinions, comments, etc.—at the same level of importance inasmuch as they define and redefine the concepts and practices appropriate to a field or discipline. That there can be multiple discourses, each informing the other, in a single field is not problematic. Often, it is the use of different discourses for different strategies that brings about shifts in the meanings and practices of a discipline (Foucault 1972, pp.67-70). However, it will become evident that ideas which are presented as foundational are often little more than hearsay that has been exchanged between one thinker and another. The issue, then, is not a question of what divides, or even unites, the arguments of the two philosophies of music education. The ultimate grounding must be in their ability to develop into a discourse of music education that moves beyond philosophy and becomes a practice. As I will show, there are limits to the practical application of both Praxial and Aesthetic approaches and these limits reside in the same place.
The limits of philosophical procedure

Both Aesthetic and Praxial philosophies fall within a general discourse of music education that consists of theories and practices. There is a general agreement among Praxial and Aesthetic philosophers on the purpose of having a philosophy. It is both to guide the profession and to advocate the value of what the profession does to those outside (Elliott 1995, pp.10-12; Regelski 1975, p.x; Reimer 1989, pp.3-10; Swanwick 1979 pp.5-6). There is recognition built into both Aesthetic and Praxial philosophies that their purpose is to contribute to the wider discourse of music education—practices and institutions as well as theory—although there is also some evidence that neither philosophy has been very successful in this latter role. All four philosophers, for example, speak disparagingly of their own country’s national standards or national curricula as technical-rationalist conceptions that reduce music education to mere objectives (Elliott 1995, p.245; Regelski 1998, p.52; Swanwick, 1999, p.99). Elliott is somewhat equivocal about the work of schools generally, and at least one music educator (Roberts 1995) has used Praxial philosophy to argue for a de-schooling of music education.

From another viewpoint, the four thinkers are drawn together by a penchant for considering music education philosophically. That is, it is assumed that the goals and purposes of music education can or should be grounded philosophically and related to idealistic concepts. Both Praxial and Aesthetic philosophers of music education locate the basis for their philosophies in psychological and philosophical concepts rather than the practices of music educators. There is no good reason why this needs to be done. Elliott, in particular, argues for a view of music as multicultural social practice arising from human activity (Elliott 1995, Chapter 8). This conception of music can be extended to include music education as both a musical practice and a human activity.

The philosophical approach, which is to build up an argument deductively with recourse to ideas borrowed from science, other areas of philosophy, sociology or psychology, produces layers of meaning which are essentially unstable and
questionable because they weave together disparate ideas that were never intended to be linked. This instability is obvious in David Elliott's consistent targeting of the basis of Aesthetic Education in the theories of Susanne Langer. In focussing on this as a weak point, he has been able to call into question the entire philosophy for which Langer's ideas provide only a partial basis. While almost any idea can be asserted and found to be supported by other logically argued ideas, this does not make them correct, verifiable or relevant.

The same caveat holds true for Praxial philosophy. David Elliott's *Music Matters* is an impressive intellectual achievement in that it marshals an extensive range of ideas and concepts in support of its argument. However, the resulting web of ideas and concepts is both a strength and a weakness. It is a strength in that it builds an argument on many foundations from many different branches of thinking. Therefore, if one concept can later be discredited, there is another waiting to fulfil the same function in the argument. The weakness in Praxial philosophy remains the philosophical procedure that also characterises the writings of Aesthetic thinkers. While Praxial philosophy can marshal an impressive array of borrowed ideas from philosophy, sociology, critical theory and psychology, these still remain supporting arguments rather than facts. In David Elliott's work, this is typically presented as,

1. A broad assertion by the author—"Most philosophies and cognitive scientists today deny the dualistic view" (1995, p.85)—which is supported with
2. Reference to a source for the borrowed idea—"Ryle (psychologist) puts it this way..."—and then further supported with
3. Reference to the work of theorists in other fields—"As Saul Ross (philosopher) explains...", 'John Murray agrees...', etc.

These selective utterances remain opinions in support of an assertion. No matter how nested they are, the assertions are usually no more valid or verifiable than those of the opposing viewpoint that are being rejected. There are some limits, then, to the usefulness of the philosophical procedure of discourse construction, inasmuch as it always remains to be tested.
Analysing the philosophies

Overt and covert abilities
Both Praxial and Aesthetic philosophies see music education as developing overt skills and covert personal qualities or experiences. The differences between the two camps amount to disagreement over the means that are most appropriate to developing the covert abilities. This stems from a disagreement over the nature of the relationship between the overt and covert behaviours. The difference is not reducible to a simple Praxial versus Aesthetic approach. An examination of only four different thinkers reveals four different stances on this question. These stances are not in themselves fixed and an examination of texts produced over several decades reveals reformulation and elaboration of personal ideas in ways that do not assist an easy summary. The focus of the following discussion is on the covert aspects of learning and the relationship between covert and overt learning. Because this approaches the debate from a different direction, I have considered it necessary to introduce a second categorical distinction—that of orthodox versus pragmatic standpoints—which provides another way of examining the usefulness of philosophies of music education.

The need for a philosophy
Reimer (1970, p.8) firmly placed the relevance of his philosophy of MEAE in the context of the 1957 Sputnik satellite launch by the USSR which, as he states, caused an upheaval in American education. The effect of this launch was to bring about a deep questioning of the American education system and the apparent lack of academic rigour that would allow other nations to outperform the USA. The solution suggested at the time was that education should focus on a genuine understanding of the major disciplines of human knowledge. Attempts were made at the Yale Summit to consider how the disciplines of knowledge could be better integrated into the education system. This ‘conceptual’ approach, which sought to put students in touch with the deep structures of knowledge, had wide appeal. But, it stumbled at the point of trying to identify these deep structures (Mark 1996, pp.35-36). The 1963 Yale University Seminar on Music Education took up this theme of the need for a
conceptual approach to the study of music. It was seen as a means of addressing the perceived failure of American music education to create a musically literate public that appreciated the great works of art music. While the seminar recognised the high level of performance standards that existed in American schools, colleges and universities, little importance was attached to it (Mark 1996, pp.35-36). The purpose of the philosophy was, therefore, partly located in a need to elevate music education as musical appreciation to the status of a socially worthwhile investment alongside that of mathematics and science education.

The foundations of MFAE lie in the ideas of Suzanne Langer (Langer 1942/1974; Langer 1953) which have informed the work of Bennett Reimer, Keith Swanwick and, initially, Thomas Regelski. Langer (1942) outlined a philosophy of art in which she put forward the theory that individual art works (in all their various forms—music, sculpture, literature, etc.) symbolise human feeling and allow us to experience these feelings and have the ‘nature of feelings’ revealed to us (p.191). Humans can, as a result, learn to understand more about the nature of feeling and ‘grow in their comprehension of the breadth and depth of human subjectivity’ through contact with the great works of art (Reimer 1970, pp.37-39). This gives the arts and learning about them a firm place in the education system as a means for enriching people’s lives through educating them in subjective experience and the human condition (Reimer 1970, p.37).

**Bennett Reimer (orthodox aesthetic philosophy)**

An orthodox aesthetic approach involves the acceptance of the ‘feelings’ basis of all art and the commonality of arts responses. In the 1970 edition of Bennett Reimer’s *A Philosophy of Music Education*, the focus on feeling gave rise to an emphasis on behaviours which indicate evidence of appropriate responses. In the 1989 edition of his work, Reimer focuses more on ‘the enhancement of cognition, of musical intelligence and musical thinking’ so that the multi-arts approach of the 1970 edition is toned down. In both editions, there is a recognition of two possible contexts—the classroom and the bandroom—as the places for experiencing music in school. In the classroom, the focus is on
perceiving and reacting through listening to and creating 'good' music. This focus involves an emphasis on exploratory learning through creative work, listening and performance. In the bandroom, greater emphasis is given to performance which is 'intensive and selective'. But, this greater emphasis on performance needs to be balanced by an attention to providing experiences that are genuinely musical rather than just technical. It must 'engage students in creative decision-making, focus on performance over technical development and needs to maintain skills, understanding and creative decision-making in optimal balance' (Reimer 1989, pp.190-192).

Reimer (1970) suggests the development of seven modes or behaviours as the means for music education, although these operate at different levels. The behaviour of valuing music (judging, finding satisfaction in, identifying with) is a general goal or long-term objective that cannot be immediately assessed or evaluated. In this respect, valuing music always remains a long-term and covert outcome and it must be served by two medium-term aims which are the outcomes of instruction—a heightened ability to perceive music and a heightened ability to respond or react to music. Reacting or responding cannot be taught, inspected or tested and, in this respect, also remains a covert process that cannot be accessed objectively. Perception, however, can be taught because it can be conceptualised. Aesthetic Education therefore focuses on developing perception through the four means or behaviours of creating, conceptualising, analysing and evaluating.

It is the four means that are the most problematic aspect of Reimer's theory. These were originally aesthetic behaviours that related to all arts (1970, Chapter 10). As such, they do not relate specifically to any particular art form and have no specifically musical translations. While the roles of creator, recreator and experience, which do have easily identifiable musical equivalences, are mentioned (1970, p.153) these tend to be ignored in favour of a focus on general behaviour types. In the 1989 edition, the behaviours become modes or ways of interacting with music but they remain fairly abstract. It is not evident that analysing, evaluating or conceptualising are actually ways in which people do normally interact with music. Consequently, while Reimer's theory can crowd
the quite distinct roles of composer and performer into one category of 'creating', it is not clear in what way conceptualising, analysing and evaluating can be separated into distinct behaviours. Reimer, himself, is unclear on this point as he says that analysis is a mode of conceptualising (1989, p.170).

From a teacher's point-of-view these distinctions between covert processes is problematic. Reimer treats as interchangeable processes (an improvisation or learning a musical instrument) and products (a composition or a performance) that would typically be considered quite distinct and which are the most overt demonstrations of musical learning. It makes distinctions between the intangible processes of analysing, evaluating or conceptualising without being able to adequately define the distinctions. The theory ultimately places a very heavy emphasis on thought processes and leads to Reimer having to emphasize verbalisation about music as a primary outcome. It also has the effect of suggesting some sort of dualism where what musicians or students do is different from what they think.

In the Silver Burdett textbook series (Crook, Reimer et al. 1974), Bennett Reimer moves beyond the philosophical to focus on the practices with which to accomplish the objectives of perceiving and responding through the development of the seven behaviours. These practices are presented as sequential activities involving singing, moving, playing, creating and listening. Thus, there is a practical model which sits beside the philosophy and which partly overcomes some of the confusion over modes or behaviours. This practical model relates only to the general classroom. Although the 1984 edition of Reimer's Philosophy of Music Education gives a much better discussion of the instrumental programme as Aesthetic Education, it is evident across a range of texts that Aesthetic Education is essentially a philosophy of music education that grows out of the model of the general music classroom. This context is adapted to provide a universal model or philosophy of music education. This is evident in the problematising of technical skill and band programs that emphasize performance as product (Reimer 1989 pp.194-200). Aesthetic Education more readily reflects the exploratory character of the general music class where skill development is possible only in a very limited way. Even
within this, the limit of Bennett Reimer’s philosophy lies in the degree to which it is possible to assess the success of what is happening. In focusing on the education of feeling and the abilities to analyse, value or conceptualise, there is a focus on covert processes and outcomes that are largely invisible to the teacher.

Keith Swanwick (pragmatic aesthetic)
Swanwick (1979) draws on Suzanne Langer’s conception of music as a symbolic form of feeling as well as Leonard B. Meyer’s conception of musical meaning as residing in expectation and fulfilment. He is also influenced by Bennett Reimer’s original 1970 edition of *A Philosophy of Music Education*. For Swanwick, ‘peak experience’ or ‘aesthetic experience’ is reached only when a work relates to ‘structures of individual experience’ (1979, p.36). This is a ‘eureka experience’ that connects music with ‘traces of past events’.

Experiencing music as the listener involves both cognitive and affective response – a recognition of the gestures; a recognition of the concept of norms in which the gestures work; expectations about how these might operate in every individual work; and, a connecting of the experience of the work with personal experience to produce a change of ‘cognitive perspective’. Music is a way of knowing the world and our experience of it by identifying both a ‘meaning-to-us’ and the ‘meaning-for-us’ (1979, p.31). ‘It is a way of knowing the affective and knowing through feeling’ (1979, pp.38-39).

Helping students towards a perspective on the ‘life of feeling’ is the role of music education. Emotions are presented in music for us to understand. Human development proceeds out of an ability to re-order and restructure experience by relating new experience to past experience. Musical experiences are related to our own traces of felt-experience and have the power to inform them. Thus, learning about music is a process making sense of many random experiences with the intention that this process will move them toward the aesthetic or peak experience. The teacher should promote musical experience through direct involvement—composition, audition and performance.
Audition is responsive listening directed toward music and requires understanding, empathy and intimate response. This is a concept of listening that is strongly paralleled in the writings of both Regelski and Elliott. Skill acquisition and literature studies (verbal knowledge about music) remain secondary. The combination of composition, audition and performance with subsidiary learning in skill acquisition and literature studies produces Swanwick's C(L)A(S)P model in which all five approaches to music education should be related and kept in balance around a musical object. We can only directly work with music through composition, audition and performance and the purpose of these tasks is to discover meaning in the music (understanding or cognition) and a personal meaning (aesthetic or affective). Teachers cannot work directly with developing students' personal meanings so they must focus on the building of musical understanding through composition, audition and performance (1979, p.54) as forms of exploration and acquisition.

Swanwick is not specific about the context of his model. He says that it is appropriate generally but the exploration model would suggest the general classroom rather than the instrumental programme, as much instrumental teaching tends to fall under the category of skill acquisition. Swanwick has explored in more detail the nature of musical meaning and aesthetics in publications from 1994 and 1999 and has expanded his ideas in terms of the notion of 'discourse' which he defines as a system of shared meaning within which we negotiate to find new meanings. This is essentially linked with the exploratory character of the C(L)A(S)P model that allows students to become cultural interpreters. By focussing specifically on the overt means of musical experience—creating, performing and listening, Swanwick is able to avoid the problems of dualism where a teacher would have to make some evaluation not only of what students do but also guess what covert processes have gone into the doing of it. This does not mean that he does not believe that there are two aspects only that the covert aspect is not, and should not, be available for scrutiny (1979, p.54).

**Discipline-Based Art Education**

Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE) and its musical descendent Discipline-
Based Music Education (DBME) is a discourse of Aesthetic Education that has had wide acceptance in the United States as a model for art and music appreciation (Delacruz and Dunn 1996, p.71). DBME aims to 'produce adults who are knowledgeable about art and its production and responsive to the aesthetic properties of works of art and other objects' and it is again strongly related to the aesthetic ideas of Suzanne Langer (Greer 1984, p.212). The success of DBAE came about largely through the financial support of the John Paul Getty Trust. This trust maintains large art collections and museums to house them as well as the Getty Center for Education in the Arts which provides funds to programmes that educate the public about art. DBAE develops the skills of art appreciation through knowledge of history, the principles of art criticism and aesthetics. In schools, this is usually at the expense of practice because the programme has been developed in line with the needs of museums for appreciative audiences. For schools and school funding agencies, the attraction of DBAE has been that it is designed as a package that non-specialist teachers can learn and use in the classroom. It obviates the need for specialist teachers and facilities (Kern 1984, p.219). Discipline-Based Music Education has been promoted for the same reasons and has been presented as a solution to declining levels of funding for music education in schools. By focussing on the non-practical aspects of music history, criticism and aesthetics, it is intended to strengthen the credentials of music as an intellectual discipline and establish parity with other academic subjects (Patchen 1996, p.19-20). This obviously has some similarities with Reimer's motives in developing his philosophy. DBAE and DBME are less ambitious in their expectations of aesthetic development than either Reimer or Swanwick. The goals of both are the 'guiding image of the informed adult' with a 'sophisticated understanding of the arts' (Greer 1984, p.215-6). In this respect, it offers a softer interpretation of Aesthetic Education but with little concern for practice or performance.

David Elliott (orthodox praxial)
In *Music Matters* (1995), David Elliott outlines an alternative philosophy of music and music education. He locates the need for this in the fading relevance of both aesthetics as a field of study and Aesthetic Education as a model for music education (pp.29-38). Although Elliott does not go into this in detail,
there is some evidence to suggest that Aesthetic Education had reached the limits of ‘transformation’ (Foucault 1972, p.190). That is, MEAE was no longer offering a viable discourse for music education. Kern (1984) had been involved in a large-scale programme to promote Aesthetic Education to schools. He reported that, in spite of being well funded and staffed as well as carefully planned, MEAE programmes made little impact on the practices of teachers. Madeja (1986) was involved in the same MEAE programme and reported how it faced significant resistance from teachers, administrators and parents. In its most recently developed form as DBAE/DBME, MEAE has been offered as an antidote to the condition of reduced funding and resourcing rather than as a well-argued philosophy.

For David Elliott, music making is essentially singing or playing as ‘a matter of musical knowledge-in-action or musicianship’ (1995, p.72). Musicianship is extended to include composing, improvising, arranging and conducting. Music education becomes education in musicianship and involves active music making in a ‘practicum’ environment. This requires progressive problem identification and problem solving and the music teacher takes on the role of mentor, coach or expert modeller. This Praxial approach requires teachers to analyse what apprentice practitioners are ‘thinking-in- action’ (p.75). Listening is important only for its ability to inform practice and it takes place within the context of the practicum in order to inform creation or performance. However, listening can only really develop meaningfully when it can be related to an understanding of musicianship as a reflective practitioner and it is not regarded by Elliott as a useful activity apart from this.

The immediately attractive aspect of David Elliott’s philosophy is that it appears to focus on the concrete products or demonstrable abilities of practice. In doing so, Elliott overcomes the problem that Bennett Reimer created by emphasizing behaviours that have no obvious outward appearance. However, Elliott does not leave it there. He locates the true worth of music education in the same types of abstract concepts and covert processes that Reimer also emphasizes. Practical musical experiences are valuable because they could lead to ‘self-growth’, ‘self-knowledge’ and enjoyment or ‘flow’. Students who learn to make music
according to artistic criteria can achieve an 'internal good' of 'a certain kind of life' which develops self-esteem (Elliott 1995, p.180). This would appear to parallel Swanwick's aim of developing personal meanings.

Elliott (1995, pp.181, 260) suggests that the 'certain kind of life' is viable for all students and that all music programmes should share the aims of providing this 'certain kind of life' by providing musical challenges and the musicianship to meet these challenges. It should also be said that Elliott does not believe that all band or choral programmes necessarily meet his Praxial criteria (1995, pp.271-272). Authentic musical performing and artistic musical listening within a reflexive musical practicum is required rather than a simplistic 'sound production' programme. Clearly, the distinction is in the response of students and the internal 'good' that is provided by the programme. But this is an abstract, covert quality which is on a par with 'reacting' or 'responding' in MEAE. Several commentators (Koopman 1998, Panaitioti 2000) have noted the similarity between Elliott's borrowed concept of 'flow' and 'aesthetic experience'. Elliott acknowledges that Csiksentmihalyi, the originator of the concept of 'flow', makes no distinction between 'flow' and aesthetic experience, although Elliott disagrees with this. In any case, there is no doubt that 'flow' and 'aesthetic experience' are equally invisible, unpredictable and metaphysical. Flow is not an experience confined to musical engagement or learning but can probably be obtained from art, doing mathematics, writing essays or riding a bike, among other things. As with aesthetic experience, it could happen while you are watching a sunset and, as such, remains an entirely covert and unpredictable experience. Teachers will consequently find it difficult to plan for either flow or aesthetic experience. Elliott makes no real attempt to explain in what way 'flow', as a key element in his philosophy, can be planned for, identified or assessed. As such, there remains the same dualism between observable action and the inner experience that characterises Reimer's philosophy.

In a more recent publication (2000), Elliott gives greater attention to the significance of the affective responses in music. Musical enjoyment is the immediate motivation or reward of 'musicing' or music listening done well and
is the feeling of what happens when we engage effectively with music as maker or listener. It requires a combination of attention, emotion, cognition, memory and intention as a complex ‘inner happening’. This complex ‘inner happening’ involves the ‘self’ becoming more differentiated, individuated and integrated. Music engages us because of the personal meanings we find in it and which we connect to an ‘ongoing narrative’ which we all have (p.84). The depth and power of musical experience is partly a function of how well it allows us to make known to ourselves personal and social meanings. This definition of the affective nature of musical response has strong parallels with Keith Swanwick’s (1979) concept of ‘the structures of individual experience’. Although these concepts are borrowed from psychology and cultural studies rather than from aesthetics, they are no less abstract and place focus on qualitics and experiences which are always going to be invisible. Again, there is no real indication as to how certainly these qualities or experiences will arise. The practical application of ‘inner happenings’ remains mysterious.

The efficacy of the Praxial philosophy inevitably rests on its ability to define how this emphasis actually plays out in the school situation so that ‘sound production’ programmes can be turned into reflexive musical practicums. Elliott’s ‘apprenticeship’ model (1995, pp.270-271) is essentially that of the individual learner in the instrumental or band programme which he then develops into a philosophy for all music education. The issue for teachers will be how to successfully apply a one-to-one model of learning with a class group of twenty-five or more students and still retain the practicum character. Even with the skills of composing, arranging and conducting, it is not always obvious how the learning contexts for these can be developed in the school situation for all students. David Elliott is often vague about whether he is proposing a philosophy of developmental music education for ‘all music students’ (the phrase most frequently used) or for ‘all students’ (less frequently used).

**Regelski (pragmatic praxial)**

Thomas Regelski has written extensively in the last few years on the Praxial basis for music education. His books on music education (1975, 1981) predate the formulation of these Praxial ideas. His 1975 book, *Principles and problems*
of music education, draws heavily on Suzanne Langer’s theories of mind and feeling but there are common threads running through many of his writings up to the present day. In Principles and problems of music education, Regelski stated that learning music must involve direct experience with music as sound (p.9). This should take place as a problem-solving process (pp.70-71) that leads to some observable behaviour. However, observable behaviours should only be treated as cues to the covert responses or behaviours which are the real goals of music education. Like Swanwick (1979), Regelski (1975, p.159) recognises that the dilemma for teachers is that artistic impulse and response cannot be easily equated with overt acts even though the overt acts are the teacher’s only means for evaluating learning.

In Regelski’s 1981 book, Teaching General Music, his ideas are extended into a concept of ‘action learning’ that involves educational experiences that ‘closely duplicate real life experiences’ (p.17). In the case of music education, it involves the student in actions where ‘the mind reaches out and acts on the music in coming to know it’ (p.16). Musical actions are the result of both covert and overt responses as goal-directed, purposeful behaviours (p.352). Learning activities must consequently provide the occasion for acting upon or acting with musical knowledge and skill. This can take place through listening, performing or creative work, and Regelski places a particular emphasis on directed and intentional listening as the most ‘realistic and universally applicable of Action Learning goals’ (p.252). However, listening remains the area of musical involvement where verbalisation must be used as an indicator of personal response and, in this respect, Regelski does not move far from Bennett Reimer’s aesthetic approach.

If the experience of music in Action Learning is paramount, it must have quality to it. Playing or singing must have feeling to be invested with meaning and the discovery of meaning or personal relevance through exploration of all the musical experiences of listening, performing and creating is the goal of music education. This search for meaning characteristics, or should characterise, all education because of its ability to provide aesthetic experience or peak experiences—‘intense moments when we feel most alive, most unique and most
fulfilled’ (p.343). In this case, the term ‘aesthetic’ is borrowed from psychologist Abraham Maslow rather than from Langer. It also has strong similarities with Swanwick’s use of the same terms. In order for music education in the general classroom to realise this aesthetic experience, it should not put a premium on the acquisition of skills which students do not recognise or accept as important. It should attend to the needs and characteristics of individual students, in order to provide challenges that are appropriate to their level of musical readiness. Ultimately, it is the experience and the response that is important (or the experience of the response). The teacher’s role is to provide the experience to which the student will respond with covert processes and overt actions. Cumulative overt actions need to be taken as an indication of covert changes taking place in students and ultimately the focus must fall on these overt actions. These may take the form of enjoyment, willingness and cooperation by students in class as an indication of the valuing they are finding in music. As with Keith Swanwick, this emphasis on experience and action goes some way toward avoiding the problem of having to locate the more intangible indicators of quality.

In recent years, Regelski has explored philosophical questions in more depth. In a 1998 article, he links his use of the term ‘action learning’ to the Aristotelian concept of praxis which he explores in some detail. Praxis is distinguished from theoria, which is abstract and exists in the mind, and from technē, which is practical knowledge that produces overt and ‘good’ results. Praxis is also practical knowledge but it involves personal values and the outcomes are covert or are unpredictable. Praxis is not amenable to standardisation, or to formulaic or methodical delineation. It involves technical knowledge and theoretical understanding applied appropriately or creatively to various specific situations in order to produce the ‘right’ or ‘good’ results. The process and outcomes of praxis are unique and unpredictable in every case.

In the context of music, praxis arises from function. Praxis—the ‘right’ results—only arises when emphasis is placed on function, purpose or goal achievement where this is creation or performance in a particular context towards a specific end. The end need not be the standard of professional
performance but can be that of the amateur music maker. It is the existence of a ‘use-value’ in any study that is the central and defining element of praxis. The implications for music education are that all forms of doing music—listening, performance and composition—can and should be involved in the teaching programme. The purpose of music education is to extend ‘choices and capacities for musical agency beyond what would have been possible without the formal instruction’ (p.45). This involves teaching effectively and pragmatically so that praxis—the joy of doing music—is developed in students. These ‘goods’ remain the affective and subjective meanings that arise in connection with intention (2001, p.71). The degree to which Regelski’s latter interest in Aristotelian philosophy can be related to the earlier concern for the feelings basis of music is not always clear, and the concept of ‘good’ or ‘right’ will always remain a slippery one. The more philosophical emphasis, then, does not contribute a great deal to the concept of Action Learning, other than to define Praxial music education in a more pragmatic sense by reducing the emphasis that Elliott gives to ‘excellence’ (Elliott 1995, p.69) and by providing a more significant role for listening.

Conclusion

The above survey of Praxial and Aesthetic philosophies suggests that they are characterised by considerable overlap and borrowing from similar sources for similar purposes. In terms of the wider discourse of music education, neither Aesthetic nor Praxial philosophy can easily account for all the practices of the field. In fact, they can be seen to be complementary. Aesthetic philosophy regards the general classroom as normative and so skill development is not a priority within the large group teaching that characterises this context. Praxial philosophy regards the individual and small group teaching of the band programme as normative and is able to give greater emphasis to the skill development that is possible in this context. Neither philosophy is easily able to account for the practices of music education where the contexts are reversed.

The philosophical differences between the authors I have considered are just as great in terms of their adherence to a philosophical orthodoxy or philosophical
pragmatism. An orthodox philosophy of music education, represented by both Reimer and Elliott, places its foundations in the biological or psychological development of the child. As a result, the basic object of music education is not so much music as it is the appropriate development of the person. Music functions more as a procedure by which appropriate covert states are achieved and the same covert experiences would necessarily have to be identified and evaluated by teachers for the relevant philosophy to be considered implemented. It is this identification that provides a stumbling block for both philosophies. In Aesthetic philosophy, it has the effect of throwing emphasis back onto the non-musical expression—words, written descriptions, notated responses—for which it has been frequently criticised. In Praxial philosophy, there is no documented way in which 'flow' can be identified and so there is no way in which teachers could determine whether their music programmes are producing it and therefore living up to the ideals of the philosophy. One can argue, then, that flow and aesthetic experience are equally impractical goals for music education.

A pragmatic approach to music education does not deny the significance of the abstract and ineffable. It just has the good sense to leave it in the background and avoid the dualism between observable action and the accompanying mental process. This is not to deny that both exist. However, it is not possible to assess mental processes independently of action. The object of a pragmatic music education philosophy is music itself and the procedures by which music is studied are the social practices of music—listening, composition and performance. This places greater emphasis on observable activity and ability which, regardless of its form, provides a less elusive measure of success. A pragmatic approach can also incorporate affective outcomes more effectively where these are restricted to the expression of experiences such as enjoyment or engagement rather than more abstract ones of flow or aesthetic experience.

Praxial philosophy’s conception of music and music education as a social practice retains some promise. In particular, Regelski’s Aristotelian concept of praxis as theoretically-informed practice leading to effective results in some ways parallels Foucault’s concept of discourse as a theoretically-informed practice applied in specific contexts for particular purposes (Foucault 1972,
p.54). It would suggest an equal status for practice alongside theory. Unfortunately, Regelski has tended to concentrate on *theoria* rather than *praxis*.

In recognising music education as a social practice, there is an implicit recognition that philosophy needs to move beyond theory into the wider discourse of music education as practice. In Chapter Twelve of *Music Matters*, David Elliott suggests that schools will need to change in order to properly accommodate the requirements of a Praxial education but the details of these changes are not spelt out. It is suggested that they would be far-reaching. As a philosophy of music education explicated essentially in the context of school, much more attention needs to be paid to the actual practicalities of implementing Praxial approaches in schools as they exist. That is, we need to focus on the *praxis*, or ‘good’ results or theoretically informed *techne*, of the Praxial approach rather than the *theoria*. Elliott suggests improvement in the practices of music education can come about through improvements to teacher training and in-service training based on exemplary models of music education-in-action which will also require identifying and replicating excellent music education curricula. As yet there appears to have been little actual movement in this direction.

The limits of both Aesthetic and Praxial approaches to music education are that they tend to ignore the practice or issues of practical application in favour of abstract theorising. In Foucault’s concept of discourse, theory and practice are inexorably linked—theory always guides practice and practice informs and renews theory. By itself, philosophical theorising remains incomplete as long as it is untested in practice. Ultimately, the value of a philosophy will be its implementability—its ability to inform and guide practice in delivering better outcomes. Although it will be shown that Aesthetic Education theory has successfully informed arts education practice in Australia, it will also be shown that this theory has limited practical application and that it produces vague and immeasurable goals in its focus on the covert biological or psychological development of the child.
Elective Research Study Two—
The death of the teacher
_or Constructing the Australian musical child

Introduction

The principles of Aesthetic Education heavily influenced the development of the _Statement on the Arts for Australian Schools_ (Curriculum Corporation 1994a) (the national _Statement_) and _The Arts—a Curriculum Profile for Australian Schools_ (Curriculum Corporation 1994b) (the national _Profile_). In particular, it was the idea of the developing covert abilities and understandings in the form of ‘feelings’ that was taken up as the central purpose of the Arts. In this Elective Research Study, I examine how the idea of aesthetic development has been developed and disseminated in Australia and the problems this has produced in curriculum documents for the Arts.

The last decade of the twentieth century saw Australian Commonwealth and state governments invest considerable resources in the area of curriculum development and reform at the level of compulsory schooling. Initiated at the Commonwealth level during Australia’s Bicentennial year (1988) by the then Minister for Education and Training, John Dawkins, the development of a national or common curriculum was identified as the key that would allow education to participate in the Government’s plans for economic restructuring (Dawkins 1989). The Dawkins Statement became an initial step in what was a five-year process of investigation, discussion and policy development carried out through the Australian Education Council (AEC) and its sub-committees. This council, which was created under the auspices of the Federal Department of Education, Employment and Training, consisted of ministers, directors-general and senior officers from each of the federal and state ministries of education.

The process of consulting upon and developing curriculum frameworks for eight different learning areas (subjects or groupings of common subjects) was a lengthy one and not without controversy (Marsh 1994, Ellerton and Clements 1995, Piper 1997). It culminated in 1994 with the publication of a separate
Statement and Profile for each of the eight Key Learning Areas or KLAs—English, Mathematics, Science, The Arts, Technology, Health and Human Development, Studies of Society and Environment, and Languages other than English. These documents were published in spite of the breakdown of cooperation that had taken place during 1993 AEC meetings and in spite of the failure of the AEC to actually endorse them as a common or national curriculum framework. While the Statements and Profiles remain without specific status as educational documents, it is apparent that they have had significant impact on both the approach to curriculum development and the curriculum model that has been adopted by many states. Each state has typically developed over many years its own strategies and processes for implementing curriculum frameworks and materials. But as will be shown, the Statement and Profiles have significantly influenced the way in which we understand curriculum and, subsequently, learning in the school setting, at least at the level of government or bureaucratic formulation.

Although the development process that produced the KLA Statements and Profiles drew considerable interest and attention from commentators and academics, the documents themselves have not been extensively critiqued. Their adoption and implementation into state curriculum frameworks has not been followed with the same interest shown in the development process. This is in spite of the fact that Victoria and the ACT, for example, both implemented new curriculum frameworks in 1995 based on the national documents (Victorian Board of Studies 1995; ACT Department of Education and Training 1994). These frameworks retain the Profiles largely intact, and an examination of their usage would provide the basis for an evaluation of the effectiveness of the process of centralising curriculum development for delivering change. Victoria has since reviewed its first adaptation and implemented the Curriculum and Standards Framework II (CSFII) in 2000 (Victorian Board of Studies 2000). Western Australia implemented its state framework (Western Australia 1998) modelled on the Profile approach in 1998 after having trialled the original Statements and Profiles in schools since their publication in 1994 (Loken 1997). South Australia adopted the Statements and Profiles in their published form as the basis for curriculum development from 1994 and later developed its own
framework based on the *Profile* approach (South Australia 2000). New South Wales undertook an extensive review of the *Statements* and *Profiles* in 1995 (Elkins in Lokan 1997) and has since published a range curriculum materials, including those for music, cross-referenced to the *Profile* outcomes (NSW Board of Studies 1994; NSW Board of Studies 1995). A cursory examination of curriculum materials from around Australia shows that, within this extensive activity in curriculum review and publication, the view of knowledge originally developed and presented in the *Statements* and *Profiles* remains influential and largely unquestioned. This is in spite of the fact that many of its ideas would appear to be unverified or not validated by any other source than the *Statements* and *Profiles* themselves. Reviews or redrafting of the *Profile* that have been carried out with the expressed purpose of clarification or simplification (Victorian Board of Studies 1999, p.2) have more often had the effect of simply adding a new layer of discourse that cements previous assumptions into place as ‘facts’.

The aim of this study is to analyse the different ways in which Australian state curricula have conceptualised music education since the publication of the *Statement on the Arts for Australian Schools* (Curriculum Corporation 1994a) and *The Arts—a Curriculum Profile for Australian Schools* (Curriculum Corporation 1994b). As I will demonstrate, it is clear that the view of learning, or perhaps more specifically, the view of musical knowledge presented in many state curriculum frameworks draws directly and often uncritically from the *Statement* and the *Profile* and their particular interpretation of MEAE. I will argue that, in these documents, a concept of aesthetic development is melded with a form of outcome-based education to produce vague and often impractical learning objectives. Many questionable assumptions and assertions are presented and treated as normative. Taken as a body of literature, it is possible to identify the development of a discourse of musicality or artistry that seems to have little grounding in the practices of music education or in social musical practices. Nevertheless, it is a discourse that is increasingly being adopted as the basis for music education around Australia.
Research procedure

Curriculum frameworks or syllabi for primary and secondary school music education or arts education were collected from around Australia. At the time of writing, some of these documents were available in published form and some were available only in electronic form via the Internet. Documents that were considered relevant were not just the final published form of the curriculum framework or syllabus but any draft version that was also available. These were particularly relevant for states such as South Australia and Queensland which were undertaking curriculum review and were making draft framework documents available for public comment. Examination of these drafts has the power to reveal how thinking in music education is changing and being changed to fit particular purposes or theoretical conceptions of the field. Document analysis therefore focussed on the ‘archaeological’ approach derived from the ideas of Michel Foucault (Foucault 1972) which were also used in Elective Research Study One. This analytical procedure traces the formulation and derivation of ideas with the purpose of locating the foundations on which they are based.

Archaeology of discourse

Foucault’s analytical approach, as used in The Order of Discourse (1970) and Archaeology of Knowledge (1972), is again adopted as a means of examining the way in which what is presented as fundamental concepts of music education are developed and given status. Foucault suggests that specific concepts may take on a greater or lesser importance within the discourse of a field as its intentions or purposes change. These shifts do not represent an ordered, rational improvement to a field in which theoretical notions are gradually being refined and perfected. Rather, Foucault (1972, p.42) suggests that the way in which concepts are defined and used is often governed by a system of social practices (he calls them discursive rules) that assign meaning, function and value to these concepts.

While presenting themselves as representations of ‘truth’, discourses are in fact not as fixed or as stable as they appear. Foucault’s procedure of an ‘archaeology’ or, later on, a ‘genealogy’ of knowledge, examines the way in
which knowledge develops not in a logical and smooth progression but through breaks, interruptions and changes of direction that subsequently redefine concepts and understanding, redirect our attention and establish new methods and intentions. His ideas provide us with a basis for analysing and critiquing our current representations of music education.

Document analysis as archacology becomes a procedure by which curriculum materials are examined to reveal discontinuity, disagreement or diversity of opinion rather than conformity and continuity (Foucault 1972, p.205). It also shows how ideas are exchanged, rejected, reformulated or invalidated in the exchange of different writings. In Elective Research Study One, I examined the concepts and procedures of music education philosophy. In the present study, I examine the various transformations of a basic set of concepts in a collection of curriculum documents developed by Australian governments. I look at the way in which a discourse of music education derives and develops new ideas from within itself.

**Applying archacology as discourse analysis**

Foucault has said that his archaological method is not a scientific technique but more of a line of attack for examining theories (Foucault 1972, p.206). He has suggested four directions from which a discourse might be examined or tested. Although these lines of attack are not used systematically in this research, each of the following procedures is drawn upon in examining Australian curriculum documents:

1. Apparently similar objects, conceptualisations or procedures may have derived from quite different sources or theoretical underpinnings (Foucault 1972, p.40). Therefore, an examination of the theories and ideas that underpin a discourse of music education forms a starting point for analysis. Music education as an object in the national *Statement* and the national *Profile* is shown to combine separate conceptions of music and of education into an apparent unity. I will provide an analysis of the separate discourses of music (as aesthetic experience) and education to show how two incompatible ideas are combined into a unity in one specific case.
2. Discourses involve sets of rules or procedures for the formation of concepts and discourses. However, it is not usually possible to establish a fixed set of rules. So, the conception of the object can be shown to vary considerably over time or between places (Foucault 1972, p.36). Therefore, one looks for discrepancies in the conception of the object. In this study, the conception of music education developed in the national *Profile* is contrasted with another state, New South Wales, where different conceptions of both music and education are combined into a different unity. The rules available for the formation of a discourse can be seen to be loose and open to question.

3. It is the organisation of statements or ideas within a discourse that establishes their status as significant ideas (Foucault 1972, p.37-8). It is not so much a matter of what you say as how you say it and ideas become important because they lend themselves to a particular form of theoretical organisation. Therefore, it is possible to look at the way in which a discourse is organised or structured as a basic means of attaining the status of a discourse. In this study, I examine the way in which music education is conceptualised as a structure involving a certain combination of abilities with various gradations developing over time. The conceptualisation of music education in terms of this tabular structure becomes a central feature of curriculum development in many Australian states. The tabular structure attains a significance quite independent of the content within it. It is the tabular structure that gives meaning to and validates the ideas presented within it.

4. Statements emanating from the same time and place do not remain fixed but evolve over time so that the object is gradually reconceptualised (Foucault 1972, p.38). In this study, I examine the way in which an initial conceptualisation of music education at the national level gives rise to various transformations and variations at state level. This shows how some ideas are retained and others are dropped, how certain procedures are retained even where the expectations are changed, and how concepts attain a normative status if only temporarily.
Archaeology of a discourse for music education

The national Statement for the Arts
This analysis begins with the two national documents on music education—the Statement and the Profile. While these documents did not attain the status of being a national curriculum for the arts, it was the intention that they should do so. Consequently, they have been influential in determining the form and direction of curriculum formulation in many states.

The Statement on the Arts is a separate document to the Profile. The purpose of the Statement is to ‘provide a framework for curriculum development by education systems and schools’ (p.III) while the Profile is designed to assist in the improvement of teaching and learning, and to provide a common language for reporting student achievement. It is not clear why these should exist separately. It has resulted in some discrepancies when the documents have been used by state governments. Only one state—South Australia—explicitly based its curriculum on the Statement, while at least one other—Victoria—bases it primarily on the Profile.

The Statement on the Arts recognises five basic art forms—dance, drama, media, music and visual arts. Each art form is described in terms of a similar structure and a similar set of outcomes. In focussing on the similarities rather than the differences between art forms, it is apparent from the outset that this document adopts an orthodox discourse of Aesthetic Education (Statement, p.6). This discourse is evident in the ‘strands organisers’ or conceptual structures for all arts subjects that the Statement adopts. These are not subject specific but are adapted from the ideas of Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE). DBAE outlines four approaches or disciplines in the study of art—understanding of aesthetics, art criticism, art practice and art history. These disciplines give rise to the conceptual structure outlined in the Australian Statement which joins aesthetics and art criticism into one strand, ‘Art criticism and Aesthetics’ (AC&A), and retains the other two DBAE disciplines as ‘Creating, making and presenting’ (CM&P) and ‘Past and present contexts’ (P&PC). While the three fundamental musical experiences of creation, performance, and listening are
referred to in the *Statement* (such as on p.21) they are not used as organisers. At the same time, strand organisers are not presented as conceptual disciplines in themselves that should be taught in their own right. Otherwise it is not possible that ‘students will be engaged in two or all three strand organisers simultaneously’ (*Statement*, p.22). Rather, they are seen as emphases that should be combined and inform each other as they develop the aesthetic learning in students (*Statement*, p.6).

As indicated in Elective Research Study One, DBAE is an approach to education geared to producing audiences or consumers rather than practitioners. This results in heavy weighting being given to appreciation, or responding to music, over making music. The descriptions or rationale of the three strand organisers often overlap both in purpose and meaning. Therefore, ‘critical and aesthetic response is enhanced through...theoretical and historical research’ while ‘Aesthetic response ... deepens through an awareness of social and historical context’. Such statements support the document’s assertion that two or more strands may be worked in simultaneously but they might also be seen to negate the need for these strand organisers to exist as separate and independent organisers in the curriculum. The processes by which students develop their understanding of AC&L or P&PC is given, in both cases, as through the roles of performers, composers and listeners (p.23). But, in keeping with a hard discourse of Aesthetic Education, skill development in these roles is largely ignored in favour of a focus on the qualitative manner in which these roles are carried out.

Perform with sensitivity and appropriate technique a wide ranging repertoire of songs relevant to their cultural environment and level of maturity.

Perform rhythmic and melodic statements expressively, displaying an understanding of purpose.

Perform complete works as a soloist or member of a vocal or instrumental ensemble, using appropriate techniques and displaying an understanding of the music and their role as performer. (*Curriculum Corporation, 1994a, CM&P, Bands Band C*)

Given that, in MEAE, all types of engagements with music—performing, listening, studying, discussing, evaluating—may lead to an aesthetic experience,
these engagements are also regarded in the Statement and the Profile as essentially equal or interchangeable. This may result, in the Statement, in completely dissimilar activities pointing to a similar outcome, or in apparently similar activities appearing as pointers in different strand organisers:

Perform a diverse range of music in a variety of situations, displaying understanding of the role of the performer in relation to the audience and the style of the work being performed (CM&P Band D);

Analyse and interpret (meaning perform) music from a range of styles and genres, and evaluate the quality of live and recorded performances with regard to their accuracy, style and aesthetic qualities (AC&A Band D);

Perform, analyse and listen critically to works representative of different ethnic and cultural groups, focusing on the work of contemporary composers, performers and conductors (P&PC Band D).

Throughout the Statement, an orthodox discourse of MEAE is most obvious in those pointers which describe suggested student activities or outcomes at each level. There is a tendency to avoid musical terminology, or any art-specific terminology, and to place emphasis on actions or qualities that are intended to point to aesthetic development. In doing so, the Statement tends to suggest that covert processes can be treated as outcomes. Therefore, in Band A of CM&P, it is suggested that *students* ‘Explore and describe…’; ‘Experiment with expressiveness…’; ‘Explore rhythmic patterns in their own world…’; ‘Use and interpret … notation…’. These sorts of behaviours are closely related to the types of behaviours that Reimer (1970, 1989) suggests are indicative of aesthetic engagement or learning. This leads to the drawing of very fine distinctions such as these in Band B of CM&P:

Perform with sensitivity and appropriate technique…;
Perform...expressively, displaying an understanding of purpose…;
Perform... using appropriate technique and displaying an understanding of music and their role as a performer…

It is clear that in the reference to three different types of performance at the same level, the Statement is attempting to highlight aesthetic qualities or characteristics within actions rather than the action itself. The expectation that things should be done with an aesthetic emphasis would also appear to be the
basis of the frequent use that the Statement makes of the word 'analysing' in many of its pointers. Therefore in points such as:

Identify, analyse and describe expressive characteristics...;

Analyse, describe and identify similar and distinguishing characteristics...; or,

Describe, analyse and compare the effects of a work..., the word 'analyse' would appear to be redundant because describing, identifying and comparing would, in themselves, constitute an analysis. The term 'analyse' seems to point to some internal analysis of feeling that is supposed to accompany the other processes.

The Australian Profile for the Arts
The Profile links MEAE to a learning development model based on outcomes (outcome-based education or OBE). This is a completely separate discourse of education and largely unrelated to Aesthetic Education. Where Aesthetic Education focusses on developing covert qualities in students, outcome-based education deals expressly with demonstrable abilities. In attempting to combine these two incompatible discourses, the Profile operates on a basic contradiction where the invisible is considered measurable.

Outcome-based learning
William Spady's lectures on outcome-based education during his 1992 visit to Australia were influential both in the framing of the Statements and Profiles for each subject area and in promoting the cause of outcome-based learning in Australia. Although outcome-based learning is open to a range of interpretations, Spady (1993) has described three forms of outcome-based education: traditional, transitional and transformational.

The 'traditional' form of OBE is consistent with the common practice of teachers in setting subject aims and objectives which specify the precise outcomes of instruction. In traditional outcome-based education, 'the outcomes are synonymous with traditional content-dominated categories' (Spady 1993, p.7). The focus is primarily on skills and competencies and, therefore, on 'micro outcomes'. Traditional outcome-based education is concerned mainly with
students' success in school at the subject or unit level. Typically, the objective is set with reference to the content or purposes of a lesson or unit of work. The outcomes follow as a logical product of teaching. The appellation 'traditional' would suggest that this form of OBE has wide currency in existing educational practice.

At the other end of the scale, 'transformational' OBE is the product of school and community working together to set goals that will endure long after schooling has finished. Transformational outcome-based education is future-oriented and focuses on life-long adaptive capacities. It aims to focus on 'broad role performance capacities of young people and their ability to do complex studies in real settings, real situations relating more directly to life' (Spady 1993, p.12). Most of Spady's discussion uses the term 'outcome-based education' to mean transformational outcome-based education. These are often referred to as 'life-skills' and would be demonstrated and used throughout a person's life. The Key Competencies (Mayer 1992) or the Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century (Ministerial Council on Employment 1999) might be considered to be a set of transformational outcomes (Cumming 1998, p.10). The process of developing transformational goals could take place at the school level where students and parents work with teachers to define them or it can be applied more broadly to include input from community stakeholders such as government, business or community groups. A key feature is that it must involve consultation, support and dedication from all parties involved—teachers, parents, students, community stakeholders. Transformational outcomes typically refer to desirable personal characteristics and not to subject knowledge. Consequently, the outcomes are specified first and the objectives and content of teaching and learning are then developed in order to produce the desired outcome.

Traditional and transformational forms of OBE are not mutually exclusive but the difference between them amounts to a different understanding of the word 'outcome'. Brady (1996) suggests that the attraction of outcomes is that they provides a 'means of system accountability because they are overt, observable and therefore assessable indicators of student achievement'. It is apparent that
this definition is suitable for traditional forms where a teacher can develop mechanisms for observing or measuring student achievement. It is much more difficult to determine whether an outcome such as ‘have qualities of self-confidence, optimism, high self-esteem, and a commitment to personal excellence as a basis for their potential life roles as family, community and workforce members’ (Ministerial Council on Employment 1999) is or is not being achieved. The demonstration of such an outcome can only be expected to take place after schooling and the qualities of self-confidence, optimism and self-esteem are not easily measurable.

In between these two extremes stands ‘Transitional’ OBE (Spady 1993). Transitional outcome-based education focuses on extending learning to higher order competencies—critical thinking, problem solving, effective communication. ‘There is a different conception of what is an outcome’ (p.8). The outcome is concerned with what is most essential for students to know and be like at graduation from school (p.8). Willis and Kissane (1997) suggest that this is the form of outcome-based education most likely to be embodied in the *Profiles*. These types of outcomes focus on the end products of schooling or significant stages within schooling and they reflect the key ‘knowledge, competencies or orientations’ (Willis and Kissane 1997, p.13) that students should be achieving. Given that transitional outcomes are to be achieved over two or three years, they are usually few in number and broad in their aims.

The *Profiles* for Australian Schools are an attempt to define programme level or transitional outcomes that mark the paths of students learning across all the years of schooling in most subject areas. An important aspect of describing programme level outcomes progressively is that they are supposed to highlight what should be changing in students’ thinking over their time at school. One of the difficulties in this process is that it often merely degenerates into unstructured lists of traditional outcomes with a resulting lack of clarity of focus (Willis and Kissane 1997, p.20). Griffin (1994) has suggested that a process based in the realities of classroom practice can produce programme-level outcomes in the form of developmental benchmarks consistent with what students actually do. However, this is not the process that was followed in the
development of the national Profiles or its various genealogical derivatives in Australian state curriculum documents. Rather, the Profiles represent a hypothesised developmental process that has largely been written in abstract and linked, in the case of The Arts, to a contentious conception of MEAE.

Some basic incompatibilities arise from the fact that there are at least three possible definitions of an outcome and they are linked specifically to aesthetic development. An outcome can mean the transitional form of culminating capabilities, or personal characteristics, or it could be the traditional form of subject-based knowledge. The Profile and to a large degree, the Statement, consistently focus on the transitional form which describes learning progress in terms of student capabilities. But in the context of the Arts, these are covert qualities or processes rather than the overt and observable indicators that Brady (1997) suggests.

Describing teaching and describing learning in the Profile
The Profile maps student development in eight stages of transitional outcomes or student characteristics. This gives rise to a separation between ‘learning outcomes’ (Profile) and ‘what might be taught to achieve these outcomes’ (Statement). It is difficult to locate the relationship between these two things in these documents. As a result, learning is hardly ever described in terms of something that is taught. Rather, learning is presented as a characteristic of the age-group that the Profile is describing. There is no clear link between the descriptions made in the Statement and the outcomes described in the Profile. None of the pointers in the Statement are repeated in the Profile or can be easily related to the pointers associated with outcomes for each of the Profile’s levels. The Profile also splits the ‘Creating, making and presenting’ (CM&P) of the Statement into three strand organisers each with its own set of outcomes. These strand organisers are Exploring and Developing Ideas (EDI), Using skills techniques and processes (USTP) and Presenting (P). What is more problematic about the Profile, however, is that its descriptions of outcomes at each level tend to have the same open-ended character as the Band descriptions of the Statement. Therefore, we are told that at Level Four, around Grade 5 or 6, a student is able to:
Experiment with ideas and explores feelings to find satisfactory solutions to music studies;
Select, combine and manipulate silences using a range of skills, techniques and processes;
Draw upon a range of skills to present musical works for a variety of audiences and purposes;
Talk and write informally about personal observations of musical works'; and,
Identify distinguishing features of musical works that locate them in a particular time, place or culture. (Statement, pp.96-98)

Although these outcomes are still at a level of generality to be considered long-term goals, they are referring to a developmental learning period of only about eighteen months. They also refer to 'satisfactory solutions', 'a range of skills, techniques and processes' and 'distinguishing features' without stating what these might be. Fortunately, each outcome has its own set of pointers that are intended to provide an indication of when such outcomes are being met. The status of these descriptions vis-à-vis similar pointers given in the Statement is unclear, although the Profile pointers have more of the character of a description of a teaching programme and, in this sense, appear to render the Statements redundant. It is also apparent that the activities are still described in terms of something students simply 'do' not something they learn or are taught to do. Therefore, a student might demonstrate completion of the outcome in which s/he 'experiments with ideas and explores feelings to find satisfactory solutions to studies' when s/he 'improvises and composes short instrumental and vocal musical works exploring different aspects of tonality, texture and form' (Profile, p.96). But, it is not stated what the teaching and learning paths are that enable students to do this nor what aspects of tonality, texture and form are to be explored or how.

What then, in the first instance, do the Statement and Profile say about musical knowledge? It is primarily about exploring and experimenting which is also apparently innate and brought forth, not learned or taught. The teacher does not really appear in either the Statement or the Profile but neither does the intention or requirement to learn. It is as if the student arrives ready-formed after having initiated his or her own processes of experimenting and exploring.
Music education as feelings education

In the Statement and the Profile, the term ‘aesthetic’ is interpreted as referring to emotions or ‘feelings’ which are treated very much as concrete phenomena that can be used, expressed and explained (Statement, pp.3-6). This focus has the effect, in many of the Profile’s outcomes, of requiring teachers to assess covert processes for which there are no assessment criteria (we should remember that outcomes are there to be assessed, presumably by a teacher). Therefore at Level Three, the outcome for the Exploring and Developing Ideas strand organiser is ‘Explores ideas and feelings through creating and making music’ (p.58). This is distinguished from Level Four in the same strand organiser which expects an outcome of ‘Experiments with ideas and explores feelings to find satisfactory solutions to ideas’ (p.76). It could be argued that the difference between exploring and experimenting is indistinguishable. At least, it is not defined in the document. When abstract aesthetic outcomes are linked to outcome-based education, it requires teachers to assess the invisible. When this is further linked to a developmental model of learning stages and strands, it results in a lack of direction and clear goals for the teacher.

Summary

It is evident that the national documents blend a range of theories and practices in an uneasy alliance. An essential contradiction lies in the expectation that the covert processes that are the primary concern of MEAF are treated as measurable qualities or artefacts. Music education is conceptualised as a programme of aesthetic development in which teachers assess developing student characteristics according to a smooth model of personal growth. It would appear that teaching is incidental to this growth and that it is primarily an emotional growth that is being assessed. At the same time, the Profile has great difficulty in distinguishing the stages in this growth or in relating the relevance of specific musical concepts and skills to the developmental learning model. It would be difficult to actually use the Profile to plan or assess music education programmes because there is no clear relationship set out between what is to be achieved and what is to be taught.
Competing discourses of music education

Although five years were spent developing the Statement and Profile at a national level, this did not suspend the curriculum development activities of the individual states during this period. The alternative approach to providing a framework, adopted in New South Wales, Queensland and Tasmania, is to provide syllabi which detail the themes or topics, content to be covered and a grading system that determines how the subject will be studied and assessed. The New South Wales 7-10 music syllabus (NSW Board of Studies 1994) is of this nature. What is interesting about this document and the support materials that accompany it (NSW Board of Studies 1992; NSW Board of Studies 1996) is that they not only straddle the period of the formation of the Statement and Profile but often use similar concepts in a different way. As a syllabus that antedates the publication of the national Statement and Profile for the Arts, the New South Wales music syllabus makes some reference to it but also clearly retains its own structure and concepts that differ significantly from those of the Profile. As such, it provides us with an example of a theoretical option.

New South Wales

New South Wales had been the first state to actually implement an outcome-based approach in the writing of its curriculum materials and had developed sets of outcomes for all of its syllabi over the period of 1991 to 1993 (Eltis in Lokan 1997, p.83). This programme took place independently of the development of the national Statements and Profiles at the national level and also predates their use of outcome-based learning (Marsh 1994, p.48). The resulting subject outcomes for creative arts (NSW Board of Studies 1992) are of a qualitatively different nature to the Arts outcomes of the national Profile, and they provide us with an alternative reading both of the concept of an outcome and of its application. The most significant difference between the two is that the New South Wales outcomes make no attempt to present a model of linear development based on age (Eltis in Lokan 1997, p.83). Instead, they are traditional outcomes that directly relate to what must be taught and they clearly distinguish between knowledge, skills, and values and attitudes. As in the Profile, separate outcomes are given for each subject (music, dance, visual arts and drama) but they are discipline-based in the sense that they recognise that
certain skills or types of knowledge are specific to each subject. Four types of skills are identified for music—performance, creation, aural skills and notational skills. Aesthetic Education is not evident either in the categories of learning or in the types of knowledge that are emphasised. Knowledge in the NSW syllabus is seen as relating to knowledge of performance repertoire and concepts, knowledge of compositional techniques, knowledge of musical style gained through listening, as are values and attitudes which are defined as ‘developing confidence and sensitivity in the use of music’ (NSW Board of Studies 1992). Outcomes are specified directly in relation to these skills and knowledge objectives so that the relationships between the intentions of teaching and the outcomes of learning are clearly drawn. This relationship is clearly evident also in the use of the future imperative tense in both the objective,

As a result of their participation in musical activities in performing, composing and listening, students will,
1. perform as a means of
   - self-expression
   - interpreting musical sounds
   - developing musical skills,

and the associated outcomes:

Students will be able to,
- perform in a wide range of styles
- perform rhythmic and melodic ostinati
- improvise rhythm and melodic patterns
- etc. (7 pointers in total).
(NSW Board of Studies 1992)

The New South Wales model of an outcome-based framework allows us to reinterpret the meaning of the national Profile and to identify the flaw in its definition of concepts. In NSW, an outcome is comparable with Spady’s (1993) definition of a traditional outcome—one linked to a unit or course of study. The relationship drawn in the New South Wales syllabus between objectives and outcomes has similarities to the outcomes and pointers in the Profile. A statement such as ‘Draw upon a range of skills to present art works for a variety of audiences and purposes’ (Profile, p.8) makes more sense if it is read as an objective rather than an outcome, even in the absence of the use of the future tense. This means that pointers should provide the function of traditional
outcomes as they do in the New South Wales syllabus. As instances of observable behaviour, the pointers in both have a much closer character to that usually given for educational outcomes. As used in the Profile, the specified outcomes rarely have the character of being observable which is presumably why pointers were deemed necessary. In the Profile, however, pointers are only advisory—‘evident when students, for example’—and they do not discriminate between different disciplinary skills. Therefore, pointers to a single Profile outcome may involve performance, improvisation, composing or even listening as the demonstration of the same outcome (as in Profile outcomes 5.17 and 6.17). In effect, it can be argued that the national Profile is an outcome-based framework without outcomes, or without specific outcomes, in the way that the New South Wales document outlines them.

A second qualitative difference between the two sets of outcomes lies in the different definitions the two imply of learning development. The Profile aims to map learning development over eleven or more years of schooling. Its manner of describing this development in terms of what students do at different stages (either Bands or Levels) suggests strongly that learning comes about as a natural unfolding of cognitive development. The New South Wales outcomes are not intended to be developmental but they do distinguish between levels of ability that can be developed over time and through specific types of learning programmes. The performance outcome detailed above is for a non-elective (or general or compulsory) music programme. Separate sets of objectives and outcomes are specified for elective programmes (or specialist programmes incorporating instrumental learning) where more time and different types of skills are developed. This recognises the relationship between learning and the teaching programme within which it takes shape and sees development in terms of a greater range and quality of things learned rather than a cognitive unfolding. Therefore, the performance outcome for an elective course retains basically the same skill objectives but builds on to them. The outcome ‘developing musical skills’ becomes ‘developing musical skills in a variety of styles’ and a fourth objective is added—‘demonstrate developing notational skills’. Outcomes are significantly more difficult because they assume the developing ability to read and play music on an instrument.
- develop a repertoire and perform in various styles
- improvise in various styles
- critically appraises own performance in terms of overall style, phrasing, role within ensemble, intonation
- interpret musical notation
- etc. (a total of 9).
(NSW Board of Studies 1992)

It is apparent that the same indicators are used in the Profile to point to increased ability—ability to read music, increasing development of repertoire (such as in pointers to Profile outcomes 4.18 and 5.18)—but these are associated with learning levels not with programme involvement.

In spite of having developed its own sets of outcomes only shortly prior to the publication of the national Statement and Profile, the New South Wales Board of Studies incorporated the Profile outcomes rather than its own outcomes into the 1994 Music 7-10 syllabus (NSW Board of Studies 1994). This results in some disjuncture between the objectives of the syllabus and the outcomes taken from the Profile. It is apparent that the objectives of the Creative Arts outcomes for music have been revised and attempts made to equate them with the Profile strand organisers. Performing, composing and listening which were the foundation of the objectives in the 1992 outcomes are retained as the three ‘learning experiences’. They are associated with the Profile as performing (Creating, Making and Presenting strand organiser), composing (Creating, Making and Presenting strand organiser) and listening (Art Criticism and Aesthetics, and Past and Present Contexts strand organisers). A table summarising Profile outcomes for Levels Four to Eight in each of the three strand organisers appears but no attempt is made to link these to the rest of the syllabus. Most of the NSW syllabus (pp.6-17) is concerned with outlining musical concepts to be covered in the content (pitch, duration, etc), the three types of learning experiences and the distinctions to be made within them for the ‘mandatory’ and ‘additional’ study courses, and the content or musical periods and styles to be studied. Although there is a statement which requires that assessment must show how the student has ‘achieved the outcomes of the syllabus in each of the learning experiences’ (p.18), it does not elaborate on how the Profile outcomes relate directly to the learning experience of listening,
composing and performing. The New South Wales syllabus also leaves open the relationship between its mandatory and additional courses and the Profile levels, stating only that most students in the mandatory course will achieve outcomes at 'levels four and five', and in the additional course at 'level six with a smaller percentage at level seven or eight' (p.1).

In 1995, the New South Wales government initiated a review of the progress of implementation of the Profile and its outcomes (the Eltis Review). The submission of the Board of Studies to this review noted the difficulties it had had aligning Profile outcomes to its own syllabi (Eltis in Lokan 1997, p.84). Among the findings of this review was the lack of consistent definition and usage of basic terms which contradicted definitions outlined in the Board of Studies own curriculum outcomes (Eltis in Lokan 1997, p.92). The review subsequently recommended suspending the use of the Profile outcomes for use in New South Wales Schools, although it was positive in its endorsement of using outcomes in curriculum documents based on the model of its earlier syllabus review.

**Summary**

New South Wales curriculum documents present a quite different conceptualisation of music education to that of the national Profile. Learning is directly related to a teaching programme and that programme focusses on musical skills and knowledge rather than emotional growth or feelings education. When attempts were made to link this learning model to the abstract developmental model of the Profile, it was considered unsuccessful and the process was abandoned. The focus on traditional or subject-level outcomes was retained. Thus, even though the NSW curriculum is nominally an outcome-based framework for music education, as is the Profile, the two documents are qualitatively different and represent quite distinct conceptualisations of the object of music education. In the Profile, the object of music education is development of feelings and responses while in the NSW curriculum, the object of music education is musical skill and knowledge.
Disseminating the ideas of the *Statements and Profiles*

Only one state, South Australia, actually chose to make use of the national publications as the basis for curriculum planning in schools. However, the model of a centrally-developed curriculum framework in which knowledge is offered as something that can be condensed, tabulated and measured held attractions for many states. It is the structural model rather than the content it organises that has become a fixed feature of Australian education to the present day. Although it is not possible to examine all the curriculum products produced around Australia, the documents from three Australian states demonstrate how the framework model begins to dominate curriculum production. Drafts and revisions show the difficulty curriculum writers have in fitting the content to the model. It also shows how the concept of an outcome gradually changes or expands over a relatively short period of time.

**Victoria**

At about the same time that the New South Wales’ Eltis Review was evaluating the use of *Profile* outcomes in New South Wales, the Victorian government was releasing its own *Curriculum and Standards Framework (CSF)* (Victorian Board of Studies 1995). A consultation draft had been released in July 1994 (Victorian Board of Studies 1994), and the revised draft was approved for publication after two months of consultation and two months of rewriting. Both the consultation draft and the final published *CSF* adopted the national *Profile* almost literally, with only a few additions or excisions. The *CSF* retains the eight KLAs used in the *Statement and Profile*. Levels Seven and Eight are collapsed into one level—Level Seven. Graphic Communication is added to the five Arts strands or subjects. But otherwise, the strands, substrands or strand organisers and many pointers are as they appear in the *Profile*.

What distinguishes the *CSF* from the national documents is that the *CSF* is essentially a rewriting of the *Profile* and largely ignores the *Statement*. Remembering that the original purpose of the *Statement* was to ‘define the learning area and describe a sequence for developing knowledge and skills’, the *CSF* turns the *Profile* outcomes into a definition of the learning area by prefacing each of the seven levels with a ‘Curriculum Focus’. In writing
curriculum focus statements for seven different levels, the developers had the
difficult task of deciding how to divide up the descriptions of the four bands of
the Statement. Each of the eight Profile levels is also prefaced by a ‘statement’,
but it is not clear what the status of these statements is in relation to the national
Statement. In the end, the Curriculum Focus descriptions for each of the
substrands in each level of the CSF appear as original contributions on the part
of the Victorian writers. They have adopted the same discursive approach to
describing substrands and their parts as does the national Statement. That is,
they describe each in terms of something students ‘do’:

Students create and make music, using their voices, instruments and
objects to learn about sound and its expressive qualities. They explore
sound patterns and create their own rhythmic and melodic patterns in
response to stimulate...

(CSF-The Arts, Music Level Two-EDI).

Some of these types of statements are traceable to the Statement descriptions but
the CSF gives a much more detailed description of the child because there are
generally four or more sentences for each of the five outcomes in each level.
Some of them (unlike the national Statement) involve ‘learning’ but often they
are a result of things students just ‘do’. This level of detail, presented in terms of
a portrait of the child should clearly distinguish the curriculum aims of each
level. It actually results in vagueness where the writers have attempted to isolate
and elucidate personal characteristics that define the level. Therefore, in EDI at
Level One, students ‘explore sound patterns in words and movements and create
their own rhythmic and melodic patterns. Students use sound patterns in
response to stimuli’. At Level Two, they ‘explore sound patterns and create their
own rhythmic and melodic patterns in response to stimuli such as songs,
movements, etc.’ which seems to be the same thing.

Another significant difference between the CSF and the Profile is the attempt to
clarify the intent of the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes in the CSF are
expressed as future states and they appear, for example, as ‘at the completion of
level 3, a student will be able to explore ideas and feelings through creating and
making music’ (Victorian Board of Studies 1995, p.91). This, in part, resolves
the problem that the Profile had of appearing to merely describe normative
behaviour rather than the outcomes of education. But, it does not really resolve
the problem that there is no specific action or product that can be specifically
associated with this type of outcome for us to judge whether it is being
achieved. Outcomes still appear more like educational objectives than outcomes
related to objectives. The associated pointers, which are often expanded
versions of those in the national Profiles, are still in the form of advice (‘for
example’).

The development of the CSF suggests that the writers had some difficulty in
understanding how to use the categories and levels of development set out in the
Statement and Profile and how to elaborate upon them to create a portrait of the
child for Victorian usage. The Victorian Department of Education decided to
revise the CSF and in May 1999 published a Consultation Draft for CSFII
(Victorian Board of Studies 1999). A key feature of this was ‘a simpler clearer
design..., a reduction in the number of strands, substrands and outcomes, a
stronger linkage between the CSF and the stages of schooling’ (Victorian Board
of Studies 1999, p.2). The CSFII abandons the bands of the Statement in favour
of three stages of schooling defined as Prep to Year Four, Years Five to Eight,
and Years Nine to Ten. It also specifies six levels of achievement: Level One—
to the end of prep; Level Two—Years One and Two; Level Three—Years Three
and Four; Level Four—Years Five and Six; Level Five—Years Seven and
Eight; Level Six—Years Nine and Ten. In support of a simpler clearer design,
CSFII abandons the three (or five depending on interpretation) substrands in the
Profile and CSF and substitutes two—‘Arts practice’ and ‘Responding to the
arts’. For Levels One to Three, it recognises only the distinction between Visual
Arts and Performing Arts as strands and specifies two outcomes for each
Level—one in ‘Arts practice’ and one in ‘Responding to the arts’. At Levels
Four to Six, individual disciplines become strands which are described in terms
of two outcomes each for ‘Arts practice’ and ‘Responding to the arts’.

The contentious issue in CSFII is still the definition of an outcome. Nominaly,
there are two or four numbered outcomes for each level. CSFII returns to the
Profile model of describing outcomes in terms of something students do rather
than will do which had been a revision incorporated into CSFI:

At Level 3, a student is able to.
3.1 Make and present performing arts works using a range of performing arts elements, skills, techniques and processes. (CSFII, p.27)

This is accompanied, as was each outcome in CSFI, with a collection of dot points or pointers. In CSFII, the dot points are now mandatory:

- The student is evident when the student is able to
- select, organise and combine....
- use a range of...
- develop ...
- plan and present... (CSFII—The Arts, p.27)

This confusion over what constitutes an outcome relates back to the blurred definition that the Profile had originally provided of an ‘outcome’ and which is now carried through into CSFI and CSFII. Each dot point and each part of each dot point becomes a separate outcome in CSFII by virtue of the fact that it is expressed as something that students can (and, therefore, must be able to) do to satisfy Outcome 3.1. In this case, it results in five separate outcomes that must be demonstrated so that Outcome 3.1 can be deemed satisfied. If the structure of CSFII makes it look like an originally conceived curriculum framework, it is, in fact, more true that many of the procedures first established in the national Statement and national Profile, like the misconceived understanding of an outcome, linger on. The curriculum foci given for each subject at each level are largely taken from CSFI with the three curriculum foci for ‘Exploring and developing ideas’, USTP and P being combined fairly literally to create a curriculum focus for ‘Arts practice’. ACA and PPC are combined to produce ‘Responding to the arts’. This provides us with quite an extensive range of statements about what students do at each level. At Level Four (Years 5 and 6), for example, this amounts to some twenty-four features or separate sentences which include the ability to ‘explore feelings and understandings of a range of issues by manipulating the expressive qualities of sound...’ as well as ‘applying their knowledge of known and created scales, rhythm, patterns, metres and tone colours including electronic sounds, expression and form’ (CSFII—The Arts, p.14).

While the curriculum focus statements appear exhaustive in their description of the student, they also often resort to vagueness when describing what should be actually learnt or taught. They often refer to ‘specific techniques’, ‘appropriate
phrasing and expression', 'acquired techniques' or just 'techniques', 'skills' and 'processes' without elaboration as to what these arc. This is particularly problematic when these statements form the basis of an outcome that must be assessed. The term 'skills, techniques and processes', which originated as a collective term that defined a substrand in the Profile, is treated in the CSF as something specific. This can be seen, for example, when the term appears in the outcome as 'plan and present performances...using a range of performing arts elements, skills, techniques and processes' (CSFI—The Arts, p.27). The references to 'skills, techniques and processes' permeate The Arts KLA framework. The student begins by exploring a range of them at Level One, developing them at Level Two, selecting and using them at Level Three, further developing them at Level Four by applying the techniques to the skills, applying them in four different ways at Level Five, and it culminates with the student demonstrating them in a stylistically appropriate manner at Level Six. At no point does any actual explanation appear as to what the skills, techniques and processes are. It is apparent that the Victorian teenager knows what these are because the curriculum focus says,

Students create, perform and interpret instrumental and/or vocal works in a range of styles, demonstrating increased technical ability. They demonstrate an aesthetic understanding in their compositions and performances by combining their knowledge of music elements, skills and processes into a holistic form. (CSFI—The Arts, p.68)

The main difference between CSFI and CSFII is that the curriculum focus now forms the basis for the outcome and so operates more closely along the lines of an educational objective. This also tends to underline the nature of the pointers as separate outcomes that relate to these objectives. In effect, the CSFII significantly increases the number of separate outcomes that teachers must assess.

Summary
The successive redrafting in Victoria of ideas originating in the national Profile shows two things. The basic principles of Aesthetic Education and Outcome-based learning are accepted and many of the same concepts are adopted directly from one document to the other. The organising model of the table becomes the means by which knowledge is structured and validated. At the same time,
categories, stages and key terms are reorganised, adjusted or given new meanings. The adjustments often demonstrate a lack of understanding or clarity about the original meaning or purpose of the category, stage or term and it is not evident that the changes provide for a better understanding. In the case of a basic concept such as that of an outcome, the definition is becomingly increasingly confused.

**Western Australia**

While Victoria has been particularly active in promoting the ideas initiated by the *Statement* and *Profiles*, other states have been more circumspect. In Western Australia, the Department of Education undertook five years of trialling, review, professional development and redrafting (Randall in Lokan 1997, p.2) before publishing its own *Curriculum Framework* (Western Australia 1998). On first inspection, this framework seems to represent a complete rewriting of the standards in the national *Statement* and *Profile* while retaining some of their basic principles. The framework consists of a learning area statement which is published separately from the arts learning outcomes. The learning outcomes are organised into four strands and nine levels covering kindergarten to the end of Year 12. The four strands have some similarities to the three or five strands of the *Profile*. ‘Responding to, reflecting on and evaluating the arts’ can be related to the *Profile* sub-strand ACA while ‘Understanding the role of the arts in society’ is comparable to PPC. The two other strands—‘Using Arts skills, techniques, technologies and processes’ and ‘Communicating Arts ideas’—clearly link with USTP and EDI from the *Profile*, while the P sub-strand of the *Profile* has been incorporated into ‘Understanding arts skills, techniques, technologies and processes’.

The Western Australian *Curriculum Framework Arts Statement* (Western Australia 1998) appears to retain little of the original national *Statement*. It is structured in a similar way consisting of a general definition of the arts, a description of the strands, descriptions of the scope of each art form and bands of development but retains none of the same content. Like the national *Statement*, the Western Australian Arts Statement describes learning in terms of four phases of development (early childhood, middle childhood, early
adolescence and late adolescence) largely equivalent in definition to the four bands of A (lower primary), B (upper primary), C (Years 7 to 10) and D (Years 11 to 12) given in the Statement. It is in these descriptions that some attempt is made to explain basic terms including the elusive ‘skills, techniques and processes’. In its descriptions of each art form, key activities, elements, skills and processes are defined. In music, the key activities are creation, performance and reflection on music. The elements are the elements of music—pitch, duration, timbre, etc. Explanation of skills is limited to a statement that students use those of ‘listening, moving, singing, playing, improvise, composing, interpreting, arranging and using new technologies’ (p.13). Although the description of the phases of development might have been expected to elaborate more on the different ways in which these skills might be developed at each stage, the Western Australian document adopts the approach characteristic of the national Statement of describing the character of students. Although the work of teachers is recognised a little more through reference to their ‘guiding or advisory roles’ (pp.17-18), the Western Australia document typically provides broad and occasionally fatuous statements about the developmental processes of students. This can be traced in the way development is linked to the use of skills and processes over the four phases:

- Students use skills, techniques and processes to make and communicate meaning to suit their own interests and development (Early childhood);
- Students now begin to show proficiency in using more complex art skills, techniques and processes (Middle childhood);
- Students continue to develop an increasing understanding and control of skills, techniques and processes. (Early adolescence);
- They can work with more complex ideas, choose projects that involve more sustained and refined skills and technical elements and use more difficult and complex processes (Late adolescence). (Western Australia 1998, pp.16-19)

The outcome statements provide little assistance in clarifying our understanding of students’ learning or by providing direction for teaching and planning.

Each of the outcomes for each strand at each level comes with its own elaboration in which students’ behaviours are further described, and some attempt is made to distinguish between the different levels. But, because the West Australian Arts Outcome statements are generic outcomes, there is no
distinction made between different art forms. The elaboration statements include some reference to activities that might be undertaken in a specific art form but these are brief. In their generic nature, they are clearly modelled on the Profile which begins with generic outcome statements and modifies them to make them discipline specific. Although the Profile and Western Australian framework outcomes are never exactly the same, it is often not apparent what is being attempted in the rephrasing except to make the statement less succinct. Thus, the Profile outcome at Level One of ‘Using skills, techniques and processes’—’Uses basic elements of the arts and explores them in making art works’ (p.8)—is probably comparable with the Western Australian outcome of ‘Uses basic elements of auditory, visual, tactile and or kinaesthetic experiences to experiment and develop basic techniques in and across the art forms’, except that the latter appears at foundation or kindergarten level in Western Australia.

At Level Four, the two frameworks correlate more precisely—

Selects, combines and manipulates Arts elements using a range of skills, techniques and processes (Profile)

Selects from a range of skills, techniques and processes, manipulates them and uses appropriate technology and arts languages to complete given studies in satisfying ways (Western Australia) —

except that the Western Australian document introduces some value judgements to be made as part of the outcome assessment.

Typically, Western Australian outcomes are longer and more complex than those of the Profile and they have the effect of actually making an outcome statement involve two or more outcomes that teachers need to evaluate. This can be particularly difficult when there is reference to covert processes, as in Level One of ‘Responding, reflecting on and evaluating the arts’ which requires that a student ‘Engages with and makes simple personal responses to own art works and activities and those of others and understands that there may be a range of different responses’. The teacher, presumably, must make an evaluation as to whether an engagement has taken place in several different cases (own art works and those of others) and determine whether the stated response reflects recognition of other possible responses, all of this with regard to a pre-literate child. Arguably, the Western Australian Arts outcomes involve such a complex
level of evaluations and assessments for even the youngest children that they become impossible to use in any meaningful way. An outcome such as 'Values and uses ideas and imagination as well as play and sensory experiences as the basis for making and sharing arts activities' ('Communicating Arts Ideas', Level One) requires identification of four different mostly covert features at two different levels and in two different contexts for a five or six year old and represents only one strand in their artistic ability. Clearly, the Western Australian child operates at an almost superhuman level of artistic ability from an early age.

**Summary**

Like Victoria, the Western Australia curriculum framework adopted the basic principles of aesthetic development, generic arts outcomes and an outcome-based developmental model from the national *Profile*. While adopting these basic concepts, the content of the Western Australian framework is quite original and suggests that development takes place according to a different set of levels and categories. Outcomes within levels and categories are generally more complicated and indicate higher levels of achievement than those set at the national level. This raises the question of what the outcomes represent. There is an implication in the language that what is being presented is normative growth or development independent of teaching. However, it is apparent that this is different in Western Australia from both Victoria and to the national average represented in the *Profile*.

**South Australia**

Following the publication of the national *Statements* and *Profiles* in 1994, the South Australian government made them available to South Australian schools as resources for curriculum planning and evaluation. The *Statement* was promoted as the basis for curriculum planning making South Australia the only state to actually use the *Statement* in its intended manner (Stehn in Lokan 1997, p.180). The Department of Education and Children’s Services did not publish any South Australian version of the *Statement* and *Profile* but chose instead to support their implementation by providing case studies and guidelines showing how schools might use them.
In November 1999, however, the South Australian Department of Education released a Preliminary consultation draft of its new South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework (SACSAF) which included a framework for The Arts (South Australia 1999). This was the first of three published drafts of the SACSAF. The Trialling Draft (South Australia 2000a) appeared in March 2000 and the final draft (South Australia 2000b) appeared in December 2000. Like the West Australian Arts Framework, the SACSAF for the Arts is a generic framework in which outcomes are specified in terms of a generic form of ‘arts’ rather than the individual disciplines. The SACSAF also clearly derives its basic structure from the national Statement and Profile. Its three strands line up with those of the Profile—‘Arts Practice’ (CMP), ‘Art analysis and response’ (ACA) and ‘Arts in contexts’ (PPC). Beyond these surface similarities, however, very little of the legacy of the national Profile is retained. The content is entirely different and the regular redrafting of the SACSAF over the period of a year entirely changed the document several times. Attempting to follow the changes in the SACSAF for the Arts is quite difficult and this difficulty underlines the arbitrary nature of a great deal of the outcome setting that forms the basis for curriculum planning in Australia.

The SACSAF Preliminary Draft went further than the Profile in dividing three basic strands into sub-categories. ‘Arts practice’ consisted of four components—‘Exploring, developing and generating ideas’, ‘Using skills, techniques, conventions and technologies’, ‘Designing, making and crafting’, and ‘Presenting’. ‘Art analysis and response’ was also divided into three components—‘Responding’, ‘Reflecting’, and ‘Evaluating’, while ‘Arts in context’ had two—‘Historical, cultural and social contexts’, and ‘Range and diversity in the arts through time and place’. This structure gives rise to a total of nine outcomes for each of the six developmental levels of about two school years. Having substantially expanded the number of different components or substrands, it is clear in the general descriptions of each that learning becomes increasingly atomistic and that the writers found it difficult to substantially separate some of the categories. In the strand component ‘Exploring, developing
and generating ideas’, for example, students ‘explore musical ideas by thinking in sound’ and ‘improvise music’, while in ‘Designing, making, crafting’ they, ‘create works that communicate ideas’ and ‘improvise, arrange and compose’. Much of ‘Exploring, developing and generating ideas’ refers to processes which are completely invisible: ‘develop conceptual ideas’, ‘represent ideas, people, feelings and needs’, ‘explore and express personal experiences’, ‘interpret experiences’ and ‘apply imagination and convention’. These are apparently carried out distinctly from the process of composition and performance which are put in the categories of ‘Designing, making, crafting’ and ‘Presenting’.

In the *SACSAF Trialling Draft* released four months later, the nine sub-strands are referred to but not treated as distinct areas of learning. Instead it was decided to have two outcomes for each of the three main strands which link to six key ideas:

Students draw from thought, imagination, data and research, and the examination of social and cultural issues, to demonstrate personal aesthetic preference, and provide imaginative solutions and artistic responses to ideas and issues;

Students develop knowledge of the styles, forms and conventions of each arts form; refine arts skills; apply appropriate techniques; explore, plan, organise and employ both creative and abstract thought in the production of arts works;

Students develop their capacity to interact effectively with people from a diversity of interests and abilities. They learn to work as individuals and as members of production/performance teams and to assume specific roles and responsibilities in the development and production of arts works which achieve particular responses from audiences/viewers;

Students learn to distinguish different genres and styles associated with the different arts forms. They employ processes for analysis and interpretation of style, genre and form of arts works, and communicate both reasoned and personal viewpoints in response to arts works;

Students examine and analyse their knowledge of a wide range of arts works, the arts industry and social influences to understand the impact of these on their own and their peers’ work and that of Australian contemporary artists;

Students investigate the arts practices of a number of cultures across time to develop an understanding and appreciation of the cultural and
global connections which are emerging as a result of social and technological change.
(South Australia 2000)

These give rise to the six Arts outcomes (‘B’ outcomes) at each level which in turn must be linked with six other outcomes (‘A’ outcomes) that relate to one of five Essential Learnings (school-wide or transformational outcomes) of Identity, Thinking, Interdependence, Futures and Communications. There are potentially sixty outcomes that could be assessed at each level although it would not appear that more than twelve are expected. Creating an ‘Arts Practice’ outcome for Level Two would then result in the following example given in the document:

A. AN ESSENTIAL LEARNING.
The student is able to connect past, present and future ideas and events and to plan and take action in relation to social or environmental issues represented as arts works, together with

B. A LEARNING AREA OUTCOME
The Student,
2.1 Uses artistic concepts and skills and cooperates in production/performing groups to create/recreate arts works.’

In the Final Draft of the SACSADF released a further eight months later, the references to the original nine sub-categories are dropped. The five Essential Learnings still operate throughout the curriculum but do not have separate outcomes statements that are to be linked to KLA outcome statements. This means that each level of the Arts now has six outcomes. However, these are not, for the most part, any of the outcomes from the previous two drafts. The outcome above from the Trialling Draft bears no relationship to ‘Arts Practice’ outcomes given for Level Two in the Final Draft:

2.1 Connects real and imagined experiences from the past, present and future, when creating/re-creating arts works within each art form.

2.2 Demonstrates knowledge and skills specific to each arts form. Chooses appropriate techniques and technologies to complete work specific to one arts form or combinations thereof.

While South Australian outcomes avoid the level of complexity of the Western Australian ones, they can be seen to operate at such a generic level that they provide little guidance. They often focus on things about which teachers can have little knowledge such as the ability of students to ‘connect real and

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imagined experiences'. The above standards are supported by pointers giving an indication for each art form of how they might be demonstrated. But as it had been in the national Profile, this is merely a possible indication.

Summary
Following the drafting and redrafting of the SACS_AF reveals the degree to which learning in music education can be turned into an abstract construction apparently unrelated to any practice. There seems to be no reason to assume that the welter of possible outcomes, which often had a life of little more than a few months, were at all based on what students really do in South Australian schools. There is no real reason to assume that the final form of the SACS_AF represents a better or more practical set of standards than the original national Profile. In fact, it would appear that the drafting process went in a full circle to return to a fairly similar structure to the original model while at the same time completely changing the content.

An overview of one Australian discourse of music education
Returning to Foucault's concept of a discourse, what can we say about the character of the Victorian, South Australian and Western Australian frameworks? Looking for the four components of a discourse represented within them brings about some surprising conclusions. Although each framework is nominally about arts and education, the actual object of the discourse is the child or student. In focussing on the student and his/her aesthetic development, it could be argued that these frameworks are child-centred—that is, that they fit education to the needs of the child. However, the role of education in the form of teaching is rarely explicitly stated and these frameworks tend to present learning as something that apparently occurs independently of any human intervention.

The operations appropriate to the object, the child, are largely those that serve to develop the student's aesthetic growth but often it is unclear whether this is applied or unfolds naturally. Various settings such as the art room, music classroom, choir rehearsal, dance, or a room with a television might be an appropriate setting and such settings appear to be interchangeable. Concepts that
frequently arise are those that refer to general processes—use play, make
choices, show personal preferences, creatively solve problems, etc.—rather than
things to be produced. This is particularly problematic when the framework is
linked to outcome assessment which is supposed to focus on demonstrable end-
products.

When comparing the national Statement and Profile and their state-based
descendants with the New South Wales syllabus, it is apparent that there are, at
least, two other theoretical options available. Firstly, it is possible to develop a
discourse of arts education as individual music education, visual arts education,
media arts, etc., frameworks which are quite distinct and unrelated. Secondly, it
is possible to understand developments in learning not as an unfolding process
but as a process that comes about through an intention to focus on specific
ideas, concepts and techniques. While all of these frameworks are notionally
about ‘development’ and ‘outcomes’, it is apparent that there are quite different
definitions available of these concepts and that the operations they involve
differ quite dramatically.

Conclusion
It is clear that the Statements and Profiles have provided a forceful model for
curriculum development in the arts in Australia. Although the literal presence of
the national Profile outcomes have been submerged through successive reviews
and redrafting, many basic principles first apparent in the Statements and Profile
continue to be found in Australian curriculum documents. These can be
summarised as follows.

Outcomes without objectives
The structure of the Statement and Profile, which separated what should be
taught from what should be learned, established a fundamentally flawed
understanding of an educational outcome. In its simplest definition given by
Spady (1993), an outcome resulted from an intention to teach or learn
something specific within a course of instruction. In the Profile, outcomes are
defined without reference to specific objectives or aims. This has the effect of
making them appear as descriptions of cognitive stages. There is clearly an
implication that this refers to normative developmental processes although there is no evidence offered to support this implication. The same model or pattern has been reproduced and refined in curriculum documents in Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia which have expanded the number of outcomes and levels, and the detail with which these cognitive stages and their outcomes are elaborated. At the same time, none of the different frameworks actually agree even on basics. Bands, stages and phases vary in starting and ending points although they are usually four in number. Levels also vary and there is usually little or no explanation of the relationship between bands and levels in any one framework. The relationship between the various developmental stages and the usual year-level structure of teaching and learning that operates in most schools in Australia is also fairly vague. The rationale for ignoring these year level structures is nowhere stated.

**Learning without teaching**
Separating outcomes from specific aims or objectives has the effect of relegating teachers and teaching to bystanders in the educational process. Learning becomes a personal voyage of intellectual and aesthetic discovery. This largely ignores the reality of education in a school context which is social, directed and contingent on the resources available. Most curriculum documents pay lip-service to the fact that schools will use the framework in their own ways but they generally ignore the power of teaching to develop skills in ways quite distinct from the sort of ‘normative’ development implied in the framework. This is problematic because development is presented as something smooth and inevitable. In reality, development of skills is much more stop-start.

The early stages of the development of the *Statements and Profiles* involved a mapping exercise which looked at the teaching of numeracy and mathematics nationally and also looked at the general curriculum nationally (Australian Education Commission 1989a; Australian Education Commission 1989b). This was followed by a mapping of English teaching in each state (Marsh 1994, pp.55-67). It is apparent that the model of literacy and numeracy development, that probably is relatively smooth because it is continuous over the twelve or
thirteen years of schooling, became the developmental model for all subjects. However, it is difficult to draw a parallel between mathematics education and arts education practices in most schools in terms of resources and the forms of delivery devoted to them. An attempt to draw or create some parallel is, in part, the reason why state frameworks refer to ‘arts’ education rather than education in music, drama, etc. In reality, arts programmes are much more dependent on what schools have the resources to offer. While students may have some access to ‘arts’ education in some form over most of their schooling, it is unlikely to be continuous and developmental over the thirteen years. The sort of developmental patterns that are suggested in these frameworks ignore the contingent nature of education in individual subjects such as music, dance, etc. at primary school level, and the largely elective nature of these subjects at secondary level. This is not to say that good arts education programmes do not exist. But, such programmes are more likely to arise because of a school’s commitment to provide teaching time and resources to their development rather than because of the ability of teachers to tap into the individual student’s developmental processes.

**Process without product**

Having separated the outcomes of learning from an intention to learn and learning from teaching, these frameworks focus on the development of the mind. This has the effect of making many ‘outcomes’ invisible and unassessable because teachers are asked to make judgements on the internal workings of the mind. This may be inevitable in any framework of arts education as Aesthetic Education where outcomes are focussed on personal aesthetic responses. Discipline-specific skills such as singing, drawing, dancing, etc. are ignored as the focus is on the feelings expressed within them. However, it is difficult to draw equivalents or make comparison between a charcoal drawing, a performance of ‘When the saints go marching in’, an improvised dance, and so on. There are no criteria available that will allow us to compare the external appearance or products of these activities in order to consider them as evidence of an ‘arts’ process. This is why arts education, in an attempt to locate some common criteria, focuses heavily on supposed processes of the mind that have gone into the production of an art work, rather than the art work itself. It is
difficult to understand what this focus on process rather than demonstrated ability can have for state education planners.

The legacy of the discourse
One of the key features of this study of the current Australian discourse of arts education is the way in which it can ‘take off’ and develop a life of its own, apparently uneffected by the need to prove its truths. Having established some degree of internal consistency, the Statement and Profile for the Arts have clearly had an impact on education that will last into the twenty-first century in Australia. At the same time, it is clear that this influence has never been as a result of the documents ability to successfully meet the original needs for which they were created. The criteria originally put forward as the purposes of a national curriculum—meeting the economic challenge, establishing national consistency and providing measurable standards by which the effectiveness of schools might be assessed (Dawkins 1989)—have subsequently been forgotten as the discourse develops a life of its own. In the various state transformations over the years, the tendency has been to develop and extend the discourse towards greater complexity and subtlety of application. While key concepts and operations are retained, they are elaborated in diverse ways that often make direct comparison and, hence, any idea of consistent understanding difficult.

The often open-ended definition given to terms in any one state (‘skills, techniques and processes’) means that schools and individual teachers may interpret them so freely as to render them meaningless and, therefore, render meaningless any concept of ‘standards’. Curriculum development as a product of the state would appear to have become abstract to the point that it is difficult to relate curriculum materials to what schools actually do or hope to achieve.
Elective Research Study Three—
Achieving outcomes in the music classroom: a case study

Introduction

As shown in Research Study Two, a focus on learning outcomes has been a significant feature of Australian education over the past decade. Outcome specification at the system level has become a standard procedure for curriculum development. Outcome-based education (OBE) promises to be an influential feature of education in Australia in the foreseeable future, with few alternatives apparently being considered as states revise and restructure their curriculum documents.

While state education departments are clearly enthusiastic about the approach of OBE, its effect on the practices of teachers and schools has not been widely investigated. A limited survey of state education departments, schools and teachers was carried out by the Australian Council for Education Research (Iokan 1997) to gauge the take-up of the nationally-published Statements and Profiles in the first two years after their publication. This contrasted the clear commitment and confidence that existed among bureaucrats with the patchy understanding and limited commitment of teachers to the documents. A survey carried out to focus more specifically on teachers’ understanding of the Victorian Curriculum and Standards Framework (CSF) (Owen, Meyer et al. 1996) reinforced this picture. Limited understanding of and commitment to the ideas of the CSF was seen to exist among teachers in a range of school settings.

The reason for this disparity can be traced to the typically grand claims that are made for the benefits of OBE. These have been summarised by Griffin (1998, p.2) who suggests that an outcomes focus produces, amongst other things, 'specific and observable changes in students as they progress along a learning continuum'. He contrasts this with the non-specific, not necessarily discernible or decontextualised objectives that are a feature of traditional teaching and school programmes. Instruction in OBE is focused on 'what the learner needs to learn', and it culminates in a demonstration of 'specified outcomes at pre-
specified levels’. Within this focus on the individual learner and his/her needs, restrictions of time, teacher approach or subject matter need to be removed in order to enable the learner to fulfil his/her own learning objectives. This requires the learner to ‘develop communication, inquiry, conceptualising, reasoning and problem-solving learning skills’ as well as ‘independence and responsibility for self-monitoring’. The image of the independent, self-monitoring learner is contrasted with the content-based programme where learners acquire ‘a fixed body of knowledge transmitted under the control of the teacher’ by ‘following a predetermined course of learning’ that reflects ‘what the teacher is able to and likes to teach’ (Griffin 1998, p.10).

It is no wonder that, phrased in these terms, OBE is being widely seen as the next great advance in education that will deliver previously unattainable transformations in our school students. If it could be shown to be more than simply a collection of ambitious claims, it would certainly merit the present significant investment of energy, resources and time that is being devoted to its implementation in many Australian states. In spite of the investment and the enthusiasm of state administrators, Griffin (1998, p.19) comes to the conclusion that there has been very little success in actually meeting the goals of OBE beyond adopting the rhetoric of reform.

The purpose of this study was to examine some of the difficulties that arose for me as a teacher when having to assess student outcomes in the classroom. It provides one teacher’s perspective on trying to use the CSF outcomes and an outcome-based framework in his own classes in one school. It attempts to look beyond the rhetoric of OBE to consider the impediments to implementation, limited realism and misconceptions that seem to be built into OBE as represented by the CSFI (Victorian Board of Studies 1995) and, now, CSFIi (Victorian Board of Studies 2000) in Victoria.

**Research methodology**

Case study is a qualitative methodology designed to capture the particularity and complexity of specific people or situations (Stake 1995). The roots of case
study as a research methodology lie in ethnographic and sociological fieldwork as well as in history and journalism. It seeks to document and explain human activity in many different contexts. Case study and ethnographic methods may be traced to the work of the Chicago School of Sociology of the 1920s and the anthropological fieldwork of Malinowski (Bresler and Stake 1992).

Stenhouse (1981, p.3) has asserted the need for a ‘contemporary history’ based on case study which will ‘inform educational action’. He distinguishes between educational policy and educational action. Action carries policy into practice but it is also interpreted and involves continual reassessment and judgement. This is essentially the theme of this research task. Important here is the ‘understanding history can give us of the context of action, and of the interplay of action with context’ (p.10). The benefit of case study methodology is that it can give insights into specific actions and situations. It offers an escape from the language of theory, although it may contribute to theory, and it documents normal experiences and practices as the basis for knowledge.

Case studies are typically confined to one setting in order to focus on specific issues in real-life contexts. Case study procedure provides a method for accessing and exploring the aims, rationalisations and understandings that operate in a specific context. It also supports rich descriptions that would be sufficient to allow readers to participate in the verification of the interpretations offered in the reporting (Stake 1978). Because qualitative research focuses in detail on the particular, its conclusions may not be more broadly relevant than one single situation. This is usually acknowledged and accepted by qualitative researchers because the focus on detail and context answers questions of ‘why’ and ‘how’ more effectively. Understanding, with the power to inform future action, rather than explanation is the aim.

**Researching one’s self**

This research falls within the parameters of ethnographic research and, more specifically, of case study research using participant observation. In this Research Study, however, there are some limitations to the methodology that should be noted. The research was carried out on three classes by the class
teacher who attempted to engage in some reflection and analysis of his practice. This is then used by the same teacher/researcher as a standard by which to critique the usefulness and validity of Victorian curriculum documents. Carrying out research on one's own work, and on groups of students closely associated with one's own work, is clearly difficult and raises some important issues. Objectivity is obviously not possible and it can be argued that the conclusions arrived at are not just subjective but that the data and research have been selected or directed to support the views of the researcher. This is partly addressed by making use of a range of data sources including surveys and student work records as well as observation and journal writing so that conclusions are supported by more than just anecdotal evidence. In part, however, subjectivity as a process of individual meaning making is one of the themes of this research.

As shown in Elective Research Studies One and Two, curriculum development is something that is increasingly being carried out in abstract, or away from the classroom, by specialist writers. I have suggested that this has led, in Australia, to some quite obscure and impractical formulations of how music education works or should work. Development of curriculum materials as documents is only a part of the curriculum process. This process must then be completed by the interpretation and delivery in the classroom by many individual teachers. There is some inevitability within this of having to be subjective and of having to make subjective interpretations about how best to apply abstract ideas to real-world situations. Consequently, this piece of research is offered as a documentary representation of the type of subjective decisions that a teacher would have to make. When I make reference to the personal difficulties of having to make interpretations, accepting interpretations or applying interpretations, I am not attempting to reveal personal flaws. I am making the point that such difficulties are inevitable in the curriculum implementation and teaching process. Where I discuss what I see to be the limitations in students' performance or ability to do something, or refer to strictures that limit both the teacher and the student, I am not offering up an admission of failure or a judgement. I am mainly pointing out what I see to be very real limits of any notion of a pure, ideal or objectively-defined educational approach.
This research, then, is a very subjective documentation of the work of one music teacher of some experience (fourteen years in the classroom, three as an instrumental teacher) in an actual school teaching real children. It will be suggested in the conclusion to this study that education can not ever really get beyond this actual subjective situation. At the same time, it may be possible that a more objective research approach—perhaps where I studied another teacher’s classes or had a researcher report on my classes—would reveal answers, alternative interpretations or insights that are hidden to me. I accept that this is possible but, equally, have not been able to find such examples of research available for music education. I offer this research in full cognizance of its subjectivity, recognising that further research by others may reveal its conclusions to be little more than self-justification.

Research procedure
Data for this study was collected by the researcher who was a classroom music teacher in a co-educational secondary school in Melbourne’s north-eastern suburb—North Eastern Secondary College (NESC). The specific data collection took place during 1999—the last year that the first Curriculum and Standards Framework (CSF) was being used. However, I had been teaching at this same school since 1995—the year that the CSF was first published — and so this research reflects the full five-year experience of a teacher attempting to put the CSF into practice.

Six Year Seven classes undertaking compulsory class music taught by the researcher for two periods per week were chosen for study. Three of these classes were full form groups consisting of twenty-five students. The other three classes were composite groups made up of students who did not take instrumental lessons and who were not attending a band rehearsal on Wednesday mornings. Some Year Seven students elected to undertake instrumental lessons and attended a band class one period a week for a whole year as well. No reference is made in this report to work done in these band classes, as they were not a part of my teaching allotment. Those students who did not go to band class were organised into and called “non-band” music
classes. These composite groups (mixed form groups) received practical lessons in keyboard and guitar and did two terms of each instrument in a term-by-term rotation. The non-band classes and the ongoing form groups were the students involved in this research. Data about student choices in instrumental music and organisation of classes was collected at the beginning of the year to provide a situational analysis of music classes at Year Seven in my school. The existence of classes is for the most part ignored in the CSF, but it will become evident that it is a highly influential aspect of how school education works and was particularly complicated in the programme being described.

A range of qualitative and quantitative data was collected over a year using various data collection methods. Quantitative data about students’ prior learning experiences in music education was collected from the three form group classes. These classes included students who were undertaking instrumental lessons and those who were not learning an instrument through the school. This data was collected by a survey consisting of mostly closed questions completed by each student that asked them about the number of years they had received of class and instrumental teaching in music. The analysis involved fairly simple statistical counts and summaries and no attempt has been made to employ more involved quantitative or statistical analysis. Students in non-band music classes maintained a progress log of the practical work they completed in class. The logs for three classes were analysed for progress through self-paced learning modules on keyboard. Again, the analysis was little more than a count and averaging of student performances over a term to identifying where and why progress seemed to change.

Students undertook a range of listening, performance and creative tasks as part of their form group music classes. This is recorded for assessment in a workbook or on tape and the assessments were kept in my teacher’s markbook. All of this data was collected in the classroom under normal classroom situations and for the most part the research project was invisible to students, as assessing students’ work is recognised as a normal aspect of school work. Qualitative data in the form of recordings of student performances in group practical tasks and written responses in workbooks was used to compare actual
student performance against the standards suggested in the CSF for Level Five. As part of the project, I also maintained a teacher's journal which recorded further qualitative data such as personal reflections on students' work, the progress of classes and on problems or issues that arose during the year. These reflections are incorporated into this research report. The research focussed on three basic themes—continuous development; individual learning; and, assessing cognitive ability through observable outcomes.

A review of the theories of learning informing the CSF

Many of the features of OBE identified by Griffin (1998) explicitly or implicitly inform the thinking of the Victorian CSF. The fourteen features are summarised in Table One and are, in turn, Griffin's own summary of the research and writing on OBE. Desired outcomes and assessment points are the bases for the concept of an uninterrupted developmental learning path that is clearly evident in the CSF's specification of the six or more levels that students are expected to progress through and be assessed against. Points 3, 5, 7 and 9 posit the learner as an individual working unfettered by the constraints of teacher demand, peer group involvement or the usual highly structured format of the school day and school term. This is further supported by points 9 and 10 in which the outcome-driven learner develops a range of cognitive skills as well as personal attributes that allow him/her to essentially control and direct his/her own learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components and Change Criteria</th>
<th>Typical of Content-based Programs</th>
<th>Typical of Outcome-based Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Desired Outcomes</td>
<td>Non-specific, not necessarily observable; typically global Statements or lists of decontextualised objectives, transmission of context.</td>
<td>Specific and observable, representing levels of progress on a continuum, changes in the student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Instructional content</td>
<td>Subject matter based</td>
<td>Outcome based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Amount of time provided for instruction</td>
<td>Fixed time units (semester, term)</td>
<td>Learner continues until outcome can be demonstrated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Mode of instruction</td>
<td>Emphasis on teacher as a transmitter of specialised information.</td>
<td>Teacher as a facilitator of learning using a variety of instructional techniques and groups.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Transition from Content to Outcomes (Griffin 1998)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Focus of Instruction</th>
<th>What the teacher is able and likes to teach</th>
<th>What the learner needs to learn to demonstrate outcomes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6. Instructional materials</td>
<td>Narrow source of materials (test or workbooks)</td>
<td>Variety of text, media and real-life materials based on various learning styles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Feedback on learner performance</td>
<td>Delayed feedback</td>
<td>Results reported immediately after performance in understandable terms.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Assessment</td>
<td>Norm referenced assessments based on relative performance of others</td>
<td>Criterion (outcomes) referenced interpretation of assessments indicates progress in terms of outcomes on learning continua.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Exit criteria</td>
<td>Final assessment in grades or percentages</td>
<td>Learner demonstrates the specified outcomes at pre-specified levels on a continuum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Learning emphases</td>
<td>Learner is encouraged to acquire a fixed body of knowledge transmitted under the control of the teacher</td>
<td>Learner needs to develop communication, inquiry, conceptualising, reasoning and problem-solving learning skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Learner responsibility</td>
<td>Learner is responsible for following a predetermined course of learning</td>
<td>Learner needs to develop independence and responsibility for self-monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Context of instruction and assessment</td>
<td>Teaching, learning and assessment are contextualised to the extent where no prediction of learning is possible.</td>
<td>A mix of content and abstract assessments are applied to new and generalised contexts to assist in generalising the student’s performance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Planning</td>
<td>Teaching plans are developed to deliver a body of knowledge.</td>
<td>Plans are developed to achieve an outcome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of this provides a profile of learning development that is essentially smooth and directed. The notion of profiling individual student performance is strongly built into the CSF. That is, data about student performance is to be collected to build up a picture of the individual student’s abilities, achievements, strengths and weaknesses. In theory, progress is mapped out over the school life of the student. This is most explicitly stated in the national Profile (Curriculum Corporation 1994b) of which the CSF is an adaptation. However, the idea of mapping and recording student development over twelve or more years of primary and secondary schooling has never proved to be very practical. In fact,
very little guidance has been provided to teachers about how to go about profiling students, and there is almost no research which has investigated how it might be done.

In spite of the absence of research evidence, the profiling model clearly provides a very attractive and positive vision of the self-directed learner whose development unfolds along a clearly marked path. In the Arts, the outcomes associated with this type of learning essentially focus on the individual student's affective and aesthetic development. By the end of primary school in 1998, Victorian children were assumed to have learnt, through the CSF for the Arts, to:

Experiment with ideas and feelings;
Select combine and manipulate sounds and silence using a range of skills, techniques and processes;
Draw upon a range of skills to present works for a variety of audiences and purposes;
Talk and write informally about personal observations on musicals works; and
Identify distinguishing features of musical works.

(CSF, The Arts, p.18-19)

They will then further develop these in Level Five when they:

Use starting points such as observation, experiences and research to express ideas and feelings;
Structure musical works using specific aspects of the elements of music and applying skills, techniques and processes;
Prepare, select and modify presentations for particular occasions taking into account factors;
Use appropriate language to describe the ways sound and silence are organised to express ideas and feelings; and,
Show an understanding of the ways music is made in particular cultural and historical contexts.

(CSF, The Arts, pp18-19)

These outcomes focus on the ability to respond to music and its aesthetic and affective qualities. The promise of the engaged, independent thinker apparently going about the business of learning and personal development in a motivated and focused manner is every teacher's and, presumably, every parent's idea of the ideal child. Surprisingly, the teacher is not really present in this or most other similar statements and this reflects the OBE view of the teacher as facilitator—someone essentially outside of the main process. OBE aims to free
the learner from the demands and idiosyncrasies of teachers in traditional content-based programmes where learning means acquiring 'a fixed body of knowledge transmitted under the control of the teacher' (Griffin 1998, p.10). Within OBE, the role of the teacher is essentially to work with the individual, developing a personal programme of short-term learning which will then be assessed so that further stages in the personal programme can be developed. Learning is essentially exploratory as evidenced by the frequent CSP use of terms such as 'explore', 'discover', 'interpret', 'evaluate' and 'experiment'. Understandings developed in this way are built up in a continuous cycle of assessment (of current understanding), planning and learning.

As a one-time instrumental teacher, this image of learning is one which I occasionally came across. Teaching classical guitar on a one-to-one or one-to-two basis, it is possible to identify some of these aspects in the way that students learn when they are learning an instrument in a studio lesson. Students progress gradually through a graded set of pieces and exercises working individually with a teacher in a half-hour lesson. They work on the pieces over a week and return to demonstrate the results. On the basis of their success or otherwise with the work, further plans are developed for the forthcoming week. Students are usually given some freedom to pick and choose pieces or styles that they wish to focus on. The half-hour lesson contact is expected to be supplemented by regular daily practice without the direction of the teacher. Typically, this practice will average 20 to 30 minutes per day so that the teacher contact represents only one-fifth to one-seventh of the learning programme for the week. The goals of outcome-based education might, therefore, be said to be realisable within this model of teaching, and the cycle of assessment-planning-learning might be said to reflect the studio music lesson or tutorial. Within the half-hour studio lesson, there is time for reflection, discussion and evaluation on the part of both student and teacher, and time for the teacher to gauge whether reflection, evaluation, exploration, or expression is taking place as well as time to report on it immediately to the student. This is the ideal of assessment-planning-learning being promoted as the OBE model.
Music teaching in context

Individualised learning and the constraints of school organisational structures
The CSF puts forward many of the ideal premises of OBE as normative, as the descriptions of students often assume they already have all the characteristics that OBE says they should develop. At the same time, it has been developed for an education system which does not run on a tutorial structure of teaching and learning. Developing individualised learning programmes for my students has not been a useful tool or feature in any of my classes. In almost all schools, teaching takes place in a context of classes of twenty-five or more students with limited opportunity for individualising teaching.

At NESC in 1999, practical classes within the Arts blocks were limited to a size of 21 students. However, only some music classes operated within the Arts blocks. Therefore, most Year Seven classes were form groups of 25 or 26 students. The Year Seven non-band classes were, in theory, practical ones but, because of organisational contingencies, were usually more likely to have 25 or more students. This occurred because the band classes were organised into three blocks that run during Periods Two, Three and Four on Wednesday mornings. In any one period, all the band students from three form groups attended a band lesson. The remaining students from these three classes were split between two teachers with up to 27 students in each class in a block depending on the percentage of students electing to take instrumental music. This was a school arrangement which contravened Union agreements but which classroom music teachers tolerated as being in the interests of a very successful band programme.

In 1999, 88 out of 221 Year Seven students elected to learn a band instrument. The 133 non-band students were given classes in keyboard and guitar. Because the band students were not evenly distributed across all form groups, some of the composite non-band classes ended up being significantly bigger than others. In Period Two, there were 43 students divided between two teachers producing one class of 22 for keyboard and one of 21 for guitar. In Period Three, there were 51 non-band students which produced a keyboard class of 25 and guitar
class of 26. In Period Four, a comparatively small group of 39 students were split 20 (keyboard) and 19 (guitar). The Period Three group was potentially a problem because there were only 25 keyboards and when classes swapped instruments in Term Two there would be insufficient resources. The situation was solved with the purchase of another keyboard, but there remained the possibility that classes would grow as the year progressed. There is inevitably some leakage of students from band classes as they lose interest and drop their instrument so that they have to be picked up by the non-band class. This did, in fact, happen at the beginning of Term Three when two students gave up their instruments. Their entry into the non-band classes had to be negotiated with the teachers of those classes by the Director of Music.

The teaching of students in classes of 25 or more is a system requirement that characterises every school and which no teacher or school really has much control over. The existence of such things as teachers and classes is barely acknowledged in the CSF descriptions of the learner. The life of the CSF1 (1995 to 1999) was also marked by an increasing pressure on class sizes and teaching allotments as the government closed down schools, made teachers redundant, and refused to recognise Union agreements on teaching conditions and class sizes.

The organisation of music classes at NESC was clearly more fragmented than it might have been in another school. The full Year Seven classes I taught for one forty-eight minute period per week for a whole year. Some of those students attended the non-band classes in keyboard and guitar. As I taught only the guitar classes that year, I saw those non-band students once per week in alternate terms. Some of the other students in the non-band class I did not teach in the regular classroom music class, and these students I saw only in alternate terms for one period per week. This fragmenting of classes and varying levels of contact had a significant impact on students’ continuity of learning and my ability to assess it.

At reporting time, I received feedback from the teacher who had taken the non-band classes for keyboard and I used this to write a report for the students in my
classroom music groups. Students in these classes who were in band received a separate report on their progress in band and in instrumental lessons. I usually do not see this report and do not refer to this work in the report I write for classroom music participation. However, in the second half of the year in particular, students’ participation in the band programme does impact on their achievement in other areas of music study. The highly fragmented nature of the music classroom programme existed to facilitate the progress of the band programme which, although it typically involves around seventy students in Year Seven, nevertheless caters for the minority of the whole cohort. This is difficult for the class teacher not just because it fragments classes and contact with students, but because the separation of students into band and non-band also has the effect of streaming abilities. In spite of this, the band programme was generally accepted by the three classroom teachers as being a necessary part of the entire music programme that allowed students to develop specialist musical skills if they wanted them.

In some way, the differences that emerged between band and non-band music students reflected the differences that OBE supporters usually say comes about from their approach. That is, non-band students clearly had an accelerated learning in all aspects of music. This is because they received a small-group lesson (2-3 students), a weekly band rehearsal of 90 minutes, and a sectional rehearsal during band class. They were also expected to practise at home and give performances in mid- and end-of-year concerts. The accelerated learning comes about through the increased allocation of resources, time and effort given to these students which parents pay for and which the school arranges at some cost to other aspects of the music programme. At the same time, the band programme is not an example of OBE because it is a highly structured programme where students progress through a predetermined course learning specific skills. The acceleration of learning comes about as the result of the increased allocation of time, money and effort rather than a different teaching approach. The band rehearsal, for example, involved one conductor-teacher and seventy or more students all working on set pieces from a book in a predetermined course selected by the teacher.
Lack of continuity of development in music education

The notion of continuous learning development was not something I found reflected in the students coming into my classes at Year Seven in 1999. I began in Week One of Term One with three different form groups of about 25 students. These students were new to the school and to me, having finished their primary schooling in the previous year. As a teacher, I received no information on the students’ performance at primary schools and no indication of their existing musical ability or learning in music education. Each student appeared as a blank slate, although I knew that this was not a true reflection of his/her ability. However, the absence of information left me with little choice but to start from the beginning.

It is not uncommon for music teachers to give their students a questionnaire to determine what musical background they have. At NESC, which drew its Year Seven intake from up to fifteen different primary schools, my 1999 survey of my classes revealed a range of experiences of both classroom music and individual music tuition. From sixty-nine completed responses to the 1999 survey, thirty-four students reported receiving some class music instruction for each year of primary schooling. The next largest group were the twelve students reporting four years of music in the upper levels of primary school. I can say, therefore, that a large number of these students have received significant amounts of music education before attending secondary school. However, there was also a block of thirteen students who reported no music learning and eight who reported an isolated year usually in middle primary. This means that well over a third had very limited or no experience of music in the primary school. In summary, there were large clusters at either end of a scale of zero to seven years experience with little in between. This disparity in experience is further exacerbated when individual learning is taken into account. For example, one student (William) reported no access to primary school music classes but seven years of private learning on the trumpet. This student immediately became a member of the Intermediate Band but was not easily classifiable according to the CSF levels where practical ability only accounts for a part of one strand organiser. Forty of the sixty-nine students reported some form of individual tuition apart from class music although only three of those were like William
and had not received any music tuition at primary school. A significant number of individual lessons were in band instruments (sixteen) and this reflects the band programmes that my secondary school developed in association with some of the local primary schools and which feed experienced players into the Training Band at Year Seven. These are not necessarily at primary schools which have a dedicated classroom music programme so there is no clear link between experience of classroom music and experience in instrumental tuition.

The picture that emerged from this survey was of a fragmented group of students. About half had a considerable amount of previous music learning in the form of four years or more of class music and instrumental lessons. A sizeable smaller group had little or no education in music. Twelve students had received less than two years class music and no individual tuition. Such a disparate range of experiences is a problem for a teacher who needs to decide where to pitch the teaching for a new Year Seven class. CSF Level Five Curriculum Focus statements spoke of students developing existing abilities:

'Students participate in practical music activities, extending their level of aural perception and sensitivity and increasing their understanding of music as a means of expression.'

'They research and extend their musical knowledge...'

'Students extend their use of the elements of music...' (CSF1, p.97)

As a group of students, these classes were fairly well endowed with past musical experiences. But, for a significant number of them, the above 'extensions' were not possible for they clearly had no existing skills to build upon. A possible solution to this, and one frequently cited in the CSF, is to recognise that a group of students will often include students working at different levels (CSF1, p.3). This presumably means that a teacher must teach a group or class at a few different levels to recognise the different rates at which students' learning can proceed as well as the different background experiences that students bring.

This is an idea strongly reflective of the notion of individualist learning that underlies OBE and the CSF but it is extremely difficult to put into practice. Clearly, in my Year Seven classes, there will be many students ready to start Level Five with a smaller group with perhaps enough experience to start Level Four where they 'build on experience', 'use and further developed appropriate
techniques' and 'talk about musical experiences' (CSFI, pp.94-95). A sizeable number will need to work at Level Three or perhaps, more easily, Level Two where there is a less explicit assumption of previously developed ability. My point here is that the concept of smooth, continuous and uninterrupted developments in learning is not generally a feature of music education within our local area. It is much more true to say that it is patchy, discontinuous and uneven.

Some recognition of the inconsistent programme delivery in music across the state seems to have been recognised in the changes made to the Arts framework in the CSFII (Victorian Board of Studies 2000). The separate strands of music, drama and visual arts are not now used at the lower three levels. The new framework distinguishes only between Visual and Performing Arts at these levels suggesting that 'cognitive and affective ability does not sufficiently develop for students to investigate and explore more complex Arts ideas and issues' until about Level Four (CSFII, p.7). Given this new guidance, it was probably reasonable for me to assume that I would be starting my Year Seven students at around Level Four or Five as most of them have some experience in music education and can begin to explore more complex concepts. This still leaves unresolved the issue of levels and continuous development. If I consider Level Four or Five a good place to start with students who have few or no preconceptions about music, what does this really say about the value or significance of Levels One, Two or Three.

**Demonstrable and observable outcomes in the classroom**

Although the arrangements that NESC made for teaching music at Year Seven seem complicated, they essentially represented a basic two periods per week for each student. One period of this was designated practical—band students went to band class and non-band students attended either a keyboard or a guitar class. The other period of classroom music was designated as non-practical, although in reality it meant that students completed a range of studies not related to developing performance skills—listening, aural work, composition work, theory work, some research and project work and some group performance work. I hesitate to call this a theory class which has connotations of students completing
worksheets on music notation. In reality, it required students to learn a range of concepts and skills—aural skills, listening analysis, notation, composition—and to be able to apply them in short studies that were usually completed within one period.

It was often difficult for me to align what we did in these classes with the prespecified outcomes in the CSP. The substrands of ‘Arts Criticism and Aesthetics’ (ACA) and ‘Past and Present Contexts’ (PPC) did fit fairly neatly into the category of the classroom music period as they could both be catered for by a range of directed listening studies. However, since both substrands were to be satisfied by listening tasks it could be difficult to distinguish which substrand a listening task necessarily satisfied. Having written two books on teaching music which incorporated a developmental listening programme (Blyth 1997; Blyth 1999) as one of the learning strands in the text, I make fairly extensive use of these listening and aural activities. In aural work, the musical elements of rhythm, pitch, timbre, etc. are studied in an abstract or isolated way—students may have to identify the relative pitch of keyboard notes, or think of some words to describe the timbre of different percussion instruments. The concepts are introduced and examined or explained. Listening work focuses on the identification of these same elements in the context of real pieces of music in a range of styles. In other words, it applies the aural skills in order to gain musical understanding. On the whole, this appeared to satisfy parts of Level Four of both ACA and PPC:

'Students listen to music, identifying and discussing specified musical characteristics. They describe and distinguish between sounds of different duration, pitch, dynamics…’
(Level four, ACA, CSF1, p.95)

'Students listen to …works form a variety of styles and cultures. They identify and describe distinguishing musical characteristics…’
(Level four, PPC, CSF1, p.96)

The understanding of musical elements eventually leads to the identification of repetition (phrases or sections) in music and understanding of musical structure and style. However, at one period per week this was a fairly slow process and
students only began to consider structure in the latter part of the year. They had still only completed part of the two substrands and were still at Level Four.

The evaluation aspects of ACA—'discuss effectiveness of own compositions...'; 'evaluate their performances...'; 'give preferences for particular works.' (CSFl, Music, Level Four, ACA, p.95)—were not really a feature of my classes. This was a problem because Level Five of both ACA and PPC outcomes are mainly about evaluation:

'Give criteria for justifying preferences.'
'Discriminate between musical elements...'
'Discuss responses to works...'
'Evaluate their own compositions and performances...'
(CSFl, Music, Level Five, ACA, p.99)
'Listen critically to works'
(CSFl, Music, Level Five, PPC, p.100)

These concepts or processes were not a feature of my teaching because I have found that students need a lot of background knowledge of music concepts and musical structure in order to be able to make an informed comment, as opposed to an opinion or preference, on music. Level Five really requires informed comments. It took most of Year Seven music for students to develop any basic knowledge, terminology and discrimination that enabled them to come up with an informed comment. As such, they were still really working most of the time at Level Four.

Other activities such as composition and group performance that we completed in classroom music fall mainly under the banner of 'Creating, Making and Presenting' (CMP). The practical classes in guitar and keyboard also fell under the banner of CMP, so Year Seven music class spent most of their time working within this area. This weighting is consistent with the three different substrand organisers and outcomes that make up 'Creating, Making and Presenting'—'Using skills, techniques and processes' (USTP); 'Exploring and developing ideas' (EDI); and, 'Presenting' (P) as against the individual outcomes for the level in ACA and PPC. Beyond this, I found the CMP strand organiser an extremely difficult strand organiser to use.
In the classroom programme, we investigated or explored a range of ideas and concepts. Some of the things students were expected to learn were symbolic dictation and standard music notation which they used to create and perform simple rhythmic pieces. Generally, they were expected to work in pairs or small groups to create and perform these. Notation was taught as an aid to performance or creation, not as end in itself. The performance in a group placed an emphasis on accuracy and correctness. Therefore, if students had to write a rhythmic piece in two parts of a specified number of bars with a particular time signature, the performance of this piece showed up any errors in notation, in groupings of beats or measures, in ability to count the beat, or in ability to correctly perform time values. As such, it was a limited creative activity which also had a correct answer and which had to be noted and performed correctly for it to work. It is a ‘pure’ music exercises which focused on musical elements (beats and rhythm) and musical skills (accuracy and co-ordination in time) rather than aesthetic expression.

It was difficult to assess exactly where this task fitted into the CSF. It appeared to fall most easily under the banner of USTP but the CSF is very vague about the distinction between levels in this subrand organiser. It could have been a Level Three outcome—'explore and use several aspects of sound and use specific skills, techniques and processes', or Level Four—'Select combine and manipulate sound and silence, using a range of specific skills, techniques and processes', or Level Five—'Structure musical works using specific aspects of the elements of music and applying skills, techniques and processes'. The key lies in the definition of 'skills, techniques and processes' at each level. However, there are no definitions given in the curriculum focus statements merely a repetition of the terms 'skills', 'techniques' and 'processes'.

The lack of distinction between levels is a problem that seems to beset the music strand of the CSF, although it is not a problem that can be said to be characteristic of all strands of The Arts in the CSF. In Visual Arts, for example, which has essentially the same outcomes referring to skills, techniques and processes, the curriculum focus statements are much more specific about what these actually are, at least at Levels Four and Five.
... differentiate between ... two- and three-dimensional art works ... address some principles of art such as harmony and repetition... visually express such aspects as perspective, movement, effects of mood...
(CSFI, Visual Arts, Level Four, p.113)

(use) a broad range of visual arts forms such as painting, drawing, printmaking,... explore principles such as contrast, harmony and repetition, ... express effects such as unity or foreshortening...(CSFI, Visual Arts Level Five, p116)

The absence of 'such as' statements in music that would give an indication of the expected observable outcome or demonstration leaves the teacher with little direction as to which specific skills, techniques or processes are to be expected. It then just becomes guesswork as to whether any specific task is more one level than another.

Judging personal qualities and feelings
In Elective Research Task One, I suggested that one of the problems that arises in Aesthetic Education is that it ignores the differences between various art products—singing, painting, acting—while making fine distinctions about the manner in which they are done. This problem is evident in the EDI substrand organiser which incorporates many things already covered by the other Arts strands organisers or substrand organisers. At Level Five, the curriculum focus for EDI suggests that students 'participate in practical music activities', 'extend their level of aural perception', 'research', 'recreate the works of others', 'compose short instrumental works', 'produce individual or group compositions or arrangements', and 'improvise' (p.97). There seems be very few musical activities that are not covered here. The same is basically true of Level Four and both seem to be going over the same ground as USTP which also involves performing, 'using aural skills', 'creating musical statements', 'interpreting visual symbols' and 'making music' (CSFI, p.94).

The distinction between the EDI and USTP, as evidenced in the outcomes, is the emphasis on expression of ideas and feelings. This is particularly difficult and contentious with respect to music. A range of viewpoints may be quoted on what and how music expresses whatever it is that it expresses. However the non-representational, non-concrete nature of music makes it difficult to
determine what this is. From a teacher's point of view, attempting to make an
assessment as to whether a student has shown an ability to 'experiment with
ideas and explore feelings' (EDI, Level Four) or 'use starting points...to express
ideas and feelings through sound' (EDI, Level Five) is almost impossible.
Whatever thinking, feeling or exploring processes have taken place have
remained largely internal to the students and invisible to me. To what degree
these processes will be evident in a finished product and may be assessed as
shown or not shown is not really elucidated in the CSF. Music does incorporate
a concept of expression. But, musical expression is usually related to the idea of
control and direction of musical elements—that is, controlling tempos or
dynamics, or adding subtle changes or increases to pitch, rhythm or tone—
rather than the raw expression of feeling which is the focus of EDI.

Having said this, music students did create and perform compositions that might
have been said to represent or imitate both musical and non-musical ideas. One
was to use electronic keyboard sounds to create a sound collage that told a story
or acted as a backdrop to a storyboard. This involved working in pairs to plan
and sketch out a short scene as a storyboard. Some sounds from the percussion
sounds or sound effects on a keyboard were to be selected to illustrate the story
and they had to be performed before the class. Again this could relate to any
level between Two and Five:

Explore sound patterns...in response to stimuli (Curriculum Focus,
Level Two)
Create short compositions in response to stimuli (Curriculum Focus,
Level Three)
Improvise and compose musical statements in response to stimuli
(Curriculum Focus, Level Four)
Improvise and compose in response to other artforms (Curriculum
Focus, Level Five).

Without any specific distinctions or specified content to distinguish between
levels, this fairly open-ended creative project was difficult to assess according to
CSF outcomes. As long as the composition was created and performed it was
hard to say that the student had not 'Used a starting point (i.e. the idea of a
story) to express ideas and feelings through sound' (Level Five outcome).
A more specific set of guidelines was given for the Rap Task where students had to write words for a rap song, choose keyboard sounds and pre-recorded rhythms as well as their own performed sounds and rhythms, and vocalise the words in time with these rhythms. This was another group task that required three to four students and was an exercise that may or may not have worked well. It required pupils to demonstrate all the self-directing, exploring and experimenting and creative skills that OBE and the CSF values. Some students were capable of these and some were not, and I did this task at the end of the year because it was intended that students demonstrate some ability to work independently as well as within the group to apply a range of skills.

The Rap Task, in itself, contained various levels of difficulty and allowed students of different abilities to work together. There was room for a more concrete expression of feelings and ideas in writing the words to the rap, although the words were not really an important feature from my viewpoint. Usually, one student in the group was better with words. Being able to perform the words rhythmically against a backing in the style of a rapper is a more specifically musical expression of ideas and feelings. However, it was not something that every student felt confident with. The ability to carry this task out had much more to do with personal confidence and an outgoing nature than with musical ability. The students who did this well were not necessarily the most accomplished musically. Usually only one group member took the part of the rapper. This left at least two members to perform in other ways. Controlling the technology—switching on the autorhythms, hitting a few sound effects buttons, maybe even changing the autorhythm — required some planning but not an excessive amount of co-ordination. It was something the least confident member of the group could do. Playing a guitar, keyboard chords or percussion instrument in time with the rhythm and the rapper required much more co-ordination and some experience of playing in time with other performers.

In assessing this task, my interest was more in the co-ordination and accuracy with which the words and rhythms were performed, how well it had been rehearsed, and how confidently it was performed. Much of this related to USTP,
and P rather than EDI. I was sceptical and reserved about the idea of evaluating the feelings or ideas expressed in any completed student task.

In summary, the classroom music lesson focused on exploring and experimenting with a range of ideas. However, this was mostly a group exploration. Individual exploration or experimentation was restricted to choices within fairly set guidelines. Even in a fairly open-ended task such as the Rap Task, specific guidelines were given as to what should have been done, how and with what results. ‘Explore’, ‘experiment’, ‘discover’ are a frequent feature of CSF1 descriptions for Levels Three to Five. In reality, these processes were too open-ended to be of value in leading to assessable outcomes for students. They are non-specific and lead to unforeseeable outcomes or, more likely, to no outcomes. As such they are inconsistent with the idea of an outcome—that is, a measurable product or achievement. Students at a beginning level required direction, guidance and assistance if any outcomes were to be achieved.

The limits of self-directed learning and individualised teaching
Self-directed learning is supposed to be a major feature of OBE. In my 1999 classes it was a feature to be found in the keyboard classes that formed part of the practical classes for non-band students. This was a programme where students learned individually without the constraints of group involvement or of the teacher setting the task (to a degree). Each student used a five-octave electronic keyboard to which they connected with headphones. They worked through books of graded keyboard pieces which introduced them to reading and playing notation, firstly using individual hands and fingers correctly and, then, working up to more advanced pieces using both left and right hand together. Some students who had had, or were having, keyboard lessons outside of class brought in their own music with which to work. However, most students began at the basic level of learning to read music notation.

The purpose of keyboard classes was essentially to teach theory concepts ‘authentically’—that is, to introduce basic notation in the context of performance and practice. Development of actual keyboard skills always remained limited. The desired outcome was some basic reading skills and
development of hand and finger use that students might be able to apply towards group performance in the classroom lesson. There were a variety of reasons why such limited outcomes could be expected.

The model for this form of teaching is the studio model of one-to-one teaching to which I referred earlier. The class was basically silent as all students have headphones on, and I circulated around the room asking students to play the completed exercise. However, in the context of Year Seven practical classes, this operated on a model of one teacher to twenty-five students which limited the amount of individual attention that any one student was likely to receive to about two minutes in a fifty-minute period. For the most part, students were left to their own devices to read, understand and apply the exercises described in the book.

The exercises were not in themselves difficult, but the situation assumed or required student behaviour of the type outlined by Griffin as a feature of OBE—'independence and responsibility for self-monitoring', 'inquiry', 'conceptualising', 'reasoning and problem solving learning skills'. It was evident in my Year Seven classes that students had only limited quantities of these skills. One problem was that students wanted much more individual attention from the teacher than it was possible for me to give. They often believed that they had completed a task when they could play it from memory. However, playing even a simple exercise involved a range of criteria—performance in time, with correct fingers, with some expression in the form of attention to dynamics and with accurate rhythmic reading—that the students did not always consider. Of course, pieces could be relearnt and students were asked to practise and improve upon their initial achievement. This was essentially the OBE model of (Learning)-Assessment-Planning-Learning (Griffin 1998, p.11) in operation. However, the process described took at least a couple of minutes to complete for each student for even the most basic exercise. This meant that most students were left to their own devices for most of the lesson as I addressed each of them in turn.
One solution that I used, at least in the early lessons, and which I also used in the classroom music classes was to make students work in pairs to practise and play the same exercise. This places emphasis on rhythmic accuracy and playing in time. It makes these concepts more meaningful because, when they are not present, the problems in performance are more evident. It also had the positive effect of reducing the number of individual performances that I needed to assess by half which made the assessment process a little more manageable. Nevertheless, attempting to get around to twelve or thirteen pairs in one lesson can be quite taxing for the teacher and still places significant reliance on students' self-management.

There was definitely a limit to how much self-management or self-direction could be expected from a group of Year Seven students. Students progressed in pairs quite well through the early stages of these exercises up to the point where they are using all the fingers on the right hand correctly. At this point, they need to start using two hands together (melody and chord- or bass-note) and all students found that progress slowed considerably. At this stage, it also became impractical to work in pairs so the original difficulty returned just at the point at which students were most in need of individual attention and assistance. I was faced with having to offer twenty-five individual lessons of two minutes within a period.

In my classes, students kept their own record sheet of the exercises that they completed and which I signed off. The collected record sheets of three classes showed remarkably similar outcomes. Students progressed quickly through the basic exercises involving only two or three notes. They could often complete three or four pieces in a lesson and perform them well enough to have them marked off as completed. At this point, motivation was high because of the novelty of the keyboards, the ease of the task and the satisfaction of quick results. Progress slowed a little when the exercises require use of all five fingers. At this point, the same exercises could be called tunes or songs and students show a marked preference for working on the tunes that they recognised—for example, *Ode to Joy*, *When the saints go marching in* or *Banks of the Ohio*. There was an element of playing by ear in the performance of these
tunes and it was often difficult to determine how much reading actually took place. Beyond this stage, students needed to start using two hands together. Progress slowed dramatically and, it must be said, enthusiasm also dropped off. Although most students were able to reach this stage towards the end of second term, it was also the point at which they began to lose interest on a large scale. Many of them continued to play the songs but only the right hand melody.

The decline in interest was not surprising. There are a very limited number of skills that can be developed to any degree without regular work both inside and outside the classroom. Asking students to learn songs on the keyboard is one thing which they enjoy doing in the time allotted. However, not many had a keyboard at home on which to practise the songs, and they were not expected to. Interest, therefore, faded at the point at which the work clearly demanded regular daily practice and more intense guidance from the teacher at an individual level. For the most part, I could expect only a very limited development of skills in both keyboard classes and in the use of keyboards in classroom music. Continuous, unlimited development or progress was not possible and was not achieved in my experience where students practised only one period per week and had to be taught in large groups.

**Conclusion**

I have attempted to review some aspects of my own classroom practice in the light of expectations placed on it by the CSF and the ideals of outcome-based education. I have only been able to deal with a few of the activities that my Year Seven music classes engage in over the course of a year. Nevertheless, I chose these studies to illustrate some of the constraints that actually operate when a teacher attempts to put the CSF into practice. Inevitably, this review has been subjective but it has allowed me to express some opinions on the difficulties that I faced as a teacher in implementing or ‘bringing to life’ some of the ideas that curriculum theories suggest I should be using.

Three basic themes—continuous development, individual learning and assessing cognitive ability through observable outcomes—derived from the theories of
OBE were the main focus of the research. In the context of the music classroom, all three ideas are problematic. Continuity of learning development assumes continuity of teaching even though this is not necessarily a feature of music education in the school system. It was not evident in the students I started teaching at the beginning of 1999. Individual learning, equally, is not a feature of how the system is structured to deliver school programmes. So, individual development is inevitably subjugated to what it is possible to learn within a large group. In my classes, I had to develop a programme that could be delivered to students in groups of twenty or more with widely ranging abilities. The opportunities for individual tuition or assessment were very limited. Assessing cognitive ability is a part of the normal school routine but it normally has to focus on the observable and demonstrable. In the CSF, levels of ability are distinguished, if at all, on the basis of the feelings or ideas that lie behind the action. But, these are hardly ever concrete enough for me as a teacher to assess and not usually obvious within the actions themselves. Consequently, much of the regime of levels, strands and outcomes appeared to me to be abstract and provided little real guidance as to how student learning had developed or could develop over the year.

More objective surveys have been carried out on the implemention of outcomes in the classroom (Hargreaves and Moore 1999; Brady 2000). The researchers in these studies have generally come to conclusions that are similar to my own—that there is a fairly wide gap between the promises of OBE and the results it produces in the classroom, and that the fairly neat learning models that curriculum frameworks present do not relate very well to the stop-start realities of school programmes and student learning. Some researchers have laid blame or responsibility for this at the feet of teachers, suggesting, for example, that they adopt the language or jargon of reform but do not adopt the practice (Griffin 1998); or that teacher conservatism is too strong a force and resistance to change is too powerful (various citations in Brady 1996); or that teachers don’t fully understand the implications of the reform (Retallick 1996). Even where researchers are sympathetic to the work of teachers (and few are avowedly or expressly unsympathetic), there is a general tendency to place the responsibility for making outcome-based education work with the individual
school and teacher. When it is shown not to work, changes at this level are usually suggested as the solution: more professional development is a common theme. But, other suggestions have included more community involvement, more active involvement of the principal or changes to school organisation.

In this research paper, I have suggested, in contrast, that the impediments to the CSF and OBE being successfully implemented in the classroom are much more structural and systemic. That is, the expectations placed on teachers, students and schools by the CSF require system-wide reorganisation and reform. The ideals of individualised learning programmes, self-motivated learners and tutorial-style education cannot be adequately met when the teacher is faced with overriding systemic factors—class sizes, allotments, school infrastructure, varying resources in schools and the organisation of the school day and school year. These factors are largely outside the control of the individual teacher or school, but they are fairly fundamental in determining the practices of both schools and teachers. They are also factors which are largely ignored in the CSF. No significant restructuring in these areas has occurred to support the demand for changes to teaching and learning practices. It is inevitable that, without these structural or system changes, any demand for reform of individual teaching practices will be met with limited enthusiasm and limited success. It is to be expected that any suggested changes will, in reality, be absorbed into existing practices because these are practices that have developed within the constraints of the system as it stands.

I would like to think that my own practice represents my best efforts to work with what is given to me—classes, resources and time allocation—as well as my best efforts to adapt what I wish to do with what I find it possible to do. I do not present this as the best practice of music education, or even the best practice within my school, or even the best of what I am capable. As a teacher, I am always looking for new ideas, new methods, new activities that I think will work. What I have tried to present is an overview of how curriculum theories must always be viewed and judged within the context of a real school operating within a real school system.
Elective Research Study Four—
Teachers with laptops: the first tentative steps

Introduction

The ‘Laptops for Teachers’ programme
The ‘Laptops for Teachers’ programme was a part of the ‘1998/99 Budget Initiatives for Schools’ programme introduced by the Victorian Department of Education and was planned to run over three years. It forms part of a larger strategy to expand the use of information technology and multimedia in Victorian schools (Victorian Department of Education 1998a, p.5). Expenditure under this programme included $14.1 million to subsidise the lease of 12000 notebook computers for teachers and $12.8 million to provide every school with a 64 kilobit per second connection to the Government’s VicOne wide-area network. VicOne provides Internet and email access for schools and allocates every teacher an email address. In return, schools were required to finalise a Learning Technologies strategy plan for the period of 1999-2001.

The Liberal-National Party coalition government of the time outlined its own agenda for this three-year period in its statement, ‘Learning Technologies in Victorian Schools, 1998-2001’ (Victorian Department of Education 1998b). There is an assumption that computer-based technology will be a ‘crucial element in the future economic development of the state’ (p.8). Within this, the concept of ‘learning technologies’ (computers and computer-based equipment used as part of education) is seen as a way of:

realising the potential of technology to enhance the quality of all aspects of education, especially student learning. To compete and be successful in an information-rich, technologically-enhanced and rapidly changing environment, students will need to be highly skilled and flexible in their ability to use technology in all its forms. (p.8)

Effective implementation of learning technologies is ‘premised on the ability of teachers to develop teaching and learning strategies and curriculum plans that fully utilise appropriate technologies’ (p.8). The goal then of the ‘Laptops for
Teachers' programme was to provide teachers with equipment with which they should familiarise themselves as a first step towards becoming confident users in the classroom.

In their implementation strategies, schools are expected to establish their 'own achievable targets' in curriculum implementation, resource development, professional development and staff achievement measures. 'The key component is an agreed school-based vision for the development of learning technologies' (Victorian Department of Education 1998a, p.19). The focus on school-based change and provision of resources at the school level represented an alternative approach to that used for many other educational initiatives put forward in Victoria since 1992. Curriculum reform, as embodied in the CSF for example, has been highly centralised. Planning and resourcing for the CSF has been focused at the administrative or bureaucratic level and the effects and benefits have been expected to filter down to schools. The provision of laptop computers focuses specifically on the need to resource the professional development aspect of the 'Learning Technologies in Victorian Schools' programme. There was an assumption that teachers can only become skilled practitioners of learning technologies when the equipment is made available for them to explore and develop capabilities themselves (Victorian Department of Education 1998b, p.13).

This research study aims to explore the impact of the distribution of laptop computers to twenty-nine teachers in one Victorian government secondary school as part of the Department of Education's '1998/99 Budget Initiatives for Schools' (Victorian Department of Education 1998a). The research focused specifically on the first round allocation of laptop computers that took place in October 1998. It attempted to examine the way in which individual teachers in this initial roll-out formulated and incorporated the use of a laptop computer into their work routines.

**Questioning the concept of a 'learning technology'**

I carried this research out as one teacher among twenty-nine to receive a personal laptop computer. Having some experience as a teacher of information
technology meant that I was more familiar than most other teachers with both the possibilities and hazards of educational computing. It meant, also, that I was probably less open to the idea that the arrival of laptop computers in the school was going to bring about transformations in teachers’ work. As a teacher also of music and history, I was aware of how difficult it was to extend educational computing away from its traditional form of learning about the computer and embed it in a meaningful way as a learning tool for other subject areas. In the wider context of my work, I used computers when necessary to write reports or type up documents, but I did not regard them as very central to my work apart from teaching in the computer laboratory. The main question addressed in this research was to what degree a computer could enhance the work of teachers both inside and outside of the classroom.

There is an extensive literature dealing with the use of computing in education but much of it remains theoretical or concerned with technical issues of hardware implementation or software use. Books such as Computers for twenty-first century educators (Lockard & Abrams 2000) are fairly typical of the type of material usually made available to teachers who want to know ‘how to incorporate technology into their classrooms’ (Lockard & Abrams 2000, backcover). The approach is to devote a chapter to explaining the basic workings of hardware and then to move on to generic software tools—spreadsheets, databases and integrated software suites—as well as various forms of computer-aided learning with a few lesson ideas attached. In essence, the focus is still primarily with computer literacy rather than effective curriculum integration of computers. In attempting to locate research that supported the value of computers to education, the authors admit that the evidence is disappointing but go on happily to state that ‘virtually anyone who has learned to use a word processor knows intuitively that it is better’ (p.47). Many of the benefits of computing to education rely on this sort faith and hope rather than documented results.

One of the few long-term studies carried out into teacher practice with computers is the Apple Classroom of Tomorrow Research (Apple Corporation 1996). Victorian Department of Education publications on the use of IT in
education (Victorian Department of Education 1998a and 1998b) drew heavily on this research for many of the assumptions which it presented. The Apple Classrooms of Tomorrow (ACOT) findings suggested that teachers moved through five broad phases of development in incorporating technology into education:

*Entry*, or learning the basics of the technology;
*Adoption*, or using new technology to support traditional classroom studies;
*Adaptation*, or integrating the computer into learning and using it to improve existing practice;
* Appropriation*, which is to use the computer as one tool to change teaching and learning approaches; and,
*Invention*, or discovering new uses for technology.
(Apple Corporation 1996, p.50)

The Department of Education models collapsed these into three broad stages labelled only ‘1’, ‘2’ and ‘3’ but which could also be described as ‘learning to use the technology’, ‘applying the technology’, and ‘creativity with the technology’. While the ACOT project represented ten or more years of research that generated a wealth of information, the Victorian Department of Education’s brochures tended to represent the research simplistically. Consequently, the learning technology kit provided only fairly broad ideas about what these phases meant in practice and what the actual pathways were that lead from stage one to stage three in the context of classroom teaching and learning.

The Laptops for Teachers programme in Victoria grew out of the findings of the Smith Report (Directorate of School Education 1994). This presented a glowing and uncomplicated view of the use of computing in schools and placed great store on the revolutionary and transformative potential of computing and communications technology. In spite of the fact that the Smith Report was unable to identify cases where this had occurred, it became a ‘de-facto policy guideline for information technology in schools’ (Lankshear and Snyder et al. 2000, p.69) and it popularised the new buzzword of computing in education—‘learning technology’. In the view of the Smith Report, educational theory and information technology have been ‘travelling over similar ground’, and the suggestion is made that the two should now converge to ‘form a powerful synergy’ (Directorate of School Education 1994, p.40). Piagetian psychology
was rediscovered in the form of Constructivism—‘an educational idea to be applied to curriculum design and instruction’, based on the notion ‘that humans “construct” their own reality or world picture which is dependent upon the range and quality of individual experience’. While bringing a new emphasis to bear on ‘experience’ in the learning process, the report stressed ‘the importance of the quality of the experiences, whether provided by computer software or by way of other factors applying within the learning situation’ (Directorate of School Education 1994, p.39). Teaching is reconceptualised as ‘facilitation’ and ‘co-learning’, and the classroom becomes more markedly a ‘learning community’ focussed around the computer. Arnold and Gilding (1994, p.47) suggest that this discourse has little to do with teaching or learning and a great deal to do with prevailing economic and labour relation models. It is quite apparent that the rhetoric of learning technologies and constructivism has successfully entered and dominated the discourse of education in Victoria since the Smith Report but has been less successful in permeating the practices of teachers.

An issue arising from the Smith Report is the relationship of both the teacher and the computer to the learning situation. ‘Teacher discomfort in handling science and technology in the classroom’ (p.19) is identified as a major stumbling block which has prevented students from learning and prevented the technology from having attained a greater educational significance to date. Television was identified as having provided a partial solution and ‘computer-mediated learning programs’ were now proposed as the next step. For the most part, then, a ‘learning technology’ is seen as a machine which delivers a greater bulk of information more efficiently than a teacher. With appropriate hardware and newly-emerging software programs, students will have the flexibility of choosing what, when, where and how the learning takes place. Learning is largely equated with the reception of information. The teacher sits on the side because the computer delivers the information directly to the student via interactive software or communications technology. It is suggested that these developments will require teachers to rethink their status and position in the classroom:
(The initiatives) require an admission on the part of teachers that there is a problem. Most require teachers to re-examine their classroom roles. Having admitted their lack of science experiences and their discomfort in handling the subject, they should then perhaps prepare themselves to become co-learners with their students. (p.63)

While recognising that, in the past, ‘the advocates of greater use of technology have promised far more than has been delivered’ and that ‘educational outcomes have been oversold and under-delivered’ (p.63), the Smith Report is prepared to suggest that technology can effectively replace the teacher in the classroom. This represents a largely behaviourist view of learning in which knowledge is delivered as a ready-made package and largely contradicts the constructivist model that was initially offered (Rodrigues 1996, pp.64-65).

Alternative concepts of both learning and technology are presented by Lankshear and Snyder (2000) whose work grew out of a two-year Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DEETYA) study into the relationship between literacy and technology in teaching and learning in schools. They examine educational computing through eleven case studies which focus less on the promise and more on the practice of computing in schools. Knowledge and learning are not seen as the absorption of content but as an intersection of three dimensions—operational, cultural, and critical learning and practice. Skills and knowledge need to be understood in terms of the context within which they operate and the meaning they have for that context (p.31). A concern for skills outside of an ‘authentic’ context of social practice is seen as counter-productive. This places learning rather than technology in the foreground.

Significantly, Lankshear and Snyder (2000, p.42) recognise schools as ‘learning technologies’. Computers are only one technology among many that have been ‘schooling’ or made into something that supports and sustains the school as a learning technology. Within the school as a learning technology, classroom practice with computer technology is seen to be characterised by five significant features: complexity, in the sense of having a large number of inter-related components operating simultaneously; fragility, inasmuch as all of the components—teacher, students and equipment—have roles assigned to them.
and must operate dependently on each other; discontinuity, resulting from the uneven distribution or compartmentalisation of resources across the school or blocks of time; conservation, in that new ideas are typically accommodated to fit existing practices; and, limited authenticity where the computer is used merely to add ‘bells and whistles’ to a task that could otherwise be done without a computer.

The present research examines the real-life aspects of teaching and learning with its associated difficulties and rewards by documenting some of the trials and tribulations of teachers making use of learning technologies in my own school. It seems important to further challenge the notion that teaching can be or should be reconceptualised by a machine. This is not to deny the contribution the computer could make to education. But, to present education as merely a collection of individual experiences of receiving information through a computer screen is to regard the work of schools and teachers simplistically. Equally, to downgrade teachers to the role of ‘co-learners’ is, I believe, impractical and misrepresents the way in which teachers view themselves and what they do.

**Research methodology and procedure**

The aim of this research is to assess the impact of laptop computers on teachers’ practices by identifying and examining changes to teachers’ aims and intentions. A case study approach based on one school—North Eastern Secondary College or NESC— but involving interviews with a range of teachers was adopted as the most effective method for doing this. Interviews provide a method for accessing and exploring the aims, rationalisations and understandings that teachers carry with them. Case study provides a means of locating these aims and understandings in a specific real-life context. It also supports rich descriptions that would be sufficient to allow readers to participate in the verification of the interpretations offered in the reporting (Stake 1978). While there is an assumption that every case will be unique, the use of multiple interviews may bring out common understandings or issues among teachers that are likely to be relevant more broadly to the profession. Interviews were considered the most
effective means of collecting data that dealt with understanding and intentions. They allowed latitude for probing and re-shaping of questions which would inevitably lead to much richer data (Bresler and Stake 1992, p.84). Because face-to-face questioning is time-consuming and produces a large amount of data, the amount of information that could be reported back had to be limited in order to keep this research report to manageable size. Consequently, only a few of the most significant issues and responses have been selected to be included in this report.

**Research questions**

Stake (1978) suggests that use of issues as primary research questions can force attention to complexity and contextuality as well as the problems and concerns of the case (p.16). He distinguishes between the issues brought to the study by the researcher (‘etic’ issues) and those that may arise or be identified within the case (‘emic’ issues). In this study, some basic questions arising from the Smith Report and the Lankshear and Snyder (2000) study provided the starting point for this research.

A primary question is the degree to which the machine (computer) is likely to replace the teacher. It seemed unlikely that data to answer this question would arise from this research. The primary question then became, to what degree could the laptop enhance teachers’ work? A second question arising with specific relevance to work in the classroom is the degree to which a laptop computer can be used to impact on the learning environment. Is learning simply reception of information and does the teacher simply need to stand aside and become a facilitator? Further research questions look at the other side of computing in education as revealed by the Lankshear and Snyder (2000) study. In what sense is the school a ‘learning technology’ that absorbs all other technologies? How fragile, complex or authentic is the use of computing in teachers’ work?

**Research procedure**

**Data collection**

Formal data gathering for this research project took place in two stages. A first
round of interviews was carried out early in Term One 1999 with each of the other 28 teachers who had received laptops. By this time, all teachers had had their laptops for some months, having received them in the middle of Term Four of the previous year. However, few had had the opportunity to make a great deal of use of the computer at school to this point. This was due to the Christmas break and the fact that all computers needed to be configured for use on the school network. For all staff, the configuring process was their initial experience with the computer and this took place in early February.

Again, following Stake (1978), interviewing focussed on a short list of issue-oriented questions that allowed each interviewee to provide an account of experiences or 'special stories' rather than survey-type questions that elicited a simple 'yes' or 'no'. As the interview questions were mostly open-ended, they allowed room for the emergence of those issues that were important to the interviewees. Thus both "citic" and "cmic" issues appear in this study.

In the initial interview, staff members were asked to identify their teaching area and give a self-evaluation of their computer skills and confidence. Four specific questions were then asked:
1. For what did you expect or intend to use the laptop when you applied for it?
2. What use have you made of it at school so far?
3. What tasks do you think you will use it for over the year in
   - class preparation
   - personal or administrative work
   - classroom use?
4. How do you intend to go about developing your skills and learning how to use the computer?

The second round of interviews took place in Term Four. In this interview, teachers were reminded of their answers to questions in the first interview, particularly those pertaining to question three. They were then asked to provide an overview of how successful they had been meeting their own goals. In contrast to the fairly closed questions of interview one, teachers were encouraged in this second interview to expand on their answers. Subsequent
questions therefore varied but focused on four main points:
1. In what ways has the laptop changed what you do in class?
2. In what ways has the laptop changed what you do outside of class?
3. How did you come up with the ideas that you tried out?
4. Have you accessed professional development programs, in-service training, or just good ideas from outside of the school?

Data analysis
As Stake (1978, p.115) notes, audiotaping of interviews can (and did) provide a large amount of data which is both potentially valuable and also potentially problematic. The benefit is the concrete record provided of each interview. Difficulties lay in deciding how to process the volume of data that was easily and quickly generated. A solution to this was found in the use of Nudist4 (QSR Pty.Ltd 1997) which provided a means for storing and processing audiotaped data that had been transcribed as textfiles. It also assisted with the analysis of data. Nudist4 assists primarily with categorical aggregation. It was this method of analysis that was favoured in identifying themes and illustrating issues that linked cases together and which could be seen to be more than just personal impressions.

All interviews were coded for data analysis with Nudist4 during 2000. The initial coding categories and themes tended to reflect the questions asked, particularly in Interview One. Given the more open-ended questions of Interview Two, the earlier categories often seemed inadequate for analysing the data. In the second interview, in particular, teachers often referred broadly to the use of ‘computers’ rather than to their own laptop. An emerging issue became the whole question of computerised or learning technologies in schools rather than just using the laptop computer that they now owned. Consequently, the five major themes of complexity, fragility, discontinuity, conservation and authenticity became more significant themes around which to arrange this report. Quotes are used extensively to illustrate these themes. Teachers are identified by their timetable initials. Simple initials indicate data collected in the first round of interviews and initials followed by a ‘2’ indicate data collected in a second interview. Line numbers refer to the transcribed interview as they
appear in the *Nudist4* text files.

**Teachers with laptops at NESC**

As part of the first rollout at the end of 1998, twenty-nine teachers received a laptop computer. Staff had the choice between Apple Macintosh or IBM-clone computers. Five staff members opted for Macintosh computers and the remainder for IBM. From a school perspective, this was only a chapter in the gradual expansion of computing facilities that had been taking place over many years. The introduction of the laptop computers should therefore be seen in the wider context of rapidly developing changes and of an increase in the use of computing throughout the school over several years.

Professional development in computing had been an ongoing process for several years. The new emphasis in professional development in the two years 1998 to 1999 related specifically to the expansion of computing resources in the school and the need to familiarise staff with their use and application. The professional development focus turned towards greater reliance on in-house training and learning rather than attending external courses. Learning was focused more specifically towards developing effective uses of new resources in the school setting rather than on learning the general features of different types of software that is so often the basis of external courses. The need to make professional development more context-specific arose from the recognition by teachers that generic skills often had little relevance in the particular context of the school and were not easily translated into the sorts of tasks teachers normally carry out in their work.

**First interviews**

The purpose of the first interviews was to gain some background information on each teacher's understandings and expectations. These interviews were carried out some months after teachers had obtained their laptop computer. They had, therefore, had some time to familiarise themselves with the basic workings of the laptop and test out the features and operating procedures.
Self-perception and conservation

One of the more interesting questions in this first round of interviews was that which asked teachers to describe their own abilities with a computer. Ultimately, this proved to be a poor question because there was no standard by which answers could be compared or evaluated. Teachers usually gave very broad responses such as 'medium', 'semi-confident' or 'relative'. When probed further about what they meant by such words, it became clear that a 'medium' level of skill for one teacher was quite different to a 'medium' level of skill for another. PB, for example, initially described her abilities as 'medium (?)'. The '?' reflected some tentativeness in the response. When asked to elaborate, PB referred generally to knowledge of programs such as Microsoft Word and Excel but not to very specific skills or applications. Her use of the computer to that point in the year had involved 'doing a little word processing'.

DM also described his skills as 'middling'. When probed further, he said that this meant that he estimated he used about '10 percent of the software capabilities' of most programs. However, he had also started using the laptop to do his roll-marking on an electronic version of the Teacher's Chronicle, connected it in class to a multimedia projector, used it extensively for his work as a Key Learning Area (KLA) leader, and had installed voice recognition software. As a KLA leader, he was also mentoring other staff in his subject area in the use of computers in class.

These two apparently discrepant responses would suggest that broad surveys of generic computing 'skills' (such as that represented by Meredyth et al. (1999)) provide only a very hazy picture of what is really happening in schools, inasmuch as the two self-assessments given above would initially suggest that both teachers were at about the same 'skill' level. What is more correct is that the ability to use something effectively and to visualise or plan for that effective use is to a large degree determined by existing understandings. Thus, a teacher who has very limited skills will still see these skills as an achievement because he/she has built on even more limited skills. Their evaluation of their ability is made in relation to their personal sense of progress from a low base.

Alternatively, someone who has a broad ranging knowledge and ability on the
computer is more likely to be aware of features, capabilities and potential that is also there but which they may not be using. Knowledge and experience or practice becomes a key prerequisite for a more informed knowledge and experience.

Conservation can be seen to operate as a means of making sense of things by relating them to what you already know and can do. This idea points to a key problem in the Laptop for Teachers programme. The technology was provided with very little guidance as to what to do with it other than to undertake thirty hours of professional development at an appropriate level. Although there are widely-held expectations of the potential of computers for education, very few actual models of practice seem to exist. No real models of practice were provided for teachers to follow or experiment with. While the Smith Report was able to talk of ‘powerful synergy’ and the Department of Education made reference to the proven research of ACOT, little of this materialised in the form of concrete ideas about what computers could do that was different to what teachers already did. This meant that many teachers were in the situation of being given a tool but very little accompanying guidance on what it could or should be used for. They consequently had to fill in their own objectives or purposes for using the laptop. The remainder of the first interview focused on discovering what each teacher set as his/her own objectives in using the computer.

Teachers’ work and complexity
On the whole, a teacher’s daily work routine involves three types of work: administrative tasks such as record keeping, report writing or organisational matters to do with students, classes and resources; class preparation including marking, collection of resources and setting up; and, classwork or actual teaching contact with students which also involves some administrative studies such as roll-marking and record-keeping. In finding a use for their laptops among these three basic categories of work, most teachers found fairly immediate uses in the first two categories. These types of tasks are essentially clerical or desk tasks and they involve using the laptop in a fairly standard way to replace pen, paper, folders and filing cabinets.
A teacher such as LI, who described herself as a 'novice' computer user, and who held no position of responsibility (that would involve her in more administrative tasks), was able to report early in Term One that she had used the laptop to type up projects and worksheets, even though she was 'not a fast typist'. DS who held a position of responsibility as Arts KLA leader was using it extensively for her administrative work: keeping class lists and marks on the computer, maintaining budgets, typing up minutes and writing a weekly KLA newsletter. She also used it for preparing class handouts, letters to parents and was using Microsoft Outlook as her personal diary. For a teacher such as CG, who was also sub-school head, the laptop had frequent daily use. She was able to connect the laptop to the school's CASES or administrative network, download student lists, create and maintain subject selection databases, and was producing a Middle School newsletter as well as a web-page for her subject. In the past, the sub-school had had occasional access to administrative staff who could maintain a database of student absences. This could also now be done on the laptop.

Typically, teachers had no difficulty in adapting the computer to those tasks that might be described as routinely clerical. This is because these are the tasks that fit with the most frequently used model of computer use—a machine that sits on a desk and allows the user to access, input and store information. Most of the basic computing software that was provided with the laptop—spreadsheet, database or word processing programmes—which form the basis of generic computer skills are designed for clerical administrative purposes. The limitation here is that this type of work usually constitutes only a minor part of any teacher's day. The opportunities to sit at a desk and do these tasks during the school day are often limited and disjointed.

Teachers also have to collect and maintain a range of information about students and classes. Usually this is kept in a markbook or teacher's diary. In my initial interviews, many teachers saw some potential for the laptop in the classroom replacing or duplicating their markbooks, attendance records and diary/planners, although they were uncertain how to go about it. The school had already
introduced computerised reporting for end-of-semester reports some years earlier. It seemed logical that the whole cycle of attendance, marks and reports could be linked together. DM reported trying to use the laptop to maintain class attendance rolls. Early on, he found this to be difficult. The need to carry the computer from room to room, set it up and enter attendance records while at the same time managing a class of students and coping with any other interruptions (such as the roll monitor coming in to record the absences) made the process unduly complicated for no real gain. Apart from DM, no-one attempted at this early stage to use the laptop for day-to-day record keeping. The notebook or attendance book was still seen as the most efficient and effective tool for this. In part, this reflected a general uncertainty amongst teachers as to whether or not they should take the laptop into class at all.

The complexity and fragility of the classroom situation which requires that things be kept moving, done quickly and kept to familiar routines did not seem to invite the sudden introduction of an unproven wildcard element. Consequently, staff members were divided on the issue of whether to use the laptop in class. Some staff viewed the laptop as a personal piece of equipment that was too precious to be allowed near students. It was seen as a fragile and expensive piece of equipment that would not wear well in the classroom. On the whole, I was one of those teachers. I did make some exceptions with my Year 12 class and, later on, with a Year 8 class for a specific purpose. Some teachers did see potential in the laptop for delivering lessons, demonstrations and the like. The school owned several digital cameras, a data projector and a set of graphic calculators that could be linked to a computer, as well as a school-wide network that provided Internet access in most rooms. A lot of the professional development activities focussed on how to set up these various pieces of equipment, with the expectation that this would then be repeated with a class. Staff who intended to take their laptops into class usually learnt how to connect the data projector to their laptop as a first step. Of eleven staff who reported taking the laptops into class, eight used it specifically with the data projector to provide a demonstration at the front of the room. The laptop and equipment remained in the control of the teacher and, in this sense, could be said only to have replaced the blackboard or whiteboard. As such, it was essentially adapted
to a familiar practice.

**Summary of the first interviews**

It became apparent that most teachers did begin using the laptop in the way that they expected they would. Although this might seem to be a fatuous statement, it means that most staff could visualise an immediate purpose for the laptop in relation to things they already did. However, they could not or did not set long-term goals beyond what was an obvious application at their own level of confidence and ability. The majority of teachers had no real trouble in transferring their paper-based information into the computer. Obviously, this could be done in their own time with few of the other pressures or interruptions that normally form part of a teacher's day. This did not result in any real advances in the work done and could be seen as being characterised by conservation of existing practices adapted to a new piece of technology.

Making the laptop a part of their classroom work proved more difficult. Although there seemed to be no particular expectation that teachers would bring the laptop into class, many of them felt that it was another potential use of the new technology that they should investigate. Those who felt that they should bring the laptop into class made a few isolated attempts. These attempts were typically in connection with other pieces of equipment such as data projectors, digital cameras or graphic calculators. Use in senior classes was usually the preferred option but no-one really reported using the laptop in class as an ongoing tool. Teachers were conscious of the fragility of the machine in the classroom and efforts to make use of the laptop within it were characterised by caution and discontinuity as possible uses were tried out but not usually persevered with.

GB came closest making the laptop an integrated part of his teaching, although it did not grow directly out of the acquisition of the computer itself. As a science KLA leader and computer teacher, GB's laptop was an addition to the ever-expanding collection of digital probes, calculators, television sets with computer interface, digital cameras, scanner and overhead projector that followed him from class to class (aided by several trolleys). But even in this case, the laptop
was accommodated within an existing practice and understanding as appeared
true of all teachers receiving laptops. The computer was used in a way which
aided, supported and fitted best with their existing understandings and methods
of working. In this sense, the school with its own structures, practices and
conventions could be seen to play the part of a determining technology which
influenced the way in which other technologies are taken up.

The first set of interviews was completed early in the year. Interviews were
characterised by the first flush of excitement of getting a new ‘toy’, some
expectation that it would lead to new things, and a general enthusiasm for the
professional development programme that operated throughout the term.
Although classroom use of laptops had been limited, most staff saw some
potential for this in the longer term even if they had made no concrete plans for
it up to this point.

Second interviews

Discontinuity and complexity
The second interviews were carried out in Term Four. I expected this set of data
to reveal much more change of practice than it actually did. In retrospect, these
expectations can be seen to be somewhat idealistic. I had found an immediate
use for my laptop for school work—doing worksheets, typing assignments and
tests, writing reports, and for personal use. I was already fairly adept at using
email and typing up work for my own purposes using voice input, but the laptop
didn’t significantly alter my teaching style over the year. In part, this was
because I was already teaching some computer subjects in a computer room and
the addition of another computer did not represent any change. For music
teaching, I could think of no real use for it in class. I did on occasions bring it
into computer classes and connect it to a data projector or to a digital camera but
this was only when the class was in the computer room and all students were
occupied using their own computers on other tasks. The weight of the data
projector and the complexity of attaching various cables, extension leads and
power points tended to discourage the use of this as an ongoing feature of my
teaching.
For many other teachers in the laptop programme, the complexity of setting up was also an issue. Assembling a laptop and a data projector or even a laptop and a graphic calculator required some time before the class, some preparation during the class and some pack-up time. The teaching day does not always permit this.

It (the laptop) is not really a part of my classroom practice. My staffroom is at the other end of the school and it’s a long way. (Ste2, line 52)

The frequent move from one class at one end of the school to another at the other, also discouraged DM from using the laptop as a record-keeper in class.

The desk diary idea died pretty quickly. I’ve got another job to do which is to teach. And I haven’t got time to wait while the thing loads up so I can mark the roll. (DM2, lines 1-2)

It is not practical to rely on sophisticated equipment that needs to be packed and carried. Obviously there will be classes where a free period beforehand or lunchtime will permit this. Many teachers were aware of the possibility of connecting the computer to a data projector to replace the whiteboard for demonstration purposes. However, they had to evaluate whether the time and effort involved in doing this was merited by any real difference in the way the class would work.

Quite often I’m running from one class to the next. And to set it all up — it’s just not possible. (MF2, lines 33-4)

In the end the authenticity of the change from whiteboard to projected screen was seen as dubious and not worth the effort, perhaps because it was simply a different (behaviourist) means of delivering information rather than a (constructivist) means of altering the learning environment. SOSE teacher, Cho was the only teacher to report bringing her laptop into class on a regular basis. She did this when she was also booked into a computer room and wanted to demonstrate on the laptop procedures that students could then replicate on their desktops in front of them. The presence of the desktops meant that students then had the opportunity to engage in hands-on (or constructivist) use of the techniques demonstrated.
What was apparent for most teachers was that one year was hardly any time at all for the laptop to have much impact on their classroom practice. Although teachers quickly found uses for the laptop as an administrative tool and did carry out some experiments in the first term, it became apparent in the second interviews that the rest of the year was viewed as a settling-in period. The administrative uses of laptops discovered in term one remained the main purpose for which they were used. Teachers such as DS, Cho and HB, who held positions of responsibility with associated administrative tasks, all reported extensive use of the laptop for those tasks which they could complete after their teaching or in their own time. Ordinary class teachers such as RC, who used it to record student marks, and MF, who produced all her worksheets and notes on the laptop continued as they had in Tcrm One without any real changes to their practice.

To a large degree, the plateau in progress was because the school requires teachers to operate within a fairly rigid time and space structure that determines, for the most part, the form and content of their practice. The structure of the school year is fairly well mapped out in advance with a routine of courses to be covered, testing or exams to be given and reporting to be carried out. This all takes precedence over other projects, including classroom innovation. Where the laptop could be fitted to a Year Twelve assessment task, as in their Maths Methods class, KL and BH had no problem with incorporating the technology into the classroom. But both subsequently took a term’s long-service leave during the year and cited this as a reason why they had allowed their laptops to fall into disuse. GB, one of the school’s technology gurus, had come up with several plans for using his laptop in class early in the year. But timetable changes had forced him to alter them.

My timetable changed and it changed all the classes I was planning to do projects with. (GB2, lines 4-5)

He decided to focus on calculators and computer-based logging equipment. These are just as sophisticated pieces of technology as a laptop and, for GB, more practical.

We’re better off giving them (the students) the equipment to use. (GB2, line 8)
Continuity, therefore, was difficult because experimentation, innovation or reflection have to be fitted into a few gaps in the term calendar or in the school timetable or between other activities such as exams and assessment. Some teachers did, however, make a concerted effort to use the laptop in a novel and innovative way.

**Testing the fragility of the technology**
LI was one teacher who thought she could use her laptop in class to motivate her creative writing group. She wanted to photograph the class both as a group and individually, download the pictures to her laptop and then distribute the photos via the network to student folders. Students were to be booked into a computer room where they could all access their own photos. They would then use the photos as the basis for creative writing. Although LI had clear curriculum goals, this task turned out to be a daunting one. The difficulties revolved around the technology.

As mentioned above, LI was quite happy to admit her novice status when it came to computers. Although she did not really have any difficulties with the digital camera, downloading the pictures proved much more of a problem than expected. As she was timetabled in a computer room on the day she took the photos, she decided that she could download and distribute them immediately. However, she had some initial trouble getting the computer to talk to the camera. She was eventually able to do so with the assistance of a few students, but this ended up taking most of the period. While the teacher and her assistants struggle with the technology, the rest of the students ended up talking amongst themselves. LI then found that putting the photos into the students’ network folder was not possible. The network gives teachers ‘read-access’ to all students’ folders but does not allow them to add files. Although LI eventually realised this, she found that she had spent most of a double period struggling with the technology for little profit. The technology had exposed the fragile character of the classroom situation and LI had to accept failure in this instance.

Prior to the next class, LI solved all of the problems with the assistance of the
Network Manager. Students arrived at class to find the pictures in their folders. They then began the task that LI had set, manipulating the photo and, typically, saving new copies of each manipulation. These were then imported into Microsoft Word. Towards the end of the period, LI suggested to students that they should save their work. Many of the students then reported that they were being given ‘out-of-diskspace’ messages by the network and could not save. Needless to say, LI was getting a little frustrated because after three periods her students had still produced almost nothing. It had also involved her in many periods of preparation and consultation, both inside and outside of class. The Network Manager suggested that the problem at this point was the number of duplicated images that the students were saving and the large word processor files created when digital images are incorporated. Students would have to convert and compress these files. He could give them more network space for the next lesson, but they would still lose today’s work.

Before her fourth period of creative writing, LI learned how to convert and compress picture files. She then spent most of the fourth period teaching the same skills to her class. Many students were not familiar with how to do this and LI spent a lot of time demonstrating individually to each student how to open the photo, change it, save it, and then import it back into Microsoft Word. After a week of work on the computers, the students were now ready to begin their creative writing.

Although LI related this story in good humour, some time after the event, and said that she would have another attempt next semester, she retained some reservations about the value of the whole process of incorporating technology. There were two fundamental issues. The first had to do with her objectives as a teacher of English. She envisaged the technology as an aid to this and wanted to see her students learning with the computer. In her few attempts at using the technology, she found that apart from her difficulties, she was mainly focusing on teaching the students how to use the technology—locating the file on the network, opening it, editing, saving, importing, wrapping text etc. This became a time consuming part of the lesson and firmly placed the emphasis on learning about the technology. LI remained adamant that she wanted to teach English
and not Technology. I suggested to her that she had started with an ambitious project for which she was only partially prepared. She agreed with this but suggested that some of the problems, such as students losing work because of a lack of disk space, were not something she could necessarily anticipate.

LI's experience and conclusions were a valid recognition of the potential problem that faces most teachers. At a time when many changes are being technology-driven rather than curriculum-driven, most teachers still want to see themselves as devoted to their subject and the curriculum. Even a teacher as committed to technology as GB who provided regional in-service programmes for science teachers in the use of technology said, 'the technology has to do what you want it to do, otherwise don't use it' (GB2, line 88). Where teachers feel that incorporating technology means having to focus on teaching the technology, most will then begin to view it as an intrusion into the subject that takes time away from what they really want to do.

Authentic changes to learning in terms of actual changes to what students do and how they do it becomes a key criterion as to whether teachers want to make use of technology in their classes. Where technology slowed down the workings of the class, required too much attention or preparation, or offered uncertain results, there was little value in it. Achieving authentic learning in the form of new practices and understandings within a given subject area was, I believe, widely recognised by teachers as the main goal of the change. This was conceived of in terms of a more constructivist approach where students had to actually engage in learning differently rather than simply acquire the same information in a technologically modified way. But the real difficulty for teachers was in working out what new things existed for students to learn. There appeared to be a dearth of external models coming into the school. In spite of the many claims made for the transformative role that computers could play, it became quite difficult to locate concrete examples of practice. Potential sources appeared to be available in the form end-of-year subject conferences, subject associations, teacher courses offered by the Department of Education such as the *Computers across the Secondary Curriculum* course, or courses offered by regional networks or 'Navigator schools' (selected primary and secondary
schools specifically set up and resourced in Victoria to investigate the use of Learning Technologies in the classroom). But, these resources were either little used or duplicated the same basic techno-literacy skills already offered in-house. LJ’s lesson using the digital camera is an example of a classroom task brought back from a Navigator school in-service education course. LJ was one of only two teachers who actually reported bringing in ideas from outside school that were then used.

Making authentic changes in LOTE
Given that most teachers’ progress through the year, including my own, was patchy and limited, it seems important to document one use of the laptop that appeared to truly meet all the criteria of being authentic, transformative and practical within the structure of the school. SP’s collaborative project with two other Victorian schools and a French secondary school proved both exciting and rewarding for her students, and an effective use of the laptop computer. The project required some time to set up in its initial phase at the end of the previous year. This included obtaining a Department of Education grant to purchase some software and a digital camera, preparing and setting up the equipment and establishing relationships with other schools. One initial difficulty was finding a school in France that was both interested and equipped to communicate regularly by email. Having established this at the start of the year, SP’s laptop then became the communications conduit through which her students could exchange letters with students in France. In the first year, this was restricted to the Year Nine French class. Students were to establish contact with a partner in France, do some research about where their partner lived, and send some details about themselves. Students would write this in French by hand, have it corrected by the teacher, and then type it up so that it could be emailed. Students had to share the use of SP’s laptop for this purpose, although many were able to overcome this bottleneck by using computers at home or being sent in small groups to a computer room. Apart from the excitement that the exchange of letters generated for students, SP felt that it changed the nature of the learning in her class:

The communication is much more authentic. Although you can teach the language, it is only in using it that you realise why it needs to be correct. Students became more conscious of correcting their mistakes.
Another highlight was when the students in France wanted to have their English corrected. The issue was how to do this. A solution was to make a copy of the message and then correct it in text of a different colour on the computer. Students had to maintain a folder on disk and on the laptop of what was sent, what was received, what was corrected, and what was not corrected.

Students reached standards that you might expect of a Year Eleven student because the need to communicate and reply means that they constantly had to think of new things to say. They also had to report regularly to their own class so they had to be able to translate and understand native speakers. (SP2, lines 40-45)

The laptop became a central tool in the class, but the focus was always the authentic use and practice of language. SP reported that her students were ‘carried away’ with the learning and that it was an ‘exalting experience’ for her as well. The course was subsequently continued into Year Ten and repeated for the new Year Nine French class in 2000. The other LOTE teachers have begun to develop similar classroom studies in other year levels.

Conclusion

The primary question in this research was to what degree could a laptop computer enhance teachers’ work. A second question arising with specific relevance to work in the classroom was the degree to which a laptop computer could be used to impact on the learning environment. Is learning simply reception of information and does the teacher simply need to stand aside and become a facilitator? In what sense is the school a ‘learning technology’ that absorbs all other technologies? How fragile, complex or authentic is the use of computing in teachers’ work?

SP frequently referred to the need for learning to be ‘authentic’. By this, I understood her to mean focused on the subject rather than the technology and focussed on its use in a real-world situation. It seemed also that this concept was widely understood by other teachers. Other LOTE teachers who did not have a laptop but could arrange to get a simple desktop computer into the classroom were able to quickly adapt and adopt the same model of classroom practice. In
this way, the technology becomes transparent. That is, the focus was no longer getting access to the technology or learning to use the technology; rather, it was on using it in a meaningful way in the context of teaching and learning. This was evidently an extremely difficult goal to achieve and is not a built-in feature of the technology. Rather, it clearly only comes about through the detailed planning and implementation that a teacher can provide.

It is apparent that learning is not merely the reception of information but involves making changes to the person. This is true in the case of the students that teachers teach and of teachers themselves. The use of a laptop computer did not, for most teachers, make significant changes to what they did during the year. Although most teachers experimented with and could foresee the possibility of changes to their practice in the forthcoming year, they also ended up adapting the laptop to those tasks and activities that they were used to performing in the usual way in which they performed them. In most cases, this involved creating electronic versions of existing paper-based documents. There was no real evidence that the computer transformed teachers’ work in this way to create authentic innovation. But, this conservatism was really mandated by the fact that the school itself did not change and the twenty-nine laptops were relatively insignificant additions to the technology of the school and how it continued to work. Teachers, therefore, applied the laptops in the most efficient ways in which the school made it possible for them to be used. The competing demands that arose during the year meant that innovation and experimentation were marked by discontinuity as teachers trialled new ideas only when the time became available—usually at the start or end of the year.

In terms of teaching and learning, teachers were overriding conscious of the complexity and fragility of the technology and, consequently, cautious about experimentation. They were also aware of the complexity and fragility of the classroom environment and how relying on a wildcard element such as a new piece of technology has the potential to cause chaos or, at least, a lot of wasted time if it does not do what is required. Managing the classroom situation requires the teacher to have clear goals and clear methods for achieving those goals. No teachers indicated any interest in giving up their roles as teachers to
become facilitators or guides. GB put it well when he said early in Term One that,

Teachers are adventurous but they are not risk takers. They need to know that it will work and that there will be a benefit, and that they can carry it off. Otherwise, move on. (GB, line 43)

Teachers were concerned that they could be certain that benefits would flow to students from the technology and that they were not just adopting the technology for the sake of it. It was important above all else to protect the learning environment rather than just play around with it.

There was evidence that a laptop computer could enhance teachers’ work but mainly in the less important administrative tasks which is the sort of work for which a computer is most commonly used. In terms of the expectations placed upon teachers not just to learn how to use computers, but also how to be creative with them in classroom situations — to discover ‘new possibilities’ or ‘explore innovation’ (Victorian Department of School Education 1998b, pp.2-3), it was evident that the school as a technology does not facilitate this conception of the computer. With few models available of what constitutes innovation and little guidance as to how to make it work within the structure of the school, the computer still requires much development before it will become a ‘learning technology’.
Dissertation

Using the Victorian Curriculum and Standards Framework in the music classroom
Chapter One—
Overview of the dissertation

This chapter provides an overview of the dissertation research. I begin by discussing the basic intentions of the research and the background within which it was conducted. I then outline the primary research questions being investigated and describe the four contentions that form the basis of the research. An overview is provided of research procedures and of the setting and the significance of the research. I conclude the chapter with an explanation of the organisation of the dissertation.

1.1 Overview of the research project

This dissertation reports on a study of music education practices of a selected group of Melbourne music teachers. The aim of the study was to examine the impact of the Victorian Curriculum and Standards Framework (CSF) (Victorian Board of Studies 1995, 2000) on the practices of classroom music teachers in a range of school settings. The study took place during a period when the first Curriculum and Standards Framework (CSFI) was being replaced after five years by a revised version (CSFII).

The CSF stands out in Victorian education as the first attempt to specify on a statewide basis the content for all school subjects across all the years of schooling. It has been a key educational policy for both Liberal Party and Labour Party governments since 1994. Considerable resources have been devoted to the development of CSFI and CSFII and to providing guidance publications and support programmes that promote their implementation in state schools (see, for example, Victorian Board of Studies 1995, 1996, 1999). The implementation programme for the CSFII over the period of 2000-2001 required state schools to revise all courses of study in line with CSFII outcomes and to report directly on CSFII outcome achievements in student reports. Independent (non-state) schools are exempted from any requirement to use the CSF. However, many independent schools, particularly Catholic ones, still make use of the CSF without being bound by the reporting requirements placed on state schools.
It is intended that this study will provide some insight into the effectiveness of the CSFI and CSFII as a planning tool for music teachers. More broadly, it is intended to provide some insight into the processes that teachers undertake when required to respond to mandated curriculum changes and into the effectiveness of centralised outcome specification as a curriculum model.

1.2 Background to the research

1.2.1 The Curriculum and Standards Framework
The CSF was first published in 1995. It is a direct outcome of the national curriculum process that began in 1988 under the Hawke-Keating Labour governments and culminated in 1994 with the publication of the national Statements and Profiles for eight ‘key learning areas’ (KLAs). The KLAs were English, Mathematics, Science, Arts, Health and Human Development, Technology, Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE), and Languages other than English (LOTE). The Statement for each key learning area sets out the content, discipline structure and individual subjects that it might incorporate. The Profile lists the outcomes that students could be expected to achieve over eight levels across the thirteen years of primary and secondary schooling. These documents were developed nationally as the basis for school curriculum planning and reporting in the various state education systems.

Because Australian education is administered at a state level, it consequently fell to individual state governments to implement the Statements and Profiles in their own way. Each state has chosen to do this differently. In Victoria, the Profiles were revised and, after some public consultation, the revised product was released to schools as the Victorian Curriculum and Standards Framework (CSFI). The Statements were largely ignored and have not been incorporated into the CSFI in any way. The Profile outcomes were, for the most part, retained in their original form except that there are only seven levels of achievement instead of eight.

As a curriculum policy, the CSFI represented a considerable change in direction from previous policies. Victoria had had a fairly long tradition of school-based
curriculum development. The previous curriculum framework, *Frameworks P-12* (Victorian Ministry of Education 1988) had focussed on this method of curriculum development within broadly defined goals of social justice and equity of access to educational resources. No attempt was made to specify subject content or to map out the paths of learning. *CSFI* adopted a new approach by outlining in considerable detail the structure and content of the eight KLAs and of individual subjects within them. It also mapped out the progress of learning in each subject over seven levels of about two years each. Where *Frameworks P-12* had given schools considerable freedom to develop teaching and learning programmes at the local level, the *CSFI* now placed emphasis on centralised curriculum development to provide statewide consistency. It was to act as a mechanism for the measurement of student achievements against benchmarked standards (Victorian Board of Studies 1994, pp.2-6).

This change of policy is partial, inasmuch as the *CSF* remains a framework and not a syllabus or curriculum. That is, it attempts to mark out broad goals or signposts in the form of a collection of outcome statements that students should achieve at certain times in their schooling. But, it does not specify the pathways leading to the achievement of these outcomes or the content of day-to-day lessons. These could have been provided by accompanying syllabi, as they are in New South Wales (see, for example, NSW Board of Studies 1994, 1996), but this was neither planned for nor carried out in either *CSFI* or *CSFII*. Planning the content and delivery of courses that would realise the broad goals of the *CSF* remained the prerogative of Victorian schools and individual teachers. Schools were required to undertake some auditing of existing courses, modify them where necessary and incorporate references to *CSF* achievement in individual student’s reports.

It will be shown that combining a school-based approach to curriculum formulation with a centralised or mandated framework risks incorporating most of the shortcomings associated with both approaches and few of the benefits. Consistency of educational delivery and standards across the nation was one of the original rationales for the publication of the *Statements and Profiles*
(Dawkins 1989). Consistency across schools and systems is also a significant rationale for the CSF (Victorian Board of Studies 1994, p.6). But, teachers have considerable freedom in interpreting what outcome statements mean in terms of their own students' performances and in deciding how to get their students to achieve them. Consequently, there is little guarantee that what students do in meeting outcomes will be similar from one school to the next. Since there is no standardised testing of CSF outcome achievement or centralised reporting of student achievement, there has been little assessment of how effectively teachers make use of the CSF. In essence, the CSF retains all the diversity of school-based curriculum development. Simultaneously, a great deal of time, money and work has been put into developing and publishing the CSF. As the primary instrument of curriculum development in the state, the CSF is a costly exercise that absorbs much of the resources devoted to curriculum development in Victoria. It is reasonable then to question whether there are any gains to be identified in the existence of the CSF. The net effect does not appear very different from the previous policies of school-based curriculum development.

In 1999, the Victorian Department of Education published a consultation document on revisions to the CSF and subsequently released a new version, the CSFII. The CSFII consultation document identified the need for revision in a variety of difficulties arising from the initial use of CSF. These included:

- overcrowding of the curriculum, or the requirement to cover too much in too little time;
- a desire to focus more on literacy and numeracy, and the incorporation of information technology into subjects; and,
- the need to identify learning priorities or essential learnings aligned to 'the broad stages of schooling' (Victorian Board of Studies 1999, pp.2-3).

The revisions resulted in a simplification of the structure of most subjects and a reduction of the number of levels of achievement to six. There was also some simplification to the layout of the document and to the language which had previously been fairly obtuse. Along with these changes came a new requirement that schools be more explicit in identifying how their subject offerings meet the new requirements specified in the CSFII outcome.
statements. Outcome statements must appear on student reports which means that teachers will need to directly assess student work in terms of CSFII outcomes.

1.2.2 The Arts within the CSF
In CSFI, music was a strand of The Arts learning area. There were five other strands in the Arts—dance, drama, media, visual arts and, from Levels Five to Seven, graphic communication. Following the model of the national Profile, all arts subjects were described in terms of a common structure of substrands and strand organisers. The Substrands were ‘Creating, Making and Presenting’ (CMP), ‘Aesthetics and Art Criticism’ (AAC) and ‘Past and Present Contexts’ (PPC). ‘Creating, Making and Presenting’ was divided into the three strand organisers of ‘Exploring and Developing Ideas’ (EDI), ‘Using Skills, Techniques and Processes’ (USTP), and ‘Presenting’ (P). One outcome was specified for each substrand or strand organiser at each of the seven levels.

These outcomes were generic arts outcomes that could then be adapted to each subject by the substitution of the term ‘The Arts’ for a term referring to the separate disciplines or strands—‘music’, ‘media’, ‘dance’, ‘drama’, ‘graphic communication’ or ‘visual arts’. Thus, learning in any arts subject is represented as being essentially the same. Typically, this learning focuses on aesthetic or affective characteristics or on processes to be used in the creation of arts works.

The model for this approach to arts education is the Aesthetic Education Curriculum Project that was current in the United States in the period 1966-1974 and, more directly, Discipline-based Art Education (Groer 1984). As models for arts education and music education, neither are widely considered to have been successful in the United States (Kern 1984). However, the principles of Aesthetic Education continue to inform many Australian state frameworks for arts education. This is discussed in greater detail in my Elective Research Study Two.

In the revisions incorporated into CSFII, music is still one of six arts subjects but it exists in its own right only from Levels Three to Six. For Levels One to Three, the CSFII distinguishes only between two strands of The Arts—Visual
Arts and Performing Arts. Curriculum Focus statements at these levels (which provide some guidance about possible course content and learning direction) do make reference to individual subjects of music, dance, drama, etc. Within each strand (individual subject) at each level, the number of substrands has been reduced to two—Arts Practice and Responding to the Arts. For Levels One to Three, one outcome is specified for each strand. At Levels Four to Six, two outcomes are specified. Although this represents an overall reduction in the number of outcomes to be assessed, the CSFII often confounds this by making each outcome statement a collection of further outcomes that students must achieve.

For the most part, the sub-strand outcomes from CSFI are redistributed into the new substrands of CSFII. ‘Aesthetics and Art Criticism’ and ‘Past and Present Contexts’ outcomes appeared under the new substrand of ‘Responding to the Arts’. ‘Creating, Making and Presenting’ outcomes are incorporated into ‘Art Practice’. Where all the CSFI outcome statements could not be fully incorporated into four new CSFII outcome statements, they appear among the collection of pointers accompanying them. In effect, there has been little reduction in the number of outcomes to be achieved.

1.2.3 Outcomes in the Arts
In both CSFI and CSFII it is the nature of the learning outcomes or standards that are contentious. The levels of ability or standards of achievement are largely hypothetical. The national Statement and the Profile for the Arts (Curriculum Corporation 1994a, 1994b), on which the CSF was modelled, were written by two Melbourne University academics under contract to the Australian Education Council. The time allocated for writing was limited and there was no research carried out to either direct or validate outcome levels (Marsh 1994). This raises the question of what the levels of achievement are actually representing. The relationship between the eight Profile levels and the thirteen years of schooling is unclear. The Statement refers to four Bands of lower primary, upper primary, lower secondary and upper secondary (p.26). This has a more obvious relationship to the practices and structure of Australian education.
But, it is evident that student progression through levels of achievement is somehow viewed as independent of what schools actually do.

The CSFI is based fairly directly on the national Profile except that its seven levels of achievement are more directly related to the years of schooling (Victorian Board of Studies 1994, p.5). It is acknowledged that the strands and learning area structure are ‘convenient devices’ (Victorian Board of Studies 1994, p.2) and that the CSF is ‘not a structure that mirrors any school’s curriculum organisation’ (Victorian Board of Studies 1995, p.1). This raises the question of what is actually being mirrored. Although the CSFI and CSFII contain a wealth of description about what students do in various strands at various levels, it is not often apparent how they come to do this. References to ‘teachers’, ‘teaching’ or ‘learning’ are only rarely made. This was particularly true of CSFI where Curriculum Focus statements and Learning Outcome statements barely acknowledged the existence of either teachers or schools.

In CSFII, teachers are given some recognition for providing ‘guidance’, ‘assistance’ or ‘support’ to students and students are more explicitly involved in ‘learning’ than they were in CSFI. But, the role of the teacher in the CSFII often appears to be incidental to the learning process. They are mentioned five times in Curriculum Focus statements at Levels One to Three for Performing Arts-Music and once only in Curriculum Focus statements for Music at Levels Four to Six. Equally, student ‘learning’ in music is only mentioned ten times across the six levels or thirteen years of schooling. It takes a subsidiary role, for example, to students ‘developing’ (mentioned twelve times) or ‘exploring’ (twelve mentions), and is only a little more important than ‘experimenting’ (nine mentions). While the CSFII is a document written primarily for teachers, it is not always evident how the curriculum focus and student learning outcomes arise as a result of teaching. What, presumably, is being presented is a model of normative learning development reflecting cognitive development or, in the case of the Arts, emotional development.
1.3 Principal research problem

The CSF has been in operation for eight years giving music teachers adequate time to learn how to use it as a planning and assessment tool. The key question being investigated in this research, then, is the impact or influence that the CSF is having on what teachers do. This can assessed by the degree to which music teachers have assimilated the ideas of CSFI and incorporated them into their own teaching practices. This assimilation would be evident in various aspects of teachers’ work such as, (1) the planning of lessons and units of work according to the outcomes of the CSFI, (2) assessment of student work in line with student outcome statements, and (3) the reporting procedures that teachers use. It may also be evident in less specific areas of a teacher’s general understanding of and empathy for CSF, or the degree to which his/her personal aims and intentions as a music teacher coincides with the philosophy of Music Education as Aesthetic Education that underpins the CSF.

There is a limited amount of evidence to suggest that the initial impact of the Statements and Profiles or of the CSF on teachers’ practice has not been significant (Owen, Meyer et al. 1996; Tokan 1997) and that this approach to centralising curriculum development is not widely appreciated by teachers. No published studies have been completed since 1996 to examine the usefulness of either the CSF or the process of centralised curriculum development in Victoria. My research aims, then, to examine how the practices of music teachers have been effected by the centralised curriculum development process.

1.4 Purpose of study and research contentions

Teachers bring a range of personal skills and interest to their teaching. Curriculum change in the form of the CSF needs to be seen as one among several factors influencing music education in Victoria. In this study, the impact of the CSF as a planning tool will be examined within a broader survey of the aims of music teachers and schools in providing music education. This is a philosophical as well as a practical issue which attempts to consider the purpose and value of music education in schools and to determine whether teachers share a conceptual or practical basis in what they do. Where this basis can be
found, it seems important to consider how or why it has evolved and what its relationship might be to the vision of school music education presented in the CSF.

In order to gather data about this, interviews with classroom music teachers in different school settings in the northern suburbs of Melbourne were carried out. These interviews recorded teachers’ own explanations of what they do in their teaching and why they do it. The interviews gave each teacher the opportunity to express opinions and understandings about the CSF as well as about the significance of their work in general. As stated above, many of the issues go beyond a focus on the CSF to more general ones of the purpose and methods of music education and of education generally.

In order to address the primary research question of the impact that the CSF is having on teachers’ practices, four contentions, derived from the four Elective Research Studies have been developed to examine aspects of the CSF and the implementation process.

The first contention is that the CSF for music has had very limited effect on teachers’ conceptions of what they are trying to do as music educators, and that it is not being used to guide music teaching in schools. This contention draws on the analysis of Aesthetic Education and Praxial Education presented in Elective Research Study One. It is contended that the essentially aesthetic and generic nature of the CSF outcomes for music gives rise to goals which are vague and unachievable. In this respect, it will be argued that aesthetic development provides an inadequate basis for teachers’ programme planning and assessment.

A second contention is that the abstract model of age-based developmental learning that forms the basis of the entire CSF does not reflect school teaching and learning practices. This draws on Elective Research Study Two where it was shown that there are abundant models of educational development existing in Australia, but very little agreement as to the nature of student development. The work and central role of teachers is ignored and this misrepresents the nature of education and learning in music programmes in schools.
Contentions three and four deal more broadly with teachers’ work and the process of educational change which are investigated in the context of music education. Drawing on the personal experiences described in Elective Research Study Three, contention three asserts that teachers’ practice is strongly grounded in the specific school situation and is an informed response to student interest and needs. At the school level, goals and outcomes are clear and measurable because teachers must make teaching and learning work in a specific context. Providing students with the most opportunities within the resources available in diverse situations is the primary concern of teachers. This takes precedence over the goals of the CSF to deliver programme consistency (in student achievement, in judgement of student ability, or of curriculum implementation across a system). The goals of the CSF are, consequently, not likely to be a priority for teachers and can not be easily mandated or implemented.

The fourth contention looks again at policy-driven change and is based on the conclusions presented in Elective Research Study Four. Where teachers see themselves as offering the best that they can for the students with whom they work, it is evident that any new demands that are made upon them will be fitted to existing practices and intentions in such a way that there is minimal disruption or change. Educational change becomes a complex process of changing practice rather than simply setting new guidelines. Where the change process is conceptualised in terms of distributing new policy documents, it is unlikely to be effective.

The overall purpose of the research will therefore be to examine the impact of the CSF on music teachers’ work from a range of perspectives. It will provide an evaluation of the efficacy of both the products of centralised curriculum development and of the process for delivering educational change and improvement.
1.5 Overview of the research methodology

This research study was undertaken in the tradition of descriptive qualitative research and attempts to answer questions of why and how teachers do or do not respond to policy-driven curriculum change. The Northern educational region, one of eight educational administrative regions in the state, was selected as the locus of the research. In June 2001, a questionnaire was mailed to all 192 state primary and secondary schools in the region requesting information about the schools' music programme and inviting music teachers to participate in an extended interview. The grounded theory principle (Glaser and Strauss 1967) of searching for contrasts was used to guide the selection of teachers for interview from the positive responses received. Thirty-two teachers from thirty-one state primary and secondary schools subsequently participated in an extended interview over the period of October to December, 2001.

The mailed questionnaire was designed principally as a sampling instrument and was not subsequently drawn on for data. Data collection for the research focussed on the tape-recorded interviews with individual teachers using a schedule of open-ended questions that invited them to describe at length experiences, intentions and beliefs. This was supported by observation, in the form of school tours, and document collection that mainly focussed on School Report proforma or programme outlines. Observations were recorded in a Researcher's Log that was written up after each interview.

The aim of the data collection was to gather rich information that would reveal the understandings and intentions of the participants as knowledgeable and capable agents. This was seen as important in revealing the true impact of change on the practice of individual teachers' understanding and work. Data collection produced a large volume of recorded data. Data-processing involved an initial transcription of interviews into textfiles which were then analysed with the assistance of Nudist4 (QSR Pty.Ltd. 1997). Nudist4 software assists with the categorical analysis of data using grounded theory techniques.
The themes and categories identified in the data have been organised around the four contentions outlined above as the basis for this report. These are presented as four separate chapters. Quotations are used extensively to support and illustrate the conclusions being made.

1.6 Overview of the research setting and sampling procedure

The northern suburbs of Melbourne are culturally and economically diverse and contain 182 state primary and secondary schools. The North-East is a middle-class area with a high concentration of people from an Anglo-Celtic background. Some parts of it are experiencing a declining school-age population which is putting pressure on schools to maintain their enrolment figures. North-Central is a more industrialised area with many first-generation Australians and people from non-English-speaking backgrounds. The Inner-North retains characteristics of both with a concentration of students from Asian and Middle-Eastern backgrounds. The region is also experiencing some resurgence in population as new, middle-class families move back into the inner-city. The Northern Region also extends to a few towns beyond the metropolitan area which have some of the characteristics of rural Victoria. The region was considered to contain sufficient variety in terms of schools and the social and economic status of the population to provide a representative sample of the state. This was considered important because the research has been framed in terms of grounded theory principle (Glaser and Strauss 1967) of basing conclusions on data that is as rich in variety and contrasts as is possible.

An invitation to participate in the research project was initially sent to all state schools (37 secondary schools and 145 primary schools) in August 2001. This invitation took the form of a plain language explanation of the project and a survey of five questions (reproduced in Appendices A and B). The survey sought to elicit some information about the character and extent of the music teaching programme in the school and about the teaching experience of the music teacher, and invited the teacher to participate in an interview. The main purpose of the survey was to locate experienced music teachers who would be interested in providing interview data. Some follow-up requests to schools to
return the survey questionnaire were made by phone during September and October of 2001.

From the responses received in the questionnaire, teachers in thirteen secondary and nineteen primary schools were selected. Teachers were selected on the basis of their experience and association with a well-established music programme. Almost all teachers had some experience of teaching in a school other than their current one and were in a position to compare their present work with that in other school situations. Experience and confidence were considered as primary qualities that would permit the teachers to reflect and comment on their own work. As far as possible, schools were also selected to produce a fairly evenly-spaced sample across the entire Northern Region. This was regarded as important so that contrasting social and economic contexts were taken into consideration.

Pilot interviews were carried out in August and September of 2001 with a small group of music teachers not involved in the main sample. These aimed to test the interview questions and the interview procedure. The formal interview programme began in October and was completed by the end of December 2001.

1.7 Significance of the research

The study has taken place at a time when the focus of curriculum development in many Australian states has shifted away from schools to centralised curriculum bureaucracies. The research was located in a few schools in Victoria where centralised curriculum development has been in operation since 1995 and has delivered two editions of the CSF. Similar processes have since been adopted in all Australians states (Lokan 1997). The need for this centralisation is typically argued in terms of a need for new or better education standards or greater consistency and accountability of educational achievements. Towards this goal, governments in all Australian states are now devoting considerable resources of money, staffing and time and have elevated curriculum development to the status of a key educational policy.
The many assumptions underlying this trend remain untested. The first of these assumptions is often not stated. The demand for new or better standards suggests that teachers and schools do not or have not set sufficiently high enough standards when left to develop their own. Such a viewpoint casts doubt on the professionalism of teachers and the efficacy of schools as agents of education in the community. A second set of assumptions that may be more readily stated suggests that standards can be established simply by describing them in a publication which is then disseminated to teachers and schools. Such an assumption posits a very simplistic view of change in which teachers and schools (as well as students, parents and the wider community) are seen as mere functionaries of state policy—what Anthony Giddens (1984) calls ‘cultural dopes’.

It will be argued throughout this dissertation that neither of these assumptions provides a credible basis for educational reform. Teachers need to be recognised as knowledgeable and capable agents and their work needs to be acknowledged as a practice best adapted to the educational needs of the communities in which they work. Such recognition does not deny or ignore the need for improvement or change. But, it does assert the need for a more sophisticated understanding of the complexities of change. Changing education is still essentially about changing the practices of people (students and teachers) and organisations (schools and school systems). It seems unlikely that a publishing programme that specifies abstract goals can provide a credible basis for educational reform.

1.8 Organisation of the dissertation
The dissertation consists of eight chapters including this initial overview chapter. Chapter Two is a literature review that consists of four sections. Section one examines literature relating to the theoretical basis of the research. Sections two and three examine the literature relating to teachers and change, to the application of outcome-based education (OBE) and to curriculum development in Australia. Section four provides a synthesis of the theoretical framework and the educational research literature.
Chapter Three is a detailed discussion of the research design. The aims of the investigation are restated in detail and the research questions and contentions are explained. The qualitative research methodology based on grounded theory procedures (Glaser and Strauss 1967, Strauss and Corbin 1990) and the sociological theories of Anthony Giddens and Pierre Bourdieu are described. These are then related to the research procedure in which the sampling, data collection and data analysis procedures are each explained.

Chapters Four to Seven discuss the data in relation to the four contentions that form the basis of the research. In each chapter, the primary themes relating to the specific contention is identified and described with the use of extensive quotation from the interview data. At the end of each chapter, a summary of findings in relation to the specific contention is given. Chapter Eight provides a conclusion for the entire research project by tying together the findings for individual contentions into a general summary that addresses the primary research question relating to the impact of the CSF on the practices of music education in Victorian schools.
Chapter Two—
Literature review

The initial part of the literature review considers the ideas of two sociologists, Anthony Giddens and Pierre Bourdieu, whose work is used to frame an understanding of this research. The second part of the literature review examines the writings dealing with teachers and change focusing mainly on teacher response to curriculum change. The third section examines the arguments relating to outcome-based education with a particular focus on that literature emanating from Australia. Research examining the response to, and use of, curriculum frameworks in the various Australian states is also examined in this section. The final section provides a synthesis of the sociological framework with the research findings on teachers’ response to change and mandated curriculum.

2.1 Overview of the sociological framework

This literature review ranges widely across several themes related to the basic research question outlined in Chapter One as well as to themes relating to the research methodology and procedures. It begins by discussing the work of sociologists Anthony Giddens and Pierre Bourdieu whose theories examine the nature of society and its individual members. This sociological perspective is used to frame the dissertation research. A top-down model of curriculum reform (as represented by the CSFI and CSFII) presents the change process simplistically. In this model, ideas and solutions are developed centrally in the form of policy documents that are fed down the system to agents who are expected to implement the received ideas both intelligently and unquestioningly. The problems inherent in this model can be located in an understanding of the limits between structure (central policy development) and agency (individual teacher’s work). Giddens and Bourdieu provide complementary theories that explain the relationship between structure and agency.

2.2 Structure and agency

2.2.1 Structuration theory

This research examines individual teaching practice and school practice within the structure of the educational system. The question of the relationship between
individuals and society (also characterised as a relationship between free will and determination) has long been a significant theme in philosophy, religion, social science and history. It is considered to be a central question in this research which deals with how individuals work within the social and educational structures given to them. A fundamental question is the extent to which the individual has the power to act freely, knowledgeably and with impact upon the given structures, and the degree to which this might be constrained or curtailed by those same structures.

Giddens (1976) suggests that society is created and recreated afresh by its participants in every social act:

The production of society is a skilled performance, sustained and made to happen by human beings. It is indeed only made possible because every member of society is a practical social theorist; in sustaining any sort of encounter, he draws upon his knowledge and theories, normally in an unforced and routine way. (pp.15—16)

Borrowing from phenomenology, hermeneutics and critical theory, Giddens (1976, 1984) has developed a ‘theory of structuration’ based on a concept of understanding as ‘the very ontological condition of human life in society’ (1976, p.19). Self-understanding is connected integrally to the understanding of others and comes about only through the appropriation of publicly-available linguistic forms of communication.

The theory of structuration attempts to resolve the traditional divide between individual action and social structure (Giddens 1984, p.xxvii). Chapter One of The Constitution of Society (1984) provides a useful summary of the elements of structuration theory. While suggesting that the production and reproduction of society is a skilled performance on the part of its members, Giddens points out that it is a performance bounded by the pre-existence of society. Structure and agency are mutually dependent. Structural properties exist as a result of the forms of social conduct being reproduced across time and space by agents (pp.2-3). It is the existence of similar social practices across separate spans of time and space that defines social systems. Agents remain agents only inasmuch as they retain some ability to contribute to the production and reproduction of
social practices. Power, in the broader sense of an ability to get things done, is an essential element of agency (p.14). An agent’s power for reflexivity means that reproduction is no simple process of duplication but a constant making anew. This makes each person an historically-located actor working within conditions that are given to him/her. Each actor works to recreate those same conditions in his/her own lifetime. The process of structuration, or the creating social structures anew in the form of enduring social practices, involves an interplay of meanings, norms and power (pp.28-29). The conditions within which people act is made possible but is also limited in scope by the meanings and norms made possible in the society in which they live. This feature of being simultaneously constraining and enabling is what Giddens calls the ‘duality of structure’ (p.25-29).

Social practices and practical consciousness become the mediating link that joins traditionally opposed concepts of individual and society, subject and object, and conscious and unconscious modes of cognition. Rather than being opposed, these binaries can be seen to interact to recreate each other. Social structures come about through the essential recursiveness of social life as constituted in social practice. The recursive nature of our social practices means that they simultaneously enter into the constitution of the agent and arise from the practices of agents (Giddens 1984, pp.41-45). The concepts of action and structure presuppose one another within two other dimensions—time and space. Social activity is always constituted as the outcome of intersecting points of time, space (or place) and paradigmatic understanding which is both inherited and passed on by agents. Context, or time and space, play a central role in the theory of structuration. Structure is not a fixed form but the constantly reproduced patterns of life as they are realised in social interaction in particular contexts. As such, they may change over time or vary between places and cannot be seen to exist externally to the practices of agents (pp.83-92). Structure appears to us as the rules and resources (norms and practices) that form the properties of social systems. The system itself is a constantly reproduced set of relations between actors organised as regular social practices (p.170).
In recognising the knowledgeability of social actors, Giddens extends the concept of knowledge to include unconscious knowledge. This is because social practices are typically handed down and accepted unquestioningly in the first stages of life. Knowledge and understanding as the basis of purposeful action goes beyond what agents may be able to explicate or rationalise (pp.45-49). Thus instinct, common-sense, intuition and practice are placed on the same level as rationality (pp.4-5). Action becomes a continuous flow of conduct within an historically-located mode of activity. However, our actions are not always amenable to rationalisation. Unconscious or tacit intentions lie in the mutual knowledge shared by actors in the production of social encounters. These are not usually rationalised or acknowledged by the actors in an explicitly codified way. The motivational components of action straddle conscious and unconscious aspects of cognition and emotion. Action is thus presented as a complex interplay of aims, rationalisation, understandings and emotions. This complex interplay takes place within conditions over which the agent is likely to have only partial control. It can give rise to both intended outcomes and consequences that could only have been partially anticipated. Giddens (1984, p.5) presents this as his stratification model of action.

Figure 1. Stratification model of action after Giddens (1984, p.5)

Knowledgeability (what agents know about what they do and why they do it) is largely carried in practical consciousness (p.26) and consists of all the things which actors know how to carry out in the context of social life. Knowledgeability is typically much wider than the number of things that actors can explain.
about their own actions. Routine is a basic element of this knowledge and the predominant form of day-to-day social activity (pp.60-64). The aim of examining our social practices is, therefore, twofold. We seek to explain how social practices as structures (such as patterns of life, routines or institutions) are constituted through action, and we hope to examine how our actions are constituted by those same structures (p.27). The goal is reflexive social practice in everyday life. Giddens sees his work as having significant implications for the form and direction of research. These implications are discussed in Chapter Three.

2.2.2 Habitus and field

The work of French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, provides a counterpart to the ideas of Anthony Giddens. Like Giddens, he sees classical social theory as characterised by an opposition between subjectivist and objectivist approaches that, on their own, fail to adequately account for human action. In two major works, Outline of a theory of practice (1977) and The logic of practice (1990), Bourdieu argues that social life must be understood in terms that recognise both the constituting practices and experiences of individuals and groups, and the material, social and cultural structures in which they live. A related opposition that Bourdieu seeks to overcome is that between the theoretical knowledge of the social world as constituted by outside observers and the knowledge used by those who possess a practical mastery of the their own world (agents) (1977, p.4). Where Giddens is concerned to map out his structuration theory as a broad theoretical model, Bourdieu (1977) focuses on three fundamental concepts or ‘tools’: habitus, capital and field. The workings of these tools are subsequently explored by Bourdieu in a range of works that examines individual social development, education, aesthetics and language.

The notion of habitus is central to Bourdieu’s theory of practice which seeks to transcend the opposition between theories that present individual action solely as ‘constituting’ (carrying out individual intentions), or solely as ‘constituted’ (determined by social forces). Habitus refers to the set of dispositions developed and reformulated through a person’s life and reflecting a personal history, social positioning and embodied learning (1977, p.72). Dispositions are gradually
acquired from the very beginning of a person’s life and can be seen to operate at a subconscious level. The first source of habitus is through the socialising agency of the mother and family. The child is disposed to see the world and act in the same way as the older generation (1977, p.167). Since this begins before the acquisition of language, often through a physical or bodily orienting of the child towards certain types of behaviour, habitus becomes the foundation for the most automatic or basic of gestures—eating, talking, personal interaction. It begins as a form of knowledge which is beyond scrutiny or reflection—a disposition to act or behave in a certain way.

Habitus also includes a person’s accumulated knowledge and experience of the world and of how to act within it. Habitus reflects the history of a lifetime and is therefore never fixed or predictable. Accumulated knowledge and experience thus has a generative or constitutive power in that action always uses experience-based knowledge adapted to particular situations. This in turn generates further understanding or practices. Practice does not follow automatically from habitus but is an ability for structured improvisation (1977, p.78). This power to gauge a situation and bring an appropriate response is necessary as material and social environments change from generation to generation. Habitus changes as the behaviour of the individual adjusts to new situations (1977, p.95). Habitus is not a determining construct but a mediating one. It is both the conduit through which the individual understands and engages with the world and the basis for strategic action.

Bourdieu’s concept of capital is neither strictly Marxist nor economic but refers to the accumulation of personal assets that provide the individual with the power to exercise some control over his/her own life. This notion of capital serves to link the working of individual habitus with the broader structures of society. On one level society is structured by a differential distribution of capital. On another level, individuals strive to maximise their personal capital. The capital they are able to accumulate defines their social trajectory. Much of Bourdieu’s work focusses on the interplay of three types of capital—symbolic capital or status and power, cultural capital or knowledge and ability, and economic capital or wealth (1977, p.179). Capital, or the exchange of capital in its
different forms, is the basis for social relations as well as social positioning. Each type of capital is convertible into other forms although, following Marx, Bourdieu gives pre-eminence to economic capital as the most readily convertible (1977, p.183). Social class as defined by economic capital becomes a significant determinant in the initial development of habitus. Cultural capital plays a crucial role within the wider conception of the field (1977, p.183-184) in determining the direction of a person’s life.

The purpose of the field is to provide the frame within which the interaction of habitus and capital may be analysed. A field is a network of relations between positions. Bourdieu uses the concept of the field instead of a broad concept of society. A field is a site for endeavour and is bounded by its own interests and modes of operation. The social world is made up of many fields all operating somewhat independently but also competing for power and resources. In a highly differentiated society, the social cosmos is made up of a number of relatively autonomous fields that are the site of a logic and of needs that are specific and irreducible to those of other fields (Bourdieu 1992, p.99). What counts as true for one field may not be relevant elsewhere and so the concept of the field is used to contextualise the operations of habitus and capital.

Positions within a field are objectively or socially defined and can be held by people or institutions. Positions impose upon their occupants a role and a habitus for working according to the situation of the position in the structure of distributed capital (or power) (1992, pp.96-7). It is the state of relations of force between players that defines the structure of the field. Bourdieu uses the game analogy extensively (1992, pp.99-100). Players can play to increase or conserve capital (power) or they can attempt to transform the rules of the game to favour their own ends. The forces that are active in the field are those which define the specific capital of the field—wealth, status, power, etc. Capital does not exist or function except in relation to the field. It confers power over the field, over the materialised instruments of production or reproduction whose distribution constitutes the structure of the field, and over the regularity and rules which define the ordinary functioning of the field and, therefore, its profits (1992, pp.101).
The notion of strategy becomes important because it describes the way in which habitus is applied within the field in a way that is neither conscious, calculated or mechanical but which applies intuitive understanding and knowledge in the pursuit of specific goals. A field is a site for struggles aimed at preserving or transforming the configuration of the forces described above. These struggles guide the strategies by which agents seek individually or collectively to safeguard or improve their position. The strategies of agents depend on their position in the field. Analysis of the field involves analysing power relations (1992, p.104). One must map out the objective structure of the relations between the positions occupied by agents who compete for authority, the different systems of disposition that they have acquired by internalising a determining type of social and economic condition (their habitus), and describe how this is actualised within the field.

Bourdieu interrelates his three central concepts to conceive of society in terms of relationships between class habitus and individual capital realised within the specific logic of a given field. An agent’s capital is itself the product of habitus just as the characteristics of the field is a cumulative history of the agents to have contributed to the capital of the field. It is only through the study of particular practice that a field can be delineated, the forms of capital perceived, and the actions of individuals understood. Actions within the field are always strategic—formulated with knowledge of the ‘rules of the game’ and carried through with a ‘feel for the game’.

Bourdieu’s concepts provide tools for the analysis of individual action within specific fields of endeavour that are valuable because they recognise both the possibility and complexity of change. How this has been used in the present research is further explained in Chapter Three. With Giddens’ emphasis on the essential recursiveness of life as constituted in certain routine practices, structuration theory provides a basic model for understanding all human practices as complex and dynamic. Both Giddens (1984, p.284) and Bourdieu (1992) emphasise the need to formulate a reflexive approach to social life. For
both, the goal is emancipation achieved through grasping the meaning of personal action and using understanding to guide further action.

2.3 Curriculum reform

2.3.1 Teachers and change

Until recently, theories of change implementation in education have regarded the process simplistically. Change is typically seen as either emanating directly in response to demands coming from above (top-down) or as developing at the ground level in response to social changes or the contingency of problem-solving (bottom-up) (Carter and O’Meill 1995). In either case, the process is seen as unproblematic and unfolds in a linear manner. Van Der Vegt and Knip (1990) suggest, for example, that innovations follow a three-stage model of ‘adoption, implementation and institutionalisation’. Within this model, the role of the teacher would be little more than that of a functionary who carries policy through to its inevitable conclusion as practical application. Where this model has been unable to account for the unpredictable or unsatisfactory practices arising from policy, blame has often been placed with teachers who are characterised as saboteurs or recalcitrant. Lortie (1975), for example, suggests that problems lie in an inherent individualism and conservatism characteristic of teachers’ work that focuses on short range outcomes in stable and familiar settings. Teachers are in his view ‘embedded in the here and now’. Duffy and Roehler (1986) support this with an assertion that teachers are particularly resistant to complex, longitudinal changes.

In the past decade, literature on curriculum change has been dominated more by the work of theorists who have argued that this idealised ‘centre to periphery’ model of curriculum change has failed to recognise the complexity of the change process. In particular, it has been argued that the role of the teacher now needs to be recognised as both fundamental and problematic in the change process. Fullan (1992) notes that there are strong impediments preventing teachers from changing their practice particularly when that change is imposed, not really understood or perceived as unmanageable. According to Doyle and Ponder (1977), a practicality ethic operates for any individual involved in
response to any innovation. A hypothetical balance sheet is drawn up in which advantages of change are measured against potential personal costs.

Although lip-service recognition has been given to the fact that curriculum implementation will fall to the teacher who ‘ultimately determines the effectiveness of policy’ (McLaughlin 1987), there has not been a great deal of research to actually document the response of teachers to reform projects. Bowe and Ball (1992) are exceptional in their examination of school and teacher responses to the English national Curriculum. Their study illuminates ‘the limits and possibilities practitioners place upon the capacity of the state to reach into the daily lives of schools’ (p.101). They found that there is much room for strategic or agentic manoeuvre by individual teachers that can ‘fracture and diversify the implementation process’ (p.85). This has the potential to confound a model of change that assumes simplicity of process. They conclude that the ability or inclination of schools to respond to new policy initiatives is effected by four factors: capacity, to muster the experience and skills of the staff to support the changes; contingencies, such as staffing, facilities, student numbers and local community issues; commitment, to the policy change; and history, of previously successful reform implementation (p.117). They argue that change in schools can best be understood in terms of a complex interplay between these factors and the intentions and requirements of policy producers.

2.3.2 Curriculum change and teacher practice

The implementation of the English national Curriculum has produced a large amount of research literature dealing with both teachers’ responses to demands for change and also analysis of the effects of the curriculum upon classroom practice. Galton, Hargreaves et al. (1998) provide a survey of this literature in the context of their own study of the impact of the national Curriculum on the teaching practices in seven primary schools. Widespread resistance to demands for changes in teaching style had previously been documented (p.43). Their own research, which largely involved semi-structured classroom observation (recording data on student-teacher exchanges at one minute intervals) also revealed little change produced by the national Curriculum demands for changes in teaching styles when compared to a similar study undertaken before the
implementation of the national Curriculum. They explain this as being the product of a tendency by teachers to simply ‘bolt’ new curriculum demands into ‘existing practice’ (p.60).

In the Australian context, there is very limited published research on the effect of centralised curriculum planning on teacher practice. In part, this may be because the reforms have been too recent and, in many cases, still only partially implemented to allow time for research. Critical attention has focused mostly on the theory of outcome-based education and how it is being implemented in the broader context of state education systems rather than as local programmes. A more detailed discussion of the literature relating to outcome-based education and student profiling as it is being presented in Australia is given in my Elective Research Studies Two and Three which form part of this Research Folio. The literature reviewed below is concerned with Australian research that specifically focusses on teacher use of, or response to, Australian curriculum documents.

2.3.3 The theory and practice of outcome-based education in Australia

Brady (1996) has suggested that while there is a general and developing commitment to outcome-based education (OBE) in Australian states, there is little available research to authenticate its benefits. He is able to provide an overview of both sides of the theoretical debate relating to outcome-based education and related approaches such as mastery learning, competency-based learning and criterion-referenced learning. He points out that there are different understandings of outcome-based education in Australia and that its terminology and implementation could take several possible forms. Brady concludes that the identified strengths of outcome-based education are usually outweighed by the many criticisms made of it (p.28). These criticisms include the tendency for OBE to fragment knowledge into small easily deliverable parcels, the demands it places on teachers to individualise instruction and keep more detailed records, and a lack of research on the practice of OBE.

An Australia-wide survey carried out in 1995 and 1996 to investigate the adoption of the national Profiles is documented by Lokan (1997). System responses were provided by Departments of Education managers from each
state. These revealed that all states had made some implementation at system level but in a variety of ways that cut across the consistency goals of the national Profiles. All states had plans for further use of the Profiles and were developing programmes to support and enhance their use. School principals and individual teachers in 442 schools around Australia were also surveyed by mailed questionnaire with about a fifty percent response rate (Lokan 1997, p.245). The survey focussed on the use of Profiles for reporting purposes. The written-response surveys from principals highlighted differences between primary and secondary schools. Generally, primary schools were more enthusiastic about the use of Profiles and were able to incorporate them into their teaching and reporting more quickly. Mathematics and English were the main subject areas in which this was done. Some schools were selected for case study in order to identify exemplary practice. A range of benefits and issues surrounding the use of Profiles in the classroom were identified by teachers. The ‘labour intensive’ nature of profiling was widely identified as an issue for teachers as was ‘the wide use of arcane terminology’ (Lokan 1997, pp.284, 288) in which outcome statements were expressed. Teachers who were able to identify the benefits of profiling were those with the most familiarity and experience of using Profile outcomes. These benefits were seen to emerge only over a substantial period of time and related to a greater focus on what was being learnt or achieved by students and the potential for agreed standards and reporting methods. Resources of time, money and effort were widely identified as necessary but still lacking after two years of work with the Statements and Profiles (Lokan 1997, pp.368-9). In spite of this, there remained significant teacher support for the process of curriculum review and outcome-based learning. Lokan concludes, however, that there were some ‘dissonances between systems’ description of the trialling and implementation processes undertaken and the teachers’ experiences’ (Lokan 1997, p.364).

Research on the use of outcomes in selected New South Wales schools is reported by Brady (1997, 2000). In New South Wales, subject outcomes have been developed to accompany existing syllabus documents. In both of his reports, Brady notes that benefits are usually balanced by problems. The 1995 study of teachers in four primary schools (Brady 1997) found that the outcome
statements 'clarified the nature of assessment as the outcomes became the performance criteria'. Outcomes represented a shift away from content to a focus on what students were achieving. To achieve this benefit, teachers needed to carry out extensive data collection and monitoring of student work at an individual level. Assessment was no longer in the form of a report card, but in the form of a folio of work collected over a period of time. A subsequent study carried out in New South Wales Schools in 1996 and 1998 (Brady 2000) investigated the degree to which teachers used outcomes in their planning, assessment and reporting. Although finding that teachers used outcomes for planning and assessment, it was apparent that there were differences according to the learning areas. It seemed likely that teachers made most use of outcomes in those subject areas which were more amenable to outcome specification. The affective dimension of the Arts or Health and Human Development learning areas did not lend itself well to outcome specification (Brady 2000, p.82).

Griffin (1998) has written extensively on the theory and practice of outcome-based education in Australia and draws on research carried out through the Australian Curriculum Studies Association. He found that, although there is a 'rhetorical shift' in the way that teachers and schools use the language of outcome-based education, it is not widely understood in the classroom (p.13). Changes in classroom practice were not taking place, and system and school reforms were not being put into place to support the approaches of outcome-based education. Griffin also suggests that in Victoria, 'checklist dominated approaches to assessment are de facto mandated' and that this is at odds with the true purpose of outcome-based education (p.14). In effect, he suggests, the CSF is being labelled outcome-based unjustifiably and this has the potential to reflect badly on the principles and ideals of OBE (p.19).

Cumming (1998) provides a summary of a number of projects on outcome-based education that the Australian Curriculum Studies Association had implemented over the preceding decade. These projects have included discussion of the theories, principles and issues surrounding outcome-based education as well as reports arising from teacher surveys and workshops. In 1996, a two-stage project commissioned from the Australian Curriculum
Studies Association by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs led to a range of issues being identified and several publications being produced (Griffin 1997, Willis and Kissane 1997). These issues included discrepant philosophical approaches to outcome-based education, diversity of meanings attributed to standard outcome-based education terms, resourcing, and the need for school reorganisation and for extensive change to existing teacher procedures and practices (Cumming 1998, p.7).

Cumming’s discussion is unique within the series of ACSA publications in that it provides five case studies of outcome-based practices in schools. For the most part, these studies deal with outcome-based education practices developed at the school level in response to identified school or community needs and not in response to centrally-developed curriculum demands. In fact, many of the school uses of outcome-based education predate the appearance of the national Statements and Profiles or their state adaptations after 1994. Even with this local commitment to outcome-based education, various means were needed to bridge what Cummings calls the ‘rhetoric-reality gap’ (p.6). Professional development is identified as a key but it is at a level rarely developed or provided for by the system (p.45). Professional development needed to include parents, teachers, students and the wider community, and it should be related to specific school charter goals as it needs to be developed as a long-term programme supported by resources and negotiation. Cumming’s findings draw attention to the fact that there are various forms of outcome-based education and that most of the documented practice of outcome-based education has occurred at a very local level of individual schools and school communities. The success of outcome-based education is premised on the extensive commitment of all those involved to meet specific, locally-identified needs. This falls by the wayside when outcome specification is translated into a centrally-mandated programme.

2.3.4 Teacher responses to curriculum frameworks in Australian states

Research on teacher response to specific curriculum documents in Australia is very limited. Lokan (1997) partially addressed this but at a time when the status
of the *Profiles* in each Australian state remained uncertain. His research took place fairly soon after the publication of the national documents and, while it has a great deal to reveal about the complexity and scale of the change process, he himself recognised that implementation was ‘only beginning’ (p.365).

Research that focusses more specifically on teacher use of state curriculum documents suffers from much the same problem. Most states see curriculum reforms as being adopted slowly over five or more years. Usually there has been little interest in making an evaluation of the outcomes of the programmes part of the programme itself. There is, consequently, no commissioned research on the effectiveness of the CSFI which was superceded in 2000. More typically, state authoritics are carrying out research to support the writing process at the formulation stage of curriculum frameworks.

Owen, Meyer et al. (1996) provide the only published research on school responses to the CSFI. They report on a survey of schools undertaken during 1995 shortly after the CSFI was first released. The report addressed two main questions—to what extent has the CSFI effected school curriculum, and what strategies schools have schools adopted to implement the CSFI (p.2). The report identified changes to teaching practice as crucial to the impact of the CSFI (p.56) and eighteen case studies of schools were presented to illustrate the extent of this change. For the most part, the findings reflect those of Lokan (1997). Generally, primary schools were more successful in using the CSFI in the early stages although this was essentially in the areas of Mathematics and English (p.47). In part, this greater success was attributed to the nature of primary school teaching in which one teacher has responsibility for all the teaching in one class and learning is more process-based. In secondary schools, where teaching of different subjects is dispersed among many teachers, response to the CSF, in terms of changes to curriculum programmes and teaching practice, was low. The tendency was to interpret existing subject content in terms of CSFI outcomes or to carry out minimal changes that conformed to external demands (p.75).

Watson (1997) reports on a survey of those music educators involved in the Victorian Arts CSF Working Party who contributed to the writing of the CSF-
The Arts. The complexity of the language and jargon used in the document was identified as a significant problem as was the broad nature of outcomes. In part, this is attributed to the generic 'arts' nature of outcomes and the desire to make outcomes general enough to be understood by non-specialist teachers.

The development of new outcome-based curriculum frameworks in Queensland and South Australia has produced several surveys of teacher responses to framework drafts as part of the development process. These surveys are made available for public scrutiny through the Internet. They still fall under the category of teachers' response to documents rather than an analysis of teacher practice. Connell and Hobbs (1999, 2000a) were commissioned to report on the use of draft curriculum documents during the trialling phase in the development of the Queensland Arts syllabus. They focused primarily on teacher and (unidentified) third-party responses to the publications and were not able to address questions of how they were used (p.40). Although generally favourable to the draft framework, teachers identified a range of issues arising from the use of outcomes. These were primarily to do with the language in which outcomes were described, the need to interpret outcomes statements without much guidance as to the meaning of terms, and the lack of associated activities that would guide teachers in how to achieve outcomes (2000a, p.14). On the framework as a whole, teachers expressed concern over the daunting nature of the learning programme which, it appeared, schools were being expected to implement in full (2000a, p.23). On the question of whether the new framework was likely to change teaching practice, ratings were lowest amongst teachers of those Arts subjects (music and visual arts) which are traditionally taught in Queensland schools (2000a, p.24). Time requirements were considered to be unrealistic, particularly by primary school teachers. In theory, the arts curriculum at primary level was written to be delivered by non-specialist teachers. But, few of the classroom teachers felt that they had the skills to do this across five art forms (p.26). Complexity and the extent of material to be covered were further identified as issues in a third report (Connell and Hobbs 2000b) that summarised the outcomes of the pilot trials of the framework in schools. These issues were seen to compromise the practicality of implementation (p.5) especially given the limited time allocated to the arts in

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most schools. The relationship between outcome assessment and the current reporting practices of schools was seen as ambiguous and not really addressed by the framework.

The development of the *South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework (SACSAF)* over 1999-2001 included extensive drafting, consultation and review of documents. The Australian Council for Educational Research was asked to do a calibration study of outcomes to ensure that the developmental sequence of outcomes in the Preliminary (first) Draft was understood and agreed upon by teachers (Harvey-Beavis, Macaskill et al. 2000). On the whole, this assessment process occupied teachers for only one day during which both quantitative and qualitative data was collected. Major concerns raised by teachers during this research focussed on the broadness of outcome statements. Some South Australian outcome statements (called standards) were to be interpreted not just at Key Learning Area or subject level but school-wide. Generally it was felt that the broader or more generic the standard, the less useful it was because almost anything could be deemed to achieve it.

Erebus Consulting Partners (2000) carried out a survey of teachers on the usefulness of the Trialling (second published) Draft of the *SACSAF*. Teachers were canvassed about the layout and content of the published documents. Few teachers had had much time to make use of the material and were being asked to respond to the publication as an untried resource. Responses to each of the twenty questions were summarised in graph form. Typically, teachers responded in the middle range with about fifty percent responding to each question at the ‘to some extent’ level. Responses at the more positive (‘great extent’) or more negative (‘small extent’) degree were usually about equal. This is perhaps to be expected and could be considered statistically unremarkable in that it provides an inverted U-curve. What it shows more clearly is that, with superficial knowledge, teachers are unlikely to either condemn or highly praise a document but are likely to reserve judgement and provide a non-committal response.
A more significant issue arising from the Erebus Consulting Partners (2000) survey was that curriculum standards (school-wide outcomes) were identified as the least understood aspect of the framework. Standards were considered too vague to provide guidance for teacher judgement. Although it is the intention of a framework to map out learning broadly, some responses suggested that the standards were so broad and open-ended as to allow students to demonstrate them at any level. The report is equivocal in identifying where the source of this problem actually lay—with the standards or with the expectations of teachers for specific guidance: ‘The expectation of specificity, especially in the light of perceptions of system-wide testing for accountability is at odds with the concept of standards within a framework’ (Erebus Consulting Partners 2000, p.81). Although achievement of standards is supposed to provide accountability across the state, the framework failed to give any indication of the procedures for collecting this data. Thus, although standard-setting was seen as essentially being the raison d’être behind the SACSASF, it was not apparent how it would achieve or measure this. Other aspects of the survey identified similar concerns to the Queensland consultation reports—weight of document, complexity of language, and the difficulties of covering all requirements at primary level with non-specialist teachers.

Research on the use of the Victorian Curriculum and Standards Framework (CSF) in schools has begun to emerge recently in the form of teacher-researcher studies of their own schools. Edwards (2000) canvassed the broad responses of teachers in his own school. He suggests that rather than portray ‘resistance as fault’, resistance by teachers to the CSF could be interpreted as ‘good sense’ involving a tactical response in which teachers plan, teach and assess using an interpretation of the CSF that best suits their own needs (p.10). He found that responses of teachers were ‘overwhelmingly negative’ towards changes which were viewed as driven by ‘impractical and remote experts’ (p.21). Teachers reported little or no change in classroom practice and minimal changes to accommodate reporting requirements. Rather, teachers engaged in ‘resistance, accommodation, subterfuge and conformity’ (Ball and Bowe 1992, quoted in Edwards 2000, p.20).
Garden (1999) examined the response of Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) teachers in one rural district to the SOSE CSF. He identified many issues for teachers in a range of categories: political, technical, cultural, rational, organisational, symbolic and normative. He concluded that the basic requirement to interpret and make judgements about how to use the CSF made it too open-ended to provide any measurable achievements. Elliott (1999) examined the teaching of one SOSE outcome, which focused on attitudes and values, by four different teachers in a primary school. Her research showed that, even within the very limited context of teachers working and planning together in one school, different approaches and outcomes emerge because of personal teaching styles and intentions.

2.4 Summary
For both Giddens and Bourdieu, agents are neither entirely free nor entirely controlled. Individual agency operates within given social structures. Agents draw on whatever social (status), cultural (knowledge) or economic capital they have in order to maximise their opportunities in any field of endeavour in which they participate. At the same time they are bound by the social norms and routines of the same fields of endeavour that will provide only certain types of opportunities and possibilities for action.

In the field of education, it is only recently that teacher agency has been recognised as both complex and fundamental to any change process. Teachers are both a part of the structure of the education system and individual agents who have the power to act knowledgeably. The success of structural educational change—at state or at national level—inevitably rests to a significant degree on the response of many individual teachers. Educational reforms that do not take into account the need to change teachers’ practice while also recognising the inherent difficulties in doing this are likely to have little actual educational impact.

In Australia, educational reform has centred on the implementation of centralised curricula to establish new educational standards or outcomes. There
has been little research carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of those reforms. The limited work that has been done to research the implementation of new curriculum models suggests that teachers are equivocal about their value. Teachers will adopt the rhetoric of change without making much change to what they do in their work. This is not just stubbornness on the part of teachers. Research consistently points to the abstract and vague nature of the standards that are set, the obscurity of language in which reforms are couched and the unrealistic nature of expectations for change.
Chapter Three—
Research design

This chapter begins by reviewing the aims of the research in the context of music education in Victorian schools. The four main research questions or contentions are then described and their relationship to the Four Elective Research Studios accompanying this dissertation is explained. The significance of the ideas of Pierre Bourdieu, discussed in the Literature Review, in providing some basic ‘tools’ for analysis is also outlined. In the third section the research methodology is discussed in detail. The relevance of the work of Anthony Giddens in adopting a qualitative research approach is also explained. Grounded theory methodology is then discussed in detail. Potential weaknesses or problems that might impact on the value of the research are considered and the steps that were taken to minimise them are described. Specific research procedures are described in the fourth section. The factors that determined the choice of both participating teachers and schools are given and the data collection and analysis procedures are explained.

3.1 Aims of the investigation

The Victorian CSF has been in use in schools for seven years. As an educational programme, it is well established and acts as the cornerstone of educational policy in Victoria. As a model for educational administration and reform, it is one that is finding increasing favour with educational authorities around Australia. The aim of this investigation is to examine the impact of the Victorian CSF on the practices of a varied group of music teachers operating in different settings and in different types of music programmes. It is intended that this research investigation will provide some evaluation of the effectiveness of the CSF in contributing to the practices of school music education. It is also intended that it will reflect more broadly on the effectiveness of the CSF as a model of curriculum development. To date, there have been no large-scale reviews of the CSF. An early review that assessed school responses in the first year of implementation has not been followed up by any real assessment of the programme in any learning area. This study goes some way towards providing a review of the CSF in action—that is, in the hands of teachers.

Music is unique in the school setting in that it is the only subject that exists in two forms—Instrumental Music and Classroom Music. Both of these subjects can call on their own philosophical foundations and pedagogical methods, and
they usually operate in different ways in schools. Typically, instrumental music teaching is an elective programme that operates in parallel to the normal school timetable as a co-curricular subject. It is not offered in every school, as it involves individual or small group teaching of students withdrawn from their timetable class. Increasingly, this form of music education is a user-pays system with little subsidisation. In many state primary schools, in particular, the instrumental music programme is provided by contracted companies who provide teaching that is fully paid for by parents. State secondary schools are able to access instrumental staff through their global staffing budget, but also contract extra instrumental teachers whose costs are covered by student fees.

Classroom music is a curricular subject offered within the school curriculum and timetable. As such, it is more widely encountered in the state school system than instrumental music teaching but it is by no means a guaranteed part of the school curriculum. In state primary schools, music, physical education, art or library are subjects or learning resources that a school might choose to offer but it is rare for all to be available at any one school. A primary school will usually have to decide which of these subjects it can staff and offer to students. Where music is offered, it is usually provided to all students for a specific amount of time. The amount of music education a student receives per week varies, but it is usually based on the formula of number of teaching hours available/number of classes to be taught. In secondary schools, music is a fairly well established feature of the Year Seven and Year Eight curriculum. It is usual for it to be compulsory in at least one, if not both, years. Beyond Year Eight, music is usually an elective subject that will run where there is sufficient student interest. As discussed in my Elective Research Study One, recent philosophical debate has tended to portray these two 'faces' of music education as being at odds with each other. In many of the schools involved in my dissertation research, however, the offering of both classroom and instrumental music education was seen as complementary. Music teachers and the school community worked hard to resource both types of programmes for their students.

Surprisingly, the division of the field of music education and the inconsistent level of delivery in the system receives almost no recognition in the CSF. This
convenient glossing over of what, in practice, may be an essential feature of a school subject is characteristic of the CSF approach to curriculum formulation which must be necessarily abstract in order to remain concise. However, such abstractions do not always make sense in the school situation. Classroom Music, for example, is not really seen as a subject in its own right but only as one among several Arts subjects, all of which share the same aims and processes. Instrumental music is not recognised presumably because its existence in any one school is unpredictable but probably also because its delivery methods outside of the timetable are not easily comparable with any other arts subject. The concept of progression through ‘levels’, in particular, has no real use where it is equated simply with the year levels of schooling (Victorian Board of Studies 2000, p.1). In what sense can a Year Seven student be considered ready to begin Level Five Music if s/he has had no access to music education in primary school? Such generalisations and shortcuts serve a bureaucratic purpose of providing tidy formulations and neat answers to administrative requirements but they rarely have much educational value. Because bureaucratic curriculum formulation has taken precedence over school-based formulation, one aim of this study is to identify what is lost or what is not gained when the emphasis in curriculum design shifts away from teachers to curriculum authorities who are removed from the school situation.

3.2 Research questions and contentions

The key issue that is investigated in this research is, what impact or influence has the CSF had on what music teachers do? This impact could be measured by the degree to which music teachers have assimilated the ideas of CSF II and incorporated it into their own teaching practices. Two contentions relating to the use of the CSF by music teachers have been developed in order to explain why the CSF for music is an inadequate tool for programme planning and implementation.

The first contention is based on the issues summarised and discussed in my Elective Research Study One that considers current philosophies in music education. In adopting an orthodox philosophy of Aesthetic Education, the CSF
for music sets unrealistic and unachievable goals that cannot be measured and
cannot be used as the basis for programme planning. It is likely that CSF’s
generic and aesthetic outcomes have had very limited effect on teachers’
understanding of music education and do not widely inform the teaching
profession. The issue is whether the CSF outcomes reflect the type of
knowledge that teachers try to give their students in music education and
whether the CSF has contributed to the knowledge stocks of the field of music
education.

Contention One was developed largely as a result of the critique developed in
Elective Research Study One which forms part of this research folio. It
examined the ongoing international debate in music education between
Aesthetic and Praxial philosophies (see for example Reimer 1996, Elliott 1996,
Elliott 1997). An analysis of the arguments on both sides of the debate was
made in this study. The conclusion drawn there was that both philosophies, in
diluted form, were necessary to account for all the practices of music education.
Undue emphasis on one or the other approach was likely to produce unrealistic
and impractical goals. The CSF gives strong weighting to Aesthetic Education
principles. Therefore, the first question that this dissertation aims to examine is,
what degree of congruence exists between the broad outcomes set for students
in the CSF and those set by individual music teachers working directly with
students in schools?

The second contention relating to the use of the CSF by music teachers is that
the developmental model used in the CSF is not a practical one for music
education and largely ignores the reality of school music education practices. It
does not reflect how teachers actually deliver music education nor does it reflect
how teachers actually develop learning in their students. Consequently, the CSF
misrepresents the nature of learning in music. The issue here is whether the
theory of learning development in music presented in the CSF reflects the way
in which learning actually takes place in a school environment in such a way
that the CSF will be able to effectively guide teachers’ planning and teaching.
Contention Two relates to Elective Research Study Two which examines how the developmental model of learning (or profile) came to be produced in Australia. It is also further explored in Elective Research Study Three that examines my own classroom practice in the light of the CSF. This developmental model regards learning as something that occurs independently of, or separately to, teaching. Learning development is seen as primarily age-based, cognitive and personal rather than a product of schools and teaching. As a consequence, schools and teachers are rarely mentioned in profile frameworks. The age-based model of continuous development has been widely adopted as a natural model of learning even though there is little evidence to be found in the practices of schools and school systems that learning operates in the manner that has been described in a document such as the CSF. The few evaluations that have been carried out of the profile model and of the CSF have generally uncovered limited sympathy for and understanding of this learning model among teachers. This is possibly because teachers do not see their work represented in these models. My research poses the question of, in what way is the developmental model of learning evident in the CSF informing music teachers’ work by providing guidance for planning, teaching and assessment?

Apart from the description of music education presented in the CSF, the CSF as a curriculum model has many problems. This model is becoming widely accepted as a standard model for many state education authorities—such as Western Australia (Western Australia 1998), South Australia (South Australia 2000) and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT Department of Education and Training 1994). It is a model that attempts to set benchmark standards while at the same time tries not to be prescriptive about the content or methods of subject delivery (at least in The Arts). A primary goal of the CSF is to take responsibility away from teachers for setting and achieving educational standards and place this with a centralised curriculum authority. The CSF assumes that outcomes specification is all that is required in order to achieve better standards and that these outcomes can be formulated without reference to specific methods of attaining them. There is a basic contradiction in this. The assumption that the acceptance of specified outcomes by teachers is automatic and unquestioning—that teachers are no more than functionaries of the
system—does not coalesce with the assumption that teachers will have the knowledge, experience and practical skills to interpret and implement these often vague goals. Therefore, two broader contentions relating to teacher knowledge and the process of curriculum change have also been developed for this investigation.

Contention Three suggests that school-based curriculum development remains the most effective model for curriculum development even though current trends have moved toward centralising curriculum production. This is based on the principle that music teachers (and all teachers) are knowledgeable agents who bring a deep understanding to the work they do based on their day-to-day experiences with students. This knowledge is essentially a practical and a relational one and consists of an ability to formulate and realise goals or outcomes that are specific to the contexts in which they work. These personal goals will inevitably override any externally imposed ones. This draws on Bourdieu’s concept of habitus. Teachers bring their own education and experience to their work in schools. Some of this represents the habitus of the field which teachers access through their own education. Some of this represents the habitus of experience developed during their working lives. The issue is whether the CSF is having any impact on the habitus of individual teachers and through them on the habitus of the field of music education.

Contention Three is based on my personal experience of having been a teacher of music for twenty years and of having worked with other teachers in state secondary schools. Elective Research Study Three, provides a brief glimpse of my difficulties in relating abstract standards to a particular group of students in one school. Elective Research Study Four which looks more broadly at teachers working in a particular school and how a group of them deals with changing their own practice also informs this contention. It presents teachers as knowledgeable about their own intentions and about how to realise these intentions within the context in which they work. In this dissertation, the question is, how are educational goals or outcomes set and achieved by teachers in the school context and how well can this process of setting and achieving
learning goals be related to the CSF’s purpose of establishing system-wide goals and standards?

Contention Four follows from Contention Three and suggests that the process of change needs to be theorised as a more complex process than is being currently acknowledged. It needs to take account of the knowledgeability of teachers as a practical and active one typically operating in and adapted to complex situations. This draws on Bourdieu’s concept of the field in which the theoretical knowledge of the social world as constituted by outside observers to the field and the knowledge used by those within it who possess a practical mastery of their own situation, is seen as quite different. Theory is inevitably an impoverished view of the practice of a field. As a change programme, the CSF attempts to reformulate the field theoretically. However, this theoretical formulation must contend with the existing practices of the field which represent the capital or knowledge stocks upon which every music teacher draws and which form part of their habitus of teaching and part of the habitus of music education. Bourdieu’s ideas inevitably give primacy to practice over theory. The question, then, is whether curriculum change presented as a simple theoretical or documentary formulation can have impact upon the practices of music education or of education generally.

Elective Research Study Four provided some further insight into the complexity of the change process in one particular school and how teachers in that environment responded to one model of change (bottom-up or locally-developed reform programmes). The CSF represents an alternative model of top-down reform. It seems likely that a similar complex of constraints and conditions that impacted on the effectiveness of a locally-based programme of professional development would come into play in wider systemic reforms in a way quite unanticipated by the reform programme. Changing the work of teachers and schools is an attempt to work against the accumulated experiences and ingrained practices that have been allied to specific contexts. The field of school education, and of music education within that, becomes a site for struggle over control and influence. It will be argued that many programmes of reform, such as the CSF, fail because they provide some surface changes that
largely ignore the complexity of the system. Contention Four, therefore, examines the degree to which this top-down model of reform could be said to have had a significant impact on school practices, policies and procedures.

3.3 Research methodology

The aim of this research is to assess the impact of the CSF on music teachers’ practices and conceptions of what they do in the field of music education. This is carried through by looking at teachers’ understandings and intentions. An interpretive research methodology based on grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967) was seen as the most effective means of achieving this. Grounded theory is designed to capture as much of the complexity and movement of the real world as possible (Strauss and Corbin 1990, p.111). The analytical procedures of grounded theory are designed to build theory or generalisations, give the research process rigour, help break through bias and assumptions, and provide grounding so that conclusions closely approximate the reality represented (Strauss and Corbin 1990, p.57).

3.3.1 Interpretative and positivist research

Carr and Kemmis (1983/86) have distinguished between two views of educational theory and practice—the natural, scientific or positivist view, and the interpretative one. The positivist approach to educational research adopts a ‘functionalist image of human behaviour as something that is determined by impersonal laws that operate beyond the individual’s controls’ (p.84). It employs a scientific model of data collection and evaluation—usually quantitative—in order to identify regular patterns of human behaviour that points to the operation or action of social laws. Society is a functional system amenable to prediction and control by using the methods of science (p.69). Such scientific methods are seen as appropriate not only to the physical sciences but to many fields of human endeavour—medicine, engineering, politics, psychology, sociology and economics (p.16). This model has long dominated educational research and theory as well. It is only recently that the interpretative view of theory and research has begun to attain much status. Interpretive social science denies the objective character of society as founded in laws and processes which operate independently of the members of society. People are
seen as agents with the ability to exist knowingly in the world and to impact upon it. Thus an interpretive social science attempts to come to an understanding of human and social action by identifying the ‘subjective meaning attached to actions by the acting individual’ (Weber 1964 quoted in Carr and Kemmis 1983, p.87).

Giddens (1984) has suggested that his work has significant implications for the nature and direction of social research. All human beings need to be recognised as knowledgeable. This knowledgableness is embedded in a practical consciousness which exhibits extraordinary complexity and is neither wholly propositional nor disconnected from day-to-day activities. This would suggest that experienced practice is a significant repository for our knowledge of music education. Knowledgeability is also bound by the unconscious and by conditions and consequences not wholly within the control of agents. Thus the study of this practice needs to attend to the context in which it operates. There is unlikely to be an ideal form of practice, only local applications. For Giddens, routine, which is psychologically linked to minimising anxiety, is the main form of day-to-day social activity and forms the basis for the reproduction of institutionalised practices. The routines represented by school practices and music education practices identified across a range of teachers could be considered as representing the structure of music education in schools. This might be contrasted with the abstract knowledge structures presented in the CSF.

Social identity, and the practical relations associated with it, involves normative rights, obligations and sanctions which provide agents with their ‘roles’. The study of context within which these ‘roles’ operate is fundamental to the investigation of social reproduction. Because agents are knowledgeable about what they do, there can be no meanings or understandings about their own lives which they cannot come to understand. Therefore, social research has a necessarily cultural, ethnographic or anthropological aspect to it and has the power to both uncover and inform agents’ existing understandings – ‘the double hermeneutic’ (Giddens 1984, p.284). Thick description communicating frames of meaning associated with specific contexts should be communicated in a form.
readily understandable to the layperson. Social research needs to recognise and identify the complex skills and motives which agents bring to making 'things happen'. Consequences and conditions need to be acknowledged as part of the flow of intentional conduct. This assumption points strongly to the need for an interpretive research approach that elicits and elucidates the individual understandings and knowledge of music teachers.

As a consequence, this study adopts a qualitative approach that seeks to identify and describe teacher understanding. Individual teachers are presented as cases of understanding and practice and the research attempts to identify the subjective meaning that they bring to their work and looks to understand the motives or intentions that guide their actions. The analysis and explanation of these actions is documented in some detail, as understanding is more likely to come about through rich description and detail that illuminates the significance of human action.

3.3.2 Grounded theory as qualitative research
Knowledgeability—what agents know about what they do and why they do it—is largely carried in practical consciousness. For Giddens, this is presented as a complex interplay of aims, rationalisation, understandings and emotions bound by context, or time and space. Understanding what teachers do and why they do it is a process of trying to access what they themselves know and relating it to the situations in which they work. Interview was adopted as the most effective method for achieving this. Interviews provide a method for accessing and exploring the aims, rationalisations and understandings that teachers carry with them. It also supports detailed descriptions that would be sufficient to allow readers to participate in the verification of the interpretations offered in the reporting (Stake 1978). Alternative methods such as document collection, observation or survey would not provide access to the rationalisations and understandings that teachers bring to their work, although they have some potential to provide supporting material that further illustrates data collected during interviews. The interview technique allowed latitude for probing and re-shaping of questions which would inevitably lead to much richer data (Bresler and Stake 1992, p.84).
Grounded theory is primarily an approach for collecting and making sense of interview data. It deals with what people say and believe is significant. Asking questions and making comparisons between answers is the primary technique for both generating data and leading the research toward theoretical generalisations (Strauss and Corbin 1990, p.143). Although data is generated through individual interviews, grounded theory goes beyond individual case descriptions and provides a methodology for collecting large amounts of rich data that will permit generalisation. It attempts to combine and balance the best aspects of an interpretative case study approach and a scientific statistical method.

3.3.3 Grounded theory methodology
Grounded theory primarily aims to identify the issues current in any field. Data collection and analysis are closely interwoven and are not carried out as separate studies. Determining the initial direction of the research will require a certain amount of ‘theoretical sensitivity’ (Strauss and Corbin 1990, p.41) which can come about from professional experience or personal experience as well as from the research literature. Grounded theory therefore validates the knowledge of the insider. Theoretical sensitivity should also arise from the research process through collecting and asking questions of the data as it is collected. This will guide further data collection as the researcher aims to fill in gaps and follow up issues. The aim is to allow the questions and issues to arise from the data.

Stake (1978, p.16) suggests that the use of issues as primary research questions can force attention to complexity and contextuality as well as the problems and concerns of particular cases. He distinguishes between the issues brought to the study by the researcher (‘etic’ issues) and those that may arise or be identified within the case (‘emic’ issues). In the context of interview methodology, Minichiello, Aroni et al (1995, p.182) also draws attention to the insider/outsider dichotomy. Being an insider provides a special knowledge and understanding of what is being discussed. However, it is not unprejudiced. Insider status provides entrance but also involves subjectivity. Meaning arises
from identifying common themes which link statements together as issues. They suggest as a solution that data should be collected within a reflective model (based on Strauss 1987) where the general research question is developed, interviews are conducted, reflection on initial data leads to refinement of questioning, revision of proposition and further data collection. This is essentially the grounded theory procedure of ‘theoretical sampling’ which involves a cycle of data collection, data analysis, search for contrasts, further data collection, further analysis, further search for contrasts until data saturation is achieved (Strauss and Corbin 1990, p.59). The constant search for contrast will reduce the possibility that too little data is obtained to validate the generalisations made.

In this study, the four contentions were developed to sharpen the focus of the research and to give a starting point to interviews. Again, following Stake (1995), interviewing focussed on a short list of issue-oriented questions that allowed each interviewee to provide an account of experiences or ‘special stories’ rather than survey-type questions that elicited a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’. In my research, questions were always open-ended as this allowed room for the emergence of those issues that were important to the interviewees. This is an approach supported by Kvale (1996, p.5) who suggests that conversation is a basic mode of human interaction and that the research interview is based on the conversation of daily life and professional conversation. The purpose is to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of described phenomena. It is a conversation which has structure and purpose orientated around a theme of interest to both parties. It should be a positive experience for both parties and characterised by reciprocal respect and shared interests (Kvale 1996, pp.29-36).

In grounded theory, data collection and analysis are tightly interwoven because analysis directs further theoretical sampling. Theoretical sampling involves sampling on the basis of concepts that have proven theoretically relevant to the evolving theory. It is tied to coding procedures and theoretical sensitivity. In open-coding, sampling is drawn from those people, places or situations that will provide the greatest opportunity to gather the most relevant data (Strauss and
Corbin 1990, p.181)—openness rather than specificity guides selection. Sampling in open coding also involves flexible interview approaches (p.183) to adjust questions and follow points dynamically. Sites are chosen for their different character (p.183). Procedures and techniques should not be applied mechanically but flexibly according to circumstances. One general technique that is central to all coding is the asking of questions. This applies not just to interviewees but also to the resultant data which should be coded or analysed following the interview. Analysis involves three major coding processes—open coding, axial coding and selective coding. The lines between coding are artificial as open and axial coding may happen simultaneously as phenomena are labelled and related to each other.

Open-coding involves naming and categorising slices of data. Asking and answering questions of data describes what is there and, in the form of propositions, suggests how phenomena are related. Such propositions guide further data collection leading to further testing of the proposition. Grounded theory research is simultaneously inductive and deductive. It derives its initial direction from the data and these conclusions are then tested inductively by further data collection where exception or confirmation is sought. In the initial data collection, concepts and categories were coded in my researcher’s log book because it was not possible to computer code simultaneously.

Once data has been open-coded into a collection of concepts, groups of concepts are further categorised into related axial codes which puts fractured open coding back together in new ways. Often the names given to the resulting categories are commonly used terms in the profession (such as ‘primary teaching’, ‘instrumental teaching’, ‘listening’, etc.) and it is better if common or existing terms can be used to represent themes or categories. In axial coding, a category or phenomenon can be described in terms of conditions that give rise to it, the context in which it occurs, strategies by which it is handled or managed, and the consequences of these strategies. These will all have properties that can be dimensionalised. The initial open-coded data is therefore organised according to the paradigm developed by Strauss and Corbin (1990, p.99).
In the paradigm, a phenomenon is that to which the data is referring and
different occurrences of the same phenomenon can be distinguished by
properties. The causal conditions are what bring the phenomenon and its
variations about and are often indicated by ‘when’, ‘while’, ‘since’, ‘because’ or
‘due to’. Context is the specific set of properties relating to a phenomenon—the
conditions within which it takes place. Intervening conditions are the broader
structural contexts within which phenomena occur. Strategies are purposeful
and goal-oriented and usually involve steps or sequences over time. They may
be impacted on by intervening conditions. Grounded theory builds its picture of
reality in a repeating cycle through this paradigm where data is collected,
analysed and reassembled according to its relationship to a gradually emerging
central category or theme.

Bringing process into grounded theory analysis is also important. Process is a
way of giving life to data by giving snapshots of actions/interactions over time
and becomes the means of accounting for or explaining change (Strauss and
Corbin 1990, p.48). Grounded theory is a transaction system—a method of
analysis that allows one to examine the interactive nature of events as they
change (p.159). The ‘conditional matrix’ is a development of the paradigm
explained above to incorporate this process of change. The matrix makes the
researcher sensitive to the significance of conditions and contingency under
which phenomena occur and how changes over time will impact on processes
and consequences. It places theory in an immediate context as substantive
theory. The theory can become a more formal one when it can be applied in a
range of contexts (Strauss and Corbin 1990, pp.160-161).

As Stake (1978, p.115) notes, audiotaping of interviews can (and, in this case,
did) provide a large volume of data which, because of this volume, can be both
potentially valuable and potentially problematic. The issue was primarily one of how to analyse the volume of data systematically using the principles of grounded theory and in such a way that themes would emerge from the data. Nudist 4 (QSR Pty. Ltd. 1997) was adopted as a means for processing the data because it has been developed specifically according to the principles of grounded theory. Coding categories were initially developed by reviewing each tape aurally before it was formally transcribed. Categories were then further developed as the transcripts were imported and analysed using Nudist 4 which allows the data text files to be searched, coded and categorised.

3.3.4 Strengths, weaknesses and criteria of quality for the research methodology

Criticisms of interpretive/qualitative research methods fall into two categories. The first of these is the limited generalisations that are usually possible in qualitative research. Because qualitative research focuses in detail on the particular, its conclusions may not be more broadly relevant than one single situation. This is usually acknowledged and accepted by qualitative researchers because the focus on detail and context answers questions of ‘why’ and ‘how’ more effectively. Understanding, with the power to inform future action, rather than proffering explanation, is the aim. The emphasis on understanding through interpretation is the basis for a second type of weakness in interpretive research. The line between subjective understanding and bias is vague. This may lead to excessive subjectivity in observation and reporting, to too much credibility being given to purely subjective responses, to implications of generalisable conclusions which are unwarranted, or to vague description rather than focussed reporting (Mills and Huberman 1984).

Grounded theory methodology and procedure were chosen specifically because they provided a means of addressing these potential limitations. The principle of data saturation that requires that data be collected until all contrasts and variations appear to be included ensures that the research deals with general phenomena rather than particular instances that may be too subjectively selected. It also forces the researcher to address phenomena outside of his/her immediate experience and helps to cut through personal subjectivity. Grounded
theory remains essentially interpretive, but this is based on the weight and extent of data, and data is presented in a rich form that permits objective verification.

Strauss and Corbin (1990) suggest that the criteria for evaluating a grounded theory study can be based on the following questions:

1. Are concepts generated?
2. Are concepts related?
3. Are there many conceptual links and are categories well developed?
4. Is variation built into theory?
5. Are broader conditions built into the study?
6. Has process been taken into account (change linked to conditions)?
7. Are theoretical findings significant and to what extent?

Lincoln and Guba (1985/88) suggest that interpretive research might also be evaluated on the basis of its own procedural criteria and they suggest four such criteria. The first of these is credibility, or the degree to which the conclusions presented in the research are supported by the data presented. The rich data typically presented in qualitative research usually provides strong credibility and this was influential in selecting the interview procedure and grounded theory methodology for this research. They provide a means for giving the reader extensive access to the data in the form of teacher quotes so that s/he may draw her/his own conclusions as to the credibility of the research.

A second criterion, transferability, refers to the extent to which the research's conclusions may also be seen to be appropriate and relevant to similar situations not initially addressed. The specific situation is thus seen as representative of a class of situations. The generalisations possible under grounded theory were a means of addressing this criterion and it was influential in my decision to interview a large number of teachers employed in a single region. Ideas, beliefs, opinions, issues or themes had to have some currency before they were considered significant. It was assumed that the variety to be found within one educational region in Melbourne would reflect those of other regions and would therefore provide a representative cross-section of teachers' experiences.
A third criterion of confirmability refers to the accuracy of reporting. It is seen as an alternative to objectivity which is unattainable in, and not a goal of, qualitative research (Bresler and Stake 1992). In the context of interpretive/qualitative research confirmability usually requires some triangulation, or collection of a range of evidence, to support or confirm specific conclusions. This was addressed by interviewing many teachers working in the same site (where the site is defined as an educational region) which could provide multiple sources of evidence about each specific question. It was also addressed in the report by extensive and multiple uses of quotation as supporting data to conclusions presented.

Finally, dependability refers to the completeness of the reporting and whether the case in question has been dealt with comprehensively in order to provide reliable information on the situation. With respect to the quality of reporting, the ultimate index was considered to be the ability of this report to provide new meanings or understandings that might have the power to influence practice (Howe & Eisenhard 1990). Although this goal cannot be easily addressed in the choice of methodology or the data collection, it was intended that the report would be written in a way that would be easily understood by a layperson, and that evidence would be provided in such a way that the conclusions would convince others in the profession.

A strength of qualitative research is its ability to investigate in holistic detail the inner workings and contexts of particular systems. It should be guided by a sense of empathy with participants which will give it the potential to enhance the application of research for improving practice. A commitment to triangulated description provides rich information that can be readily understood by readers and can give them the opportunity to confirm or critique the researcher’s conclusions. This provides the basis for Giddens’ (1984 p.xxxv) ‘double hermeneutic’—social research as a critique that contributes to our understanding and forms the basis for making things ‘aneew’.
3.3.5 Limitations of the study

The research study focuses on music education and the experiences of music teachers in using the CSF. In relation to Contentions Three and Four, some attempt is made to draw wider conclusions about the effectiveness of the CSF as a tool for educational reform. Research evidence (Brady 2000) suggests that teachers of music or The Arts are not necessarily representative of all teachers. Maths and English teachers, in particular, find greater value in a curriculum framework than do teachers of The Arts. Therefore, any conclusions made in this research study about the value of the CSF as a curriculum process or model for change will need to be further researched in the context of teaching and learning in other subjects.

3.4 Research procedure

The procedure chosen for this study was a qualitative/interpretive approach using grounded theory techniques. Teachers from state primary and secondary schools in the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne were chosen. The Northern Region is a culturally and economically diverse one. The North-East is predominantly middle class suburban ‘mortgage-belt’ and extends to semi-rural areas in Whittlesea and Eltham. The North Central is a more industrialised area containing a higher proportion of first generation Australian families and students of a non-English speaking background particularly from southern and eastern Europe. The Inner North retains characteristics of both. There are concentrations of recently arrived families from Asian and Middle-Eastern backgrounds in suburbs such as Preston and Brunswick, while neighbouring suburbs of Clifton Hill and Parkville have always retained some status as the gentrified inner-city.

Because grounded theory provides rich detail about particular contexts, it was regarded as useful to examine the operation of teacher understanding and practice with the CSF in multiple situations that were not necessarily comparable but which may provide a rich set of findings. This was considered important because, in one of the schools, the researcher also worked as a teacher. By examining other schools from a non-participant position, it was hoped to limit the possibility of the research becoming or appearing to be too
subjective. It was also seen as a way of ensuring that the findings had some wider application than just a single instance.

An invitation to participate in the research was sent to all 192 primary and secondary schools in the region. This invitation took the form of a plain language statement about the research and a survey-consent form of six questions (Appendices A and B). The survey asked music teachers in each school to indicate the extent of music teaching in the school and to express willingness to participate in an extended interview during Term Four 2001. A total of forty-five affirmative responses were received. This initial set of responses was mainly from primary schools and nineteen teachers were selected for interview. Secondary schools were under-represented and follow-up phone calls requesting interviews from secondary music teachers were made in October 2001, as data was being gathered from primary school teachers. Ultimately, thirteen state secondary and nineteen state primary teachers participated in interviews from a collection of schools spread fairly evenly across the region.

There were several criteria used to determine which teachers to select for interview. It was considered important to have a sample that represented the diversity of the region. Consequently, equal numbers of teachers from primary and secondary schools in inner-city, working-class, middle-class and semi-rural areas were chosen. Preferences were given also to teachers who indicated in the survey that their school maintained both a classroom and an instrumental music programme. This was not always possible in primary schools where the existence of instrumental music tuition is an exception rather than a rule. Preference was also given to teachers with three or more years of teaching experience. This meant that teachers could speak with some experience and understanding of the workings of the CSF and of teaching music in schools. It was also expected that with this experience teachers might also be able draw on their experiences of teaching in more than one school and thus provide a greater source for generalisation. Again, this was seen as a way of ensuring the validity and reliability of the conclusions.
3.4.1 Data collection
The researcher's own school is also one of the schools in the Northern Region. Initially it was intended to form a significant part of the study. As invitations to participate in the research were being sent to other schools, I decided to use my own school as a pre-test site for the questionnaire. The music programme at the school is a large one that employs three classroom teachers and three full-time instrumental staff as well as other casual instrumental teachers. Interviews with the two other classroom teachers took place as a pilot questionnaire study at the end of 2000. With the retirement of one classroom teacher, a third interview was carried out with a classroom teacher in her first year at the school (but not her first year as a teacher) during Term Three 2001. Also interviewed at this time were three instrumental music staff. The purpose of the pre-test was mainly to evaluate the effectiveness of the few open-ended questions, which relied particularly on the willingness of the interviewee to discuss at length their own practice, and the interviewing skills of the researcher. To a large degree, these had also been tested in Elective Research Study Four. Pre-testing of the interview questions revealed that most of the questions originally devised were appropriate and, as the interviewer, I felt confident about my ability to draw out issues as they arose or adapt questions to the experiences of the interviewee.

The main body of the data collection was carried out in Term Four 2001 with individual appointments being made with each of the thirty-two teachers who had agreed to participate. The focus of the data collection was the interview which was typically accompanied by a brief tour of the music facilities. Where document collection was possible, it focused on examples of school report templates, lesson plans from individual teachers and programme outlines that supported the data being collected in the interview. Notes were written up immediately following each interview to identify significant points or issues that arose during the interview. These were helpful for determining coding categories before the interviews were fully transcribed.

3.4.2 Interview questions
The four contentions gave rise to series of broad questions put to teachers during the interviews. Given the open-ended nature of the interview process, the
questions acted merely as starting points which invited teachers to elaborate on their understandings of key ideas. Further questions arose as data was collected giving rise to a cycle of questions and responses around broad topic areas. The following initial questions were devised in relation to the contentions developed above:

Questions arising from Contention One (generic arts outcomes set for students in the CSF do not reflect those set by individual music teachers working directly with students in schools)

- What do you teach your students?
- How do you use the CSF outcomes for music?

Questions arising from Contention Two (the developmental model of learning given in the CSF does not reflect the way in which learning in music education actually takes place)

- How do you see learning in music developing over your programme?
- What is the nature of this development?

Questions arising from Contention Three (school-based curriculum development remains the most effective model for curriculum development even though current trends have moved toward centralising curriculum production)

- How has the music programme at the school been developed?
- What is the overall aim of the programme?

Questions arising from Contention Four (curriculum change presented as a simple theoretical or documentary formulation has little impact upon the practices of education)

- What requirements does the school make for using the CSF?
- How have you addressed these requirements?

These broad questions were not put to teachers as such but gave rise to clusters of questions that formed the basis of the interviews. Although aligned initially to specific contentions, each of these broad questions, and any arising questions as well as data in the form of documents and personal observations had the potential to inform testing of any of the four contentions. Other questions would also arise as issues relevant to particular teachers emerged.
At the start of the interview, teachers were asked to identify themselves and their position in the school and the music programme. These questions were followed by a range of questions that solicited information about the school music programme and their work in it. A range of questions were asked relating to the use of the CSE and how it connected with the school music programme as teachers had described it.

The actual questions put to teachers included the following, although they were not necessarily in the same order each time as the contingencies of the interview threw up particular questions at different times:

Because teachers have to work within the wider constraints of school goals and resources, it seemed important to recognise these as significant factors. This gave rise to questions such as:

- What is the character of music education in each school?
- What are its aims?
- What means are put in place by the school to achieve those aims?

Related questions that might follow would ask teachers to make an evaluation of the effectiveness of the programme, to suggest improvements or to identify constraints that are impacting upon the programme.

The questions put to teachers dealing with their own general aims focussed on content taught:

- What do teachers see as the purpose of their music teaching?
- Why are these worthwhile purposes?
- What means have been made available to achieve these goals?
- What purposes do individual teachers set in their teaching programmes at different levels?
- How are the goals and means affected by the specific school character or context?

Related questions might ask teachers to compare their teaching with the experience of teaching in other schools, or in earlier periods of their careers.
In examining the goals that music teachers set for themselves, it seemed necessary to examine where these goals come from. This gives rise to question such as:

- Where do teachers get their professional ethos from?
- What is the teacher’s training in music?
- What effect has their own learning in music or training in education had on the sorts of goals they set for their students?

The final set of questions focussed specifically on the use of the CSF:

- How is the CSF used for planning and assessment by individual teachers?
- What use of the CSF is required by the school for assessment and reporting of student achievement?

Because the CSF is only one potential source of ideas for teaching among many, other questions may give some indication of the significance of the CSF within the range of available resources:

- What other materials or resources are used for programme planning?

Related questions might examine how practices have changed as a result of the CSF, what understanding teachers have of particular features of the CSF or what personal evaluations they have made of the CSF.

**3.4.3 Data analysis**

All interviews were fully transcribed as textfiles by a team of three transcribers. The initial analysis of transcribed data was carried out using Nudist4 which is a data analysis software package that has been developed specifically for qualitative research. Nudist4 allows the transcribed textfiles to be analysed and manipulated to identify themes and issues. Chunks of text are assigned to user-created categories or ‘nodes’ and then relationships are developed between various nodes in order to bring out underlying themes. The appearance of a theme is determined largely by the extent to which categories have significant occurrence within the data. Nudist4 employs a tree structure which allows the researcher to categorise data into various levels of significance analogous to the roots, branches and leaves of a tree.
In the initial assignment of nodes, the interview questions formed the categories. Additional categories that appeared as significant in my Researcher's Log (post-interview notes) were added to these. Branches or themes (called 'Parent' nodes) were also predefined using the four contentions outlined above. As data collection took place new nodes and branches were developed. Nudist4 allows for searching of the data or searching of the tree structure in order to discover new themes. It also retains the raw data in a form easily accessible for quoting in the written report.

3.5 Organisation and presentation of data

Analysis of the transcribed interview data gave rise to sixty separate nodes or categories which were then grouped to form major themes. In the case of both categories and themes, the labelling reflected terms that are commonplace in the experiences of teachers. Categories such as 'Teaching_3-4', 'Teaching_prep', 'Teaching_5-6' could be linked to produce a theme of 'Primary_teaching'.

In order to address the primary research question, themes were then related to the four contentions. Each contention is discussed in its own chapter with the relevant themes used to organise the chapter. Categories could belong to more than one theme and one theme could be relevant in several chapters. For this reason, it was not always possible to discuss contentions entirely separately from each other. As far as possible, each chapter is focused around a central contention which is being discussed in terms of the relevant features and dimensions that emerged from the data.

Discussion of the contentions and themes is supported by extensive quoting usually from multiple sources in order to illustrate various relevant features and dimensions. The quotes are referenced using the initials of the interviewee and line numbers which refer to the transcribed interview textfile as it appears in Nudist4.
3.6 The structure of the data reporting

The remaining part of this dissertation analyses and interprets the data in terms of the research question and the related four contentions.

Chapter Four examines the conceptual basis of music education in schools and looks at how Aesthetic Education goals align with teachers' intentions. Teachers usually described their aims or intentions in terms of what they taught in classes and what they wanted their students to achieve. The outcomes that teachers expect to obtain from students and the strategies that they adopt to achieve them was seen to shift gradually over the thirteen years of schooling. Therefore, the chapter is organised to show how the dimensions of learning in music (including its aims and strategies) shift in four stages of lower primary, upper primary, lower secondary and upper secondary schooling. Although teachers retain some aesthetic goals, this chapter shows that the goals are significantly different from those expected by the CSF.

Chapter Five examines how useful the learning development mapped in the CSF outcomes is to teachers. The link between learning and teaching is not very explicit in the CSF because learning development is conceived of as a personal cognitive and age-based trajectory. Teaching is rarely mentioned. Nevertheless, the CSF has primarily been written for teachers to implement and the expectation is that teaching will be aligned to CSF outcomes. The CSF has two aspects—as a framework for developmental curriculum planning and as a framework to guide the assessment and reporting of student outcomes or standards of development. In this chapter, the CSF is evaluated in terms how relevant teachers regard it for each of these aspects. It is evident that the heavy focus in the CSF on assessment is not reflected in teachers' practices. Developmental learning is not regarded by teachers as something that simply emerges from students and is there to be assessed. It is a feature that grows out of the music programme itself and as a product of what teachers offer.

In Chapter Six, I look in detail at the bases on which teachers develop their music programmes. The data presented in Chapters Four and Five indicates that
teachers find little direction in the CSF and that it only minimally impacts on their practice. Nevertheless, all music teachers expressed clear goals in relation to the teaching and learning of their students. This chapter examines the various aspects and issues relating to teacher agency and how this plays out in the setting and achieving of learning goals. It draws more specifically on the ideas of Anthony Giddens (action, knowledgeability and structured improvisation) and Pierre Bourdieu (habitus and capital). It also incorporates a case study of how one teacher built her programme in one school over a number of years.

Chapter Seven looks at how teachers react to policy change. Educational innovation/reform/policy change often overlooks the central role of the teacher and the contextualised nature of education. Administrator or policymakers view knowledge or change as a product that can be formulated theoretically and delivered and distributed in easily digestible pieces. Teachers expressed clear opinions on the value of the CSF as a document and a process for change. This chapter summarises teachers’ response to mandated curriculum change.

Chapter Eight provides a summary of findings for each of the four contentions and addresses the primary research question of how the CSF has impacted on music teachers’ practices in Victorian state schools.
Chapter Four—
Learning music—enjoyment and engagement or developing skills?

In this chapter, I examine how the Aesthetic Education expectations and goals of the CSF align with teachers' own aims and practices. The interview data revealed that teachers' goals and strategies were not fixed but varied according to the age-group they are teaching. I begin the chapter by examining the aims and methods of teachers when they are teaching at lower primary level. I then trace the changing emphases that teachers adopt as students move through primary school and into secondary school. The chapter concludes that teachers adopt flexible aims and strategies in response to students' interests and capabilities.

4.1 Introduction

In Elective Research Study One, I examined the debate between two philosophies of music education—Aesthetic and Praxial. I concluded that the aims and problems in these competing philosophies were ultimately the same. Not only are 'aesthetic experience' and 'flow' essentially indistinguishable, they are also invisible. The value of both concepts for music education is consequently limited because teachers have no means for determining whether they are achieving either 'aesthetic experience' or 'flow' with their students. A more pragmatic view of both Praxial and Aesthetic approaches to music education would avoid the emphasis on covert experiences and would focus more on overt ability. The differences in these philosophies in a more pragmatic interpretation would amount to little more than a question over where to strike the balance between simple enjoyment and engagement with music and skill development in music.

The first contention I will examine in this research suggests that there is little congruence between the broad outcomes set for students in the CSF and those set by individual music teachers working directly with students in schools. In adopting an orthodox philosophy of Aesthetic Education, the CSF for music sets unrealistic and unachievable goals that cannot be measured and cannot be used as the basis for programme planning.
4.1.1 The Victorian CSF
The tension between skill development and aesthetic development is particularly evident in the CSF. The six levels of art outcomes contain frequent references to skills, techniques, processes, elements and ideas without explanation of what distinguishes them at the different levels. Aesthetic development is conceived of in terms of an ability to express ideas, feelings, understandings and experiences in aesthetic ways. Because the CSF is an assessment framework, teachers are placed in the position of having to both foster and assess their students' emotional development. This region of development is usually considered to be outside of the scope of the educational system (Bloom, Krathwohl et al 1958, Introduction). Teachers are quite likely to find it difficult to determine whether, in a particular task, a student has demonstrated a Level Five ability—'use experimentation and a range of sound sources to develop musical ideas from starting points'; a Level Four ability—'experiment with the expressive quality of sound to develop musical ideas'; or even, a Level Three ability—'selects, organises and combines a range of elements with the intention of developing ideas'. The distinctions fall on the differences between experimenting and selecting and organising, or between developing ideas and having the intention to develop ideas. In the CSF, this tension between the goals of aesthetic development and the requirements for measured and accountable assessment ultimately results in a document that satisfies neither goal.

4.1.2 Teacher aims
Most music teachers would be unaware of the existence of, let alone the debate between, two philosophies of music education. Only one teacher, DS, made reference to the concept of 'Aesthetic Education' which she defined in fairly broad terms. However, the question of how to balance enjoyment and engagement in the music class with skill development is a fundamental one. Teachers generally felt that both were important. Students needed to be learning about musical concepts and developing their musical skills but teachers also wanted their students to enjoy learning. There was no one answer as to how to balance these two objectives. Indeed, each of the thirty-two interviewees could
have provided an individual case study on how a particular teacher juggles these two objectives in the context of their school, their classes and their personal abilities.

CD taught at one of the few Prep-12 schools in the region. Her experience as a primary class teacher as well as a music teacher at primary and secondary levels gave her a particular perspective on the value of skill development. She agreed with the need for developmental skill levels leading all the way through to the completion of the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) in Year 12.

However, she also believed the CSF was an adequate tool. Her conclusion that,

I find it a bit general—I don't always understand what they mean. They say something as broad as 'composers in a variety of styles'. Well, I can get my Preps to do that so I find it a little loose for my needs (CD 96-98),

was backed up the fact that she had already developed her own skill development framework:

I typed up at one stage—what was really useful—my own interpretation of what you think the kids should have achieved at each level. And, I had that next to me when I wrote reports. I'd go "Okay, that kid's about level four" or whatever. (CD 101-103)

A different view was expressed by CP who was a secondary music teacher and also a sub-school co-ordinator. He saw the assessment focus in the CSF as being superseded by the more recent policies of Middle Years programmes and Local Learning and Educational Networks with their emphasis on engagement and retention.

Given what we hear from our principal class members who come back from various meetings, and from my own experience of going to Middle Years conferences and things like that, I think that this year its place of significance has fallen away considerably.
(CP 484-490)

In their own ways, CD and CP were atypical of other teachers. Primary teachers were generally less concerned with assessment and skill development than secondary teachers who often had one eye on the possible need to prepare students for the VCE. Secondary teachers were also conscious of the need to 'get the numbers'—i.e. get enough students to select the subject so that it would
be viable. They could not easily cater to having just anyone in the class because of the practical requirements of the VCE.

Across the range of primary and secondary teachers, the question was not where to locate a magic balancing point between engagement and learning. Rather, it was recognized that, as students moved through their schooling, a range of factors cause this balance to gradually shift from an emphasis on enjoyment to an emphasis on ability. For all teachers, locating and accommodating this ‘moving target’ determined how their programme developed. The question was not whether to focus on aesthetics or practical skills but how to get the right mix for the right year level at the right time.

4.2 Primary Strategies
Although distinction was made above between the aims of primary and secondary teachers, these aims are not clear-cut. In reality, the goals that a primary music teacher might set for a Grade 1-2 are probably quite different from those s/he would set for the Grade 5-6 classes. The balance between engagement and learning is a continually shifting one and is influenced by a range of internal and external school factors. This means that in any one year, a certain amount of Giddens’ ‘structured improvisation’ is necessary—gauge the class, determine where they are up to, decide where you can move them to, gather the resources, begin the process, revise goals if necessary, and repeat for each grade. In this section, a selection of primary teachers describe what they do, how they do it and why.

4.2.1 Lower primary school
At the beginning of school music, there is not much distinction between playing and learning.

Children in this area are fairly immature and you have to keep them fairly young at that level. So, nothing too formal. It’s a lot of instrument recognition and just lots of different songs and games and plays and, you know, doing pitch games. Not just formal music but a bit of the sort of drama comes in. (HC 41-45)

Music learning is a physical process at this stage.
With prep it was marching songs, lots of body percussion, lots of song—something they can feel. If they can feel it, they will learn it. So, we would always clap along, we would always move to songs, sometimes movements with just a lot of [interviewee claps hands together].

(HE 94-99)

The ‘game’ concept seemed to characterise a lot of what teachers did with their students at this beginning level.

Okay, with the Prep children a lot of it’s just basic music games, giving them a lot of experience with different instruments, with different aspects of the music so that their musical concepts of beat and rhythm, pitch and all that are starting to develop. So it’s just a lot of singing games, a lot of playing instruments. (AM 38-43)

The physical and play character of music learning also means that there is little distinction drawn between music, drama and dance.

Yes, lots of creative movement, drama work, puppetry, using a lot of...like, I’d take little things say from Orff... (CS 63-64)

For music teachers, however, the movement and games are essentially about music education.

I structure the programme so that there’s a good deal of musicianship at that stage—a lot of activity, a lot of games, a lot of movement, a lot of singing, a lot of beating of the untuned percussion instruments. And we actually start off with only a little tiny bit of music. We read a lot of rhythms. (HCo 69-73)

If the distinction between learning and playing might not be very clear-cut for students, teachers nevertheless have a clear purpose in choosing the activities they do.

Preps do not learn a lot of theory—they learn to play and recognise a lot of classroom instruments, acoustic and percussion instruments, a lot of movement, a lot of listening. They do the different aspects of music like your high, low, that sort of thing. They can recognize a lot of songs. (PR 76-81)

Prep, Grade 1 and Grade 2 are often seen as representing one stage. In part, this may be due to the presence of composite classes in many primary schools.

Although there seemed to be no obvious pattern or rationale as to how composite classes were created, they were fairly common. Some schools had Prep-Grade 1 composites but the more common grouping was of Grade 1-2.

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Numbers may sometimes have determined or required composite classes but even large primary schools with over six hundred students maintained composite classes. The teachers whom I asked about composites did not usually know the rationale for their existence.

It was usual to consider Prep-Grade 2 a stage in terms of programme allocation. I take each class for at least three-quarters of an hour—three-quarters of an hour for Prep, Ones and Twos, and an hour for Grade 3 and up. And we’ve got twenty-four classes going. (LM 34-35)

The development of learning through this stage becomes a progressive development of the types of games and activities described above. Learning is active and participatory and the games become progressively more structured towards specific learning goals—refining memorisation, moving from simple recall into symbol use, and making movements, rhythmic response or singing more co-ordinated.

We use instruments, percussion instruments, but not terribly much in the Prep area. It is more dancing and moving and the feel of the music and different types of music and styles of music and all that. In Grade 2, we do a similar sort of thing but we take it to the next step. We start to use rhythms and I use the Kodaly symbols and they do the patterns and a lot of songs with that type of thing... And again we stick to the theme, we do singing, we do a lot of drama, we do movement. (JF 53-64)

4.2.1.1 Music as a performing art at levels one and two

The CSFII distinguishes only between performing arts and visual arts in its first three levels to the end of Grade Four. This is consistent with the expectations of Aesthetic Education that all learning in the arts is concerned with development of generic ‘feeling’ abilities. From the data presented above, it is also evident that this is reflected in the practices of teachers, but only up to a point. Although incorporating movement was a significant aspect of music learning at this level, very few teachers conceived of what they did as ‘performing arts’. Nor did they see themselves as performing arts teachers. Rather they were music teachers who incorporated dance and drama activities into their music teaching to aid music learning.

Not just formal music but a bit of the sort of drama comes in and a bit dance. So, more the performing arts but with a focus on music. (HCA 42-44)
However, there were some exceptions to this. One teacher, LL, had trained in
drama and dance as part of a performing arts major at university and had only
taken up music as part of her primary teacher training. She was more confident
in conceiving of what she offered as three separate disciplines.

The years that I know there is a concert in Third Term, I do less dance
and drama in the other terms because I know that it is going to be dance
and drama focus in the Third Term. I would say that there would be
movement in every class. But, drama? I probably do two lessons a term
specified as drama. (LI 109-112)

However, the school at which she taught tagged her as the music teacher. Most
of the teachers in this research project had their initial training in music and as a
consequence tended to think of their dance and drama offerings as music.

Also they [meaning the CSF]—in Levels One, Two and Three—they
don’t actually have a music section. They have it all combined. And I
find that difficult because, really, I am not teaching the arts. (LS 277-278)

The strict focus on music might change, however, depending on the school and
how it wanted to conceive of the programme. There was only one primary
school that did offer dance and drama as separate programmes to music with the
aid of part-time teachers. This was an option viable only for a really large
primary school. Some of the larger primary schools also offered a Position of
Responsibility as performing arts co-ordinator. It then fell to the confident,
successful applicant to extend his/her teaching into dance, drama, school
production, band conducting, choral training, etc.

And, we have elective programs. We have a choir—we have about 30 to
40 kids on average in that—and that’s from Grade Three to Six. I have a
dance group and we do jazz dancing at lunchtime. Bands—the idea is to
have all the kids that are learning, once they get to a certain level, to join
bands so there is about 30 kids in that. We are involved in state events
like ‘Joining the Chorus’ so we have 20 singers and 20 dancers and
every other year when it’s been on we’ve done that. Every second year
we have a whole school production thing. The last two I’ve actually
written and incorporated songs and instrumental stuff that we’ve been
doing so that just ties that all in together. (CS 27-34)

Where the school felt bound by the CSF to offer dance or drama, this was, of
course, placed in the hands of the music teacher, rather than the class teacher.
The concept of ‘performing arts’ is, therefore, more a term of convenience than a coherent philosophy of arts education.

I mean, I know with our school it is a matter of making sure we have covered everything in the curriculum. So, if I am not covering something—we have a checklist which we pass around in our integrated curriculum team—then we have to make sure that we pass it on to someone else to do, so it is covered. (LS 282-287)

Dance could just as easily be, and sometimes was, incorporated under physical education at primary level.

4.2.1.2 Teachers’ perceptions of students

Very little of what teachers said about their classes meshed with the CSF. The notion of individualised cognitive development that is pointed to in the CSF is not really reflected in teachers’ descriptions of their own students. So, when the CSF II says Level One students ‘explore ways of producing sound… use appropriate techniques… experiment with sound…’ (p.18), teachers usually expressed this as something that they taught students to do and was perhaps better reflected by the descriptions in the latter part of the same curriculum focus statement—‘Teachers introduce… teachers assist… students learn to…’ (p.18).

Much of what the CSF II says students learn at Level Two—the distinction between rhythm and beat, a limited range of symbols, musical elements, and basic performing skills—is fairly accurately represented in what teachers actually do teach classes. On the whole, however, teachers seem to regard Prep to Grade 2 as a single developing level—a continuum of learning which involves:

- learning to keep the beat before introducing rhythm:

   And, as I said, I focused on rhythm and beats. So, Peter Leyden percussion charts… It is really good because I didn’t do them in Prep, I really only start them in Grade 1… (EI1 86-88);

- learning to describe the musical elements:

   So the Grade 1’s at the moment, we’re revising all the elements of music. We’ve done a Goldilocks song… We had a focus on pitch. So they have the low music for the papa, middle for mamma… The next one I’m going to do involves tempo. (MF 118-121);
• learning songs led by the teacher:
  
  I start off with a fair bit of singing—either static, sit on the ground
type singing or action songs. I get up and do the actions as well and the
kids actually quite like that. (LP 143-145);

• learning how to use symbols and then be able to read them in different
contexts:
  
  Well I do start basic use of crotchets and crotchet rests for Preps and 1’s.
I’ve got a lot of little patterns on magnetic clips for the white board with
40 patterns. I do it right from scratch so the children actually learn to
start writing some of their own four beat patterns using the little patterns
that I’ve got. (LM 59-66)

4.2.2 Middle primary

Many teachers conceived of Grades 3 and 4 as a distinctive age group. If the
term ‘performing arts’ was a convenient descriptive term for what teachers
taught up to Grade 2 level, it didn’t really reflect teachers’ views of what they
did with Grades 3 and 4.

At Grade 3 and 4, teachers typically place greater emphasis on pitch reading.
Learning an instrument such as a recorder, keyboard or glockenspiel usually
begins here. There is a perception among teachers that by about Grade 3
students had some ability to work independently and manage their own learning.
This often leads to small group creative work or independent work on a
keyboard. Many teachers saw what they did with their Grade 3-4 classes, whom
they often referred to as a discrete level or as ‘middle school’, as laying the
foundations for Grade 5 and 6. In this respect Grades 3 to 6 were often seen as a
continuum or band of learning.

  I guess Grade 3 would be a little more structured. And as they get to
Grade 5 and 6 well even the themes that they’re doing are a little bit
more sophisticated. (AM 101-105)

Many teachers regarded Grade 3 and 4 students as the most enjoyable ones with
whom to work. Students had the ability to work with most musical concepts,
they were open to and interested in exploring new ideas, and they had some
independent learning capability. The range of ideas that teachers were able to
explore with them appeared almost endless. Extension of the class music
programme into extra-curricular music programmes—choir, bands, dance
groups—often started at this level. Programmes remained strongly practical and
it is the ability to develop more sophisticated practical skills—note reading on
instruments, playing in parts, creating music with graphic scores, writing tunes
on a keyboard—that characterise this stage. Listening, a primary feature of
Aesthetic Education, only occasionally surfaced as an activity. Discussing
music, as suggested in the CSF II, seemed not to be a big feature of music
learning, although there were exceptions.

At middle primary, the composite class could often be something of a difficulty.
Most teachers had to teach composites and the usual strategy was to have a two-
year rotating programme. This was not confined to middle primary but usually
occurred throughout the school. The perception of a division between middle
and lower primary was not always reflected in how the school structured its
composite classes.

This year most of them are in the right levels for the CSF except that we
have got three Prep-1’s. And I don’t actually teach them this year, but
that range of going over Levels is hard. (AM 132-133)

Yes. Prep-1, Prep-1-2 and 2-3. And then we’ve got 3-4, 4-5, 5-6.
Because it’s so small, we have to have composites. (JB 212-214)

It also meant that teachers were often introducing new concepts such as pitch
notation to a class containing students with no experience of the concept and
students with one year’s experience.

4.2.3 Upper Primary
By the end of Grade 4, most teachers were able to develop all the foundational
skills—group playing, individual playing, notation reading, creative work and
listening. At Grade 5-6 the focus became one of application and developing
sophistication. This, of course, assumed that the Grade 5-6 students had come
through the school and had received five years of musical education already.
Where this was not the case, teachers often found Grade 5-6 a difficult level. At
one school, a large transient population meant that many students came into the
school with limited musical background.
I don’t follow the CSF at all for the 5-6 area. They cannot handle any creative work. We do a lot of playing, but it’s fairly structured. They respond to structured stuff. (VM 114-116)

At another school the music programme had stopped because of the lack of a room in which to teach with a consequent loss of musical skills amongst students.

All the kids in Grade 5, when I first teach them now, they can’t hold a beat. They don’t understand rhythm. Whereas, the Prep’s course was pick the beat. (EH 46-50)

Students at Grade 5-6 could be a bit of a paradox for teachers. They are more independent—‘their personalities come out’—but they are more conscious of peer pressure and consequently less open to just any new idea.

Enjoyment, appreciation of music—particularly different styles. And that can be a battle in the upper school because the Top 40 is the only stuff that they want to listen to initially. (AM 277-278)

The use of computer programs for creative work was a developing feature in several music classes at this level.

We sort of have technology group, and...what they have been doing is...creating their own sound-scapes with Micrologic. (LS 156-160)

Teachers also focused on popular music, or aspects of it such as syncopation and chord progressions, as a way of directing students’ interests towards specific learning in music.

I do a lot of ensemble work with the Grade 5’s and 6’s in their classes. So, we might have a sort of a focus on popular music over the last twenty years. We might have a song we focus on, and then we try and do like one of the songs from the styles we were looking at. (MF 146-149)

Students are able to develop increasingly sophisticated individual skills at this level. For some schools this might mean class music is supplemented by instrumental teaching. Students also often begin to learn an instrument at home at this age. This can be both a boon and a headache for teachers as individual interests and abilities diverge and produce a range of skill levels within any one group.

The band meets 1.30 on a Tuesday afternoon, I have three keyboards, drum kit, they play marimbas instead of xylophones and then I have all the hotch-potch of instruments you can imagine—recorders, clarinets,
flutes, saxophones, guitar, violins, maybe a cello, whatever. So, I teach and I have a melody line, a harmony line and a chorus and that’s all I do... I teach it to them in that time. If they can’t read well, I let them write the notes in... (JF 98-111)

The increasing development of individual personal abilities also means that music is in competition with other areas of the curriculum such as sport, particularly in co-curricular programmes.

The 5’s and 6’s choir used to be at lunchtime. I did it differently this year because the numbers were dropping quite considerably. I could see that really the biggest problem was the fact that they were giving up their lunch times. (HC 127-131)

Gender also becomes more of an issue at this stage.

I have probably about six choir groups, but more girls. My senior choir is made up of girls... Yeah, it’s a shame because boys have the better voices. (JH 454-460)

Many teachers develop their programmes as increasingly performance-based. This allows them to develop studies such as group projects involving a range of possible skills which are directed towards a specific goal. Such goals might include presentation nights, school concerts and productions, or class performances.

But for instance, I’ve done video clips with Grade 5-6, where they’ve chosen a bit of music that they like. They have to sort of get together so they can make it and I can film it. They think about costumes and things like that. (AM 105-107)

Now we perform at... we do a lot of community service where we perform for hostels. There are local hostels here that we go back to every year. We also play at Doncaster Shopping Town. (JF 222-226)

The focus is less on learning new things than on developing and extending existing skills through presentation.

We might have a few students go off and do the backing type of singing. I’ve sent some people out there to practice singing. We have a tuned percussion part. A few learn guitar. I give them the chords and the drummer plays the drum, all in one lesson. So really in Grade 5 and 6, I really try and get them to apply the things that we’ve done. (MF 146-150)

Emphasizing performance becomes an inevitable aspect of skill development and often leads to larger primary schools having several specialised choirs,
hands and performing ensembles. This can stretch teachers to the limit as responsibility to establish, teach and manage various performing groups will usually fall upon the one music teacher.

The recorder group is any one who wants to do it in a group. We started off with Grade 3 and up and had 35 or 36 kids performing to assembly... Choir it has been any one almost who wanted to do it—it is far too big. Then the two bands. Anyone who has learnt an instrument has to be in a band....Keyboards are open to Grade 6 for anybody, as I say there is about 60 kids. I take the string group, because the string teacher can’t be here longer than what she is actually teaching... I do all the accompanying for them... (PR 249-270)

Teachers also make a more formal attempt at music appreciation through listening and research at this stage.

I started giving a thumbnail sketch on the background of where music, contemporary rock music is today. I went back as far as the American Civil War. (LP 230-234)

Creative work also continues.

I get them to compose. So, because we are giving them the harmonic background as well from about Grade 5 on, Grade 3’s and 4’s would just compose melodies. (EH 143-6)

And teachers often incorporate some theory work as this can provide breathing space to cope with composites or concert preparation.

This term, as I said, it is a bit more theory work. Purely because of the difficulty of handling them at this stage. You just need to give yourself a break more than anything. (HCa 140-141)

The continuing development of skills and of the programme as a whole inevitably puts a lot of pressure on individual music teachers to find more time to do more things in the school day.

4.3 Aesthetics in Years 3-6

Responding to music as opposed to performing or creating music remains a largely underdeveloped aspect of music education at primary school. It often takes the form of a single excursion to hear the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra or a visit to the school by Musica Viva performing groups. At Grades 3-4 focussed listening as an activity was hardly mentioned by teachers. More use of these activities was evident at Grades 5 and 6 where teachers try to counter a
Top-40 obsession with exposure to other styles of music. For the most part, however, teachers generally conceived of their music programmes in terms of active music-making usually in groups. Given that students received, at most, only an hour for music each week, the place for discussion or evaluation of music was seen as comparatively limited.

Equally, there was little sense that the balance between performance, composition and listening changed at Level Four when the subject ceased to be Performing Arts and became Music. There was actually a greater sense that Performing Arts finished at Grade 2 and Grades 3-6 focused on music performance and creation. Teachers, such as PR, who did make a conscious effort to incorporate listening and responding into the music programme, did so from Grade Prep. Teachers often focused on the musical elements but usually did this across all their grades and adopted a practical or performance approach—introducing dynamics into performance, describing parts in terms of pitch register. Thus, while MF was confident in asserting that her Grade Six performed at Level Four and beyond, I believe that this was probably in relation to ‘Arts Practice’ outcomes as she also admitted she generally undervalued ‘Responding to music’ outcomes in her teaching.

There is a real focus on giving opinions and that sort of stuff, and I suppose maybe I’ve glossed over that a bit. (MF 279-283)

4.4 Secondary school
In Grades 5 and 6 one of the challenges for teachers is how to manage the personal interests and abilities of students as they gradually develop and diverge in individual trajectories. At the beginning of secondary school, this multiplicity of personal abilities is magnified by the fact that any cohort of new Year 7 students entering secondary school will be drawn from a range of neighbouring primary schools. My interviews with primary teachers drew from a group of twenty-five full-time music teachers who indicated on the survey that they delivered music education across the school. About twenty primary schools replied to my survey by indicating they did not have a music teacher. The many other blank survey questionnaire forms that were returned could have indicated the Principal’s lack of interest in the project or the lack of a music teacher for
the survey to be passed on to. However, the number of primary schools indicating no music programme points to the potentially quite disparate musical skills base of any group of students entering secondary school.

4.4.1 Teaching Years 7 and 8
Secondary teachers as a whole seemed to respond to the varied skills base by developing their Year 7 programme as a ‘taster’ programme—that is, some playing, some composing, some listening, some theory and some project work. This is in contrast to the strongly practical nature of primary school music. Secondary teachers were also conscious of having to provide two streams for music. One stream must cater to students who wish to develop instrumental skills and another must broadly cater to all Year 7 students. Some schools dealt with this by actually separating students from the start into Band classes and non-Band classes. This split can involve quite complicated timetabling arrangements.

They have a choice when they come into Year 7 as to whether they go into the band programme or just they go to classroom music. Okay, if they go into the band programme they have one timetabled session a week band rehearsal and that comes out of their Arts per week allotment of time. When they have classroom music, it comes out of classroom music. So those kids would only have two sessions of classroom music, one session of band. When they are not in classroom music (which stops after a term) it comes out of Arts rotation. So they are one session short of art or graphics for the other three terms and they do band. (JS 87-93)

However, given the somewhat unpredictable skills level of the cohort arriving from various primary schools, most secondary teachers regard Year 7 as a time for students to try out a few different things without specialising.

It’s a fairly general course. Even though in this area the schools are getting stronger in music, you still have a number of students coming through with no background in music. So you’re working with beginners. (JaS 102-104)

There was often a sense that teachers are starting again. In this respect, the broad descriptions of music programmes at this stage often appeared to be a bit of a grab-bag of ideas from primary school Grades 3 to 6.

We look at notating the soundscapes as in graphic notation. That leads us into traditional forms of notation. We start playing some fairly simple tunes on the keyboard, and learning how to notate music in the
traditional way. We do some rhythm stuff—rhythm games, echo clapping and all of that. (CP 265-270)

Although teachers try to keep the general music class practical, there is a greater emphasis on theory work, research and written work. PR’s 80% practical to 20% theory mix for primary classes probably drops to about 50/50 at lower secondary.

Yes. Hands on stuff—fifty percent is hands on stuff. One period is theory, much to their horror and my insistence... (DS 174-176)

The mix might increase on the practical side where schools have been able to create band music classes at Year 7 but relatively few secondary schools manage to do this. In trying to get a specialised music class operating, teachers usually run up against timetabling and staffing contingencies.

We tried this year. I went through a list of students who had requested instrumental lessons and I tried to cobble together the most appropriate large class ensemble. I tried to timetable them for the first half of next year but there was a stuff up by the coordinator who forgot that there were to be specific special music classes...(TS 86—90)

The school instrumental music programme typically runs parallel to class music programme and outside of the timetable as students are withdrawn from normal classes.

Secondary teachers have less sense of their programme being developmental than do primary school music teachers. In primary schools with a dedicated music teacher, all classes were guaranteed to get a certain amount of music for the full year and this continued each year. Programme allocation at secondary schools varied so greatly that it was difficult to treat it as a developmental programme.

Year 7, two periods for the whole year...Year 8, two periods a semester only. (AV 30-44)

In Year 7, it’s three periods for a semester and in Year 8 it’s two periods for a semester. (CP 138-143)

No classroom music until Year 8. They do drama in Year 7—one semester, three periods—and they do music four periods a week in Year 8 for one semester. (JSt 86-88)
For this reason, Year 7 and Year 8 music often has a fragmentary and superficial character—a lot of different activities are undertaken which require minimal background and expect minimal development. Only a couple of teachers actually conceived of their Year 7 or Year 8 classes in more focused terms where students were required to develop and explore their own projects.

Yeah, and I used to try and make it reasonably composition-based. We had one large room and two smaller rooms—no, three smaller rooms—going off it. So that was quite good for dividing up classes getting them to rehearse pieces and so on. (AD 49-53)

Obviously this sort of focus on creative production relied on having certain facilities which were not all that common. Although most music teachers attempted to do some sort of creative and performance work, there was not a lot of evidence to suggest that classes got away from teacher-directed activities which would allow students to develop and explore own musical creativity as in CSFII Outcome 5.1:

imaginatively and perceptively combine the elements of music to create and expressively interpret works, use experimentation and a range of sound sources to develop musical ideas from starting points (CSFII—The Arts, p.51)

There probably was a greater emphasis, however, on the outcomes under ‘Responding to the arts’.

We do some music appreciation—that’s listening to music and talking about it and exposing them to a range of music. I give them some classical, some jazz and all that sort of stuff. And they end up, a lot of them, end up quite liking it. (MI 81-85)

So yeah, just an awareness of what is music. Basically trying to shove as much quality orchestral music their way because, in Year 8, we do rock ‘n roll and survey the kids to see how much music and what type of music they listen to. (AV 238-241)

In this respect, the equal balance between practice and appreciation suggested in the CSF for music at Level Five probably does reflect what actually takes place at Year 7-8. Given that this same balance is suggested throughout all CSFII levels, it could be concluded that the CSFII is a secondary teaching model which has been offered as the model for all years of music education.
4.4.2 Years 9 and 10

Beyond Year 8, music is almost universally an elective subject which theoretically students choose to do. While this might appear to offer a solution to the problem at Years 7 and 8 of having to cater to the broad mass with its range of abilities, it does not necessarily work out that way. Getting enough students to choose the subject to enable it to run is always an issue.

The first [Year 10] semester is practically-based and that’s always run. In second semester, Year 10 music has probably run only once in the last seven years... (AV 81-86)

As electives, yes. We’ve almost got a Year 10 up for next year. We couldn’t get it to run last year. (JSe 60-61)

If you can get enough students to choose the subject, there is also the problem that they are not necessarily the students best suited to a subject that might be conceived of as Level Six, meaning fairly advanced. Even in schools where there is a large instrumental programme that would provide a sizeable group of musically-literate performance students, these are not always the students who choose to do music at Years 9 and 10.

Well, it does depend on the mix of students that you’ve got. It looked like we were about to get this Year 10 class up next year and, looking at the kinds of students we had, they were all into guitars and rock instruments. So, in that way we would have catered to perhaps doing some VET units and the music industry skills course. However, you know, if you had another mix... (JaS 213-217)

This is an issue for those schools offering or hoping to offer Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) music in Years 11 and 12. Music classes at Years 9 and 10 often have to function as more than just catering to students’ musical interest. Year 10, in particular, is often regarded as a preparatory year for VCE and the aim is to draw in the most capable students to encourage and prepare them for VCE music subjects.

So by Year 9 and 10, I start doing really heavy aural stuff now. Now that I’ve taught Year 12, I know that you’ve got to start doing the aural stuff really early or you’re going to be in real trouble. (CD 154-156)

Where this is the case, the Year 10 subjects often had the character of a watered-down VCE Music Unit One incorporating group performance, aural training, theory work, music history project work, composition and arranging. Year 9
might be a more general interest subject focused on music technology, theory at individual levels, music history and group performance catering to a range of abilities.

For schools that do not offer VCE music, Year 9 or Year 10 courses would be terminal subjects offering what ever is of interest to students. Schools frequently revised or reconceived of their Year 9 and Year 10 music programme on an annual basis in order to attract students.

So it’s just undergone a review. Arranging, performing, composing—you know, that sort of thing—we thought that would turn them on. And we almost got the numbers but we were always two down or something. So we’ve reviewed it a month or two ago for next year and we turned it into specifically a singing elective to encourage our production. (AV 86-91)

Music technology is increasingly being investigated as a possible new option as is VET music industry skills. But, the unpredictability of student interests at this level makes it difficult to characterise programmes. Teachers’ intentions and expectations are also not easy to summarise beyond saying that they aim firstly to get the subject off the ground before deciding what to actually teach.

4.5 Summary of teachers’ aims

This overview of music teaching from Years Prep to 10 suggests that teachers aim to develop as much practical skill as possible. What practical skill development is possible is gradually seen to decline over these eleven years as personal interests, learning histories and rates of development gradually demand more individualised programmes. Music ability, however, is primarily conceived of in terms of performance rather than an ability to respond to music and this is borne out by what teachers look for in their students when they assess them.

Teachers generally did not assess students by the abstract outcomes of the CSF, but by the components of their own programmes. At primary level, this is strongly practical and very much group-based at least up to Grade 4. There is not a lot of individual assessment.
It (learning a solo piece on glockenspiel) also helps me make sure they’re all learning something because it is very hard to monitor. I find, actually I find that very difficult especially in the group work, very hard to monitor and evaluate. It’s hard to keep track of everything. (AM 119-122)

In particular the idea in the CSF that students are, or should be, reflective and self-evaluating is probably too hard for most teachers.

So I sometimes feel that the evaluation...children’s self-evaluation which is a big thing in the CSF, you just can’t always cover that adequately. You would have to concentrate on one activity so you can evaluate it and you just can’t do that. (CS 271-274)

Teachers are much more concerned with how their students are participating in the programme.

And that participation has to be probably the first and most important thing. You know, the effort they’re making. Because in music, that’s everything. (HC 281-223)

Teachers often use indicators which are included on the reports to show what students have done and how well they have performed. These are not necessarily the same as CSF indicators.

Yes. For instance with Preps, you know, I put in about the music concepts. I put in lists of things like ‘beat’, and I put ‘clap hands’, ‘claps in time to the music or rhythm’... rather than just saying they need to develop musical concepts. (AM 216-218)

How far to assess is also an issue for teachers.

But I always say to the children ‘don’t let anybody ever tell you that you haven’t got talent’. So I always give them a 1 or a 2 - so they’re either right there or they’re just about there. (LM 312-314)

Teachers did not see assessing students as the aim of their programmes. When they had to make assessments, they looked at concrete and observable abilities.

Yeah, I guess that’s one reason why I find that the reporting system is a little bit onerous. Because I feel like then I focus on assessment rather than making sure they are still enjoying it and I find that a bit disappointing when I see myself getting focussed on that. (AM 281-284)

Enjoyment was a key determinant in just about all music programmes. Primary teachers in particular identified the goals of their programmes as providing engagement and enjoyment.
So you look at really the participation, enjoyment and...acknowledging their interest and enthusiasm. (JII 606-609)

Secondary teachers sometimes taught students things they knew students didn’t like because they thought it would be necessary further down the track. But engaging students rather than assessing students was still a focus.

My grand philosophy is to get as many kids involved in the practical side of music as I can and getting themselves to express themselves in music. (CP 556-560)

My goal is just to get kids together playing and just enjoying music. Just enjoying being in a group of any standard of any kind because there is a good feeling in doing it you know. (CM 432-435)

Ultimately, enjoyment and engagement are aesthetic goals. That is, the teacher is looking for or working towards a particular type of response from his/her students and considers the value of the music programme in terms of its ability to illicit this response. Usually, it is the practical aspects of students’ learning that bring about this response. As an aesthetic goal, however, this general programme aim is quite different from the more specific aesthetic goals outlined in the CSF where ‘feelings’ are treated as products that can be shaped and used in different ways.

At primary level, music teaching shows a fairly close affinity to a praxial music approach with its goal of developing practical skills towards an end of achieving ‘flow’, where ‘flow’ might also be interpreted as enjoyment or pleasure. In terms of a more rigorous development of aesthetic ability to respond to music or use and explore feelings, this did not surface in any discussions with teachers. Given the focus on group teaching throughout schooling but particularly at primary level, the development of skills was also limited. The notion of individualised development that underlies the CSF conception of The Arts as personal feelings development is at odds with teachers’ practices of working with classes and groups.

When students get to the latter stages of primary school and move on to secondary school, teachers were conscious of the need to broaden students’ experience in order to counter the dominance of Top 40. This goal has a more
directly aesthetic basis. But, there was not a lot of evidence that teachers went to any effort to measure their success in changing students’ interests and attitudes. As students move on toward the VCE, teachers’ concerns again turned toward practical skills and that area that Swanwick (1979) calls literature studies—theory work and knowledge of music history—which do not easily fit into either aesthetic or practical philosophy.

4.6 Summary

The goals of the music programme remain something of a ‘moving target’—they cannot be easily encapsulated either in a single framework or a single philosophy. Teachers focus strongly on practical skill development but they are also conscious of the limits of this development. It cannot be pushed at the expense of enjoyment and engagement. Teachers’ goals are, therefore, to find the balance between practical skill development and the aesthetic goals of enjoyment and engagement. There is no established formula for getting the mix right and the CSF is of little use in advising how to get the mix right. Given the emphasis on practical work in teachers’ classes, the very general way in which musical skills, techniques and abilities are described in the CSF represents an obvious omission. By contrast, the CSF’s detailed descriptions of how students’ feelings and responses develop appears to be of little concern to teachers. There appears, then, to be little evidence that the aesthetic basis of the CSF is informing the field of music education in Victorian schools or adding capital to teachers’ practices.
Chapter Five—
Teaching for developmental learning

This chapter investigates how the developmental learning framework presented in the CSF matches with teachers’ intentions to provide developmental teaching programmes for their students. Teachers regard teaching and learning as being linked, although this link is not obvious in the CSF. Teaching involves three stages of planning, teaching and assessment. The relevance of the CSF to each of these stages is examined.

5.1 Introduction

In Elective Research Study Two, I examined how curriculum developers in Australia have attempted to map learning as a gradual unfolding of cognition over thirteen years. It was noted in the earlier study that there were many versions of how this unfolding took place and many variations of the sorts of cognitive abilities a teacher could expect to find in students. In spite of the discrepancy among states, the belief that learning somehow develops according to a predictable, natural path retains significant attraction for Australian educational planners.

It will be apparent from my discussion in Chapter Four that teachers also have a sense that learning should be developmental. This sense was particularly evident among the primary school music teachers whom I interviewed who usually taught all the students in their school each year. If the teacher stayed at the school long enough, s/he was in a position to actually observe and manage the development of her/his students over seven years. It was less evident among secondary music teachers who entered the process in the middle and who had to balance the competing demands of providing both a general programme and specialised paths toward the VCE.

The nature of learning development, as teachers see it, is quite different to the way in which the CSF presents it. If teachers appear largely absent in the CSF, or at least on the sidelines, they are highly present in the classroom. Where the CSF suggests that students learn according to preset levels and develop through an exploratory and experimental engagement with abstract musical ideas and
activities, teachers firmly plan and direct students’ musical activities in the classroom by setting specific tasks to be solved. As such, most teachers found the CSF’s regime of levels and descriptors largely irrelevant to actual classroom practice.

I typed up at one stage what was really useful—my own interpretation of what you think the kids should have achieved at each level. And I had that next to me when I wrote reports. (CD 100-102)

This statement reflects one teacher’s interest in having a conception of how learning in music developed across her classes as well as her sense that it was not evident in the detailed descriptions already provided by the CSF. As a primary-trained teacher who had taught primary classes, primary music and maths, and currently worked in a Prep-12 school where she taught music to VCE level, CD had more interest than most teachers in the idea of a developmental learning framework. She was generally more rigorous about assessing her students’ levels of achievement.

I wouldn’t do—what I think a lot of teachers do in a lot of subject areas—Level Six is Year 9 and this kid is a good Year 9 student so I will put him ‘Established’ for Level Six. (CD 100-105)

Surprisingly, though, she regarded the CSF as being ‘all just on paper’.

But I find it a bit general—don’t always understand what they mean. (CD 96-99)

CD’s ideas were admittedly a little unusual in comparison with many teachers. Having taught Maths, she liked the checklist approach where outcomes were specified in a list of discrete skills which the teacher could tick off as students completed them. Although she did not believe that this was applicable to music, she did believe that it was possible to define levels of achievement although it would require an understanding of the subject. CD’s concern was not so much for assessing her students as for having a personal understanding of how learning should progress. She saw it as her responsibility to monitor this progress.

Well I’m very much a primary teacher. I think we feel much more responsible for our students learning across the board. I think they do instil that in primary teachers—that you’re responsible for a group of kids, not a subject… (CD 130-134)
The CSF had to be made to fit with what she wanted to do for her students. Most teachers adopted this approach. They developed and taught their programmes and related them to the CSF as required.

5.2 Using the CSF

There are two possible uses for the CSF—as a planning tool and as an assessment tool. This is really a part of a single teaching process—teachers plan classes, units of work and programmes; they teach them; they assess student learning; they provide reports to students and parents. Consequently, a teacher could look to the CSF for ideas about what to teach students at Level Four Music by referring to the curriculum focus statement. The teacher could then look to the outcome statement and its indicators in order to get an idea of the standard of achievement that could be expected at this level. It would be normal to expect a high degree of redundancy between a curriculum focus statement that outlines the objectives of teaching and learning, and an outcome statement that describes the results to be expected from the teaching and learning.

Therefore, if the objective of teaching is for students to learn to play a range of instruments such as guitar, recorder or glockenspiel at a basic level, the expected outcome would be that students would be able to play a few songs on a range of instruments such as guitar, recorder or glockenspiel.

In the CSF, there is a high degree of redundancy between the curriculum focus statements and the Outcome statements. However, the curriculum focus statement is hardly ever expressed as a teaching or learning objective. Instead, it suggests that teachers provide ‘guidance and support’ as students ‘explore music ideas using sounds from various sources’ and ‘explore their feelings about and understandings of their environment by manipulating the expressive qualities of sound’ (CSF4-The Arts, Music Level Four Arts Practice Curriculum Focus). The expected Outcome is then that students ‘demonstrate the ability to experiment with ideas in making music’ which will include being able to ‘explore ways of communicating ideas about their environment’ (CSF4-The Arts, Music Outcome 4.1). This could mean almost anything in the absence of an explanation of what constitutes ‘experimenting’ or ‘exploring’ in the
classroom. Music teachers consequently need to come up with their own interpretations in terms of more specifically musical activities. In the absence of any reference to teaching, as opposed to supporting and guiding, teachers will also need to decide on their own strategies for ensuring that students can obtain and demonstrate the required abilities. Given the extensive need to interpret and add to the CSF’s very vague guidance, it is not surprising that there was no evidence among teachers in primary or secondary schools that the entire planning-teaching-learning cycle was carried out with the aid of the CSF. In certain phases of the process, teachers made use of features of the CSF in a manner that could best be described as ‘accommodation’. But for the most part, it was evident that the CSF sat on a shelf somewhere.

5.3 Planning

There was little evidence that the CSF was used by teachers as a planning tool.

Well, to tell you the truth, I don’t look at it too often. I just say, right, we’ll just do the music. (JB 549-550)

I don’t think the CSF should drive any programme, to be quite honest. The CSF can be used to support a programme by making sure that you check certain things off against it. But we have paid no attention to the CSF in developing our new courses at Years Nine and Ten. (CP 373-378)

5.3.1 Programme planning

There are several different levels of planning. Teachers usually have an overview or framework of what they teach at each year level or composite level. The CSF is probably most applicable here in the sense that it is also a broad framework. When the CSF was introduced in 1995 and subsequently revised in 1999, it was expected that schools and teachers would review programmes in line with the published documents. This probably happened in most schools in a fairly superficial manner. Teachers do, nevertheless, make some attempt to link the work that students do with the CSF structure of two outcomes—practical and compositional work in ‘Arts Practice’, and listening and history in ‘Responding to the Arts’.

The basis of our programme, seventy-five percent, has been quite similar in the last ten years. So the CSF comes along and you say ‘OK, let’s have a look at what we do and what can we tick off against the CSF’, not
‘here’s the CSF, let’s design a whole new programme around it’. (AV 306-310)

It’s an odd language and, really, what I was doing was covering the learning outcomes. I went through my programme and numbered the learning outcomes and just put the numbers next to each of the activities I was doing. I thought, I’m covering everything. (AM 182-187)

A basic familiarity with the outcome structure was seen as necessary but teachers rarely saw themselves as bound by this structure.

I did not refer to the CSF after familiarising myself with the actual policy and programme. As I said, the practical basis of much of what we do, and our resources, means that we go in a slightly different direction. (EH 244-246)

Occasional reference to the CSF was seen to have some value in terms of just reminding teachers about possible gaps in the programme or content that they might have omitted.

Occasionally, if I am stuck, you know, for a term topic or I have had enough of one particular theme, then I will go to the CSF. And a couple of times I have found holes—I haven’t done that or whatever. (LL 122-126)

Having said that, the CSF has been useful in a very minor sort of way in terms of having a look at what might be done. (TS 204)

For teachers coming into the profession, there wasn’t much sense that the CSF gave them an overview of how learning really worked in the classroom.

It was a bit like a foreign language I must say. I think I had had a very good musical training at university. And I think that gave me more of an idea, and it still does, of what I have to teach. I can open the book and it is a little bit wishy-washy. (LS 219-223)

In terms of planning, teachers’ experience of teaching students was a much more secure guide as to how to develop their programmes. In part, this is because programme planning was not seen as something that could be done without reference to the students who were to be taught.

Yes, because I actually had a Uni student in here last term. I said to her ‘a lot will just come off the top of your head at the time and the kids will want to do more of a certain thing that you hadn’t thought of, so the kids will be an inspiration for you to develop things’. (PR 184-191)
Surprisingly then, the loose nature of the CSF was regarded as a positive thing. It gave teachers the freedom to do whatever they wanted.

I find it’s vague enough so I can more or less do whatever I want to do. If I was a learner teacher, I think it might be not quite specific enough. (LMc 169-172)

An increased emphasis on composition was seen as one of the positive outcomes of the CSF although it was not always easy to realise.

To me what stands out with the CSF is the creative aspect of it—it is a really hands on type thing. So I am doing that, but I am doing it my way. (CM 115-118)

In the broad outlines, then, the CSF served as a sort of reminder of what could be done without really being seen as a directive. Teachers gave much greater weight to the ‘Arts Practice’ side. There was a perception that ‘Responding to Music’ was a bit too unpredictable in its outcomes.

I reckon you would very rarely find kids actually using the terminology that they want you to use or even identifying certain features they expect. (CS 351-358)

The way the CSF is worded, it worked very well with prac. But in terms of appreciation and critical analysis and things like that, it’s beyond the kids. (JSc 307-330)

At secondary level, the purpose of listening was more to expose students to the unfamiliar than to engage them, although engagement might turn out to be a by-product. Engagement was something that had to be continually negotiated with students.

I have tried putting on a Mozart Symphony and have gone ‘this is too old, this was the pop music of that time’. So I find a lot of things like Rock Me Amadeus which has Mozart’s Symphony 41 in it, but it is contemporary. (CM 105)

5.3.2 Term planning

For day-to-day planning, there was no real sense that teachers found the CSF useful. For primary teachers, there was a greater expectation that the CSF would be integrated into term planning.

I know, with our school, it is a matter of making sure we have covered everything in the curriculum. (LS 282-287)

But, as one teacher pointed out, this was not consistent across schools.
At my other school, I probably tie in more with the CSF but that’s because of the school’s expectations I suppose. We have to put in a plan that’s more in line with CSF and look at those outcomes. (SK 202-211)

Where teachers did draw up term plans or semester plans linked to CSF outcomes, there was no guarantee that learning would follow the plan.

I used to work it out. I used to have a Week 1, Week 2, Week 3. But you find that that never happens and so I just do a general theme with the lists of things and resources and stuff and hand that in. (AM 193-195)

Planning according to CSF outcomes is also only one requirement among many that teachers need to accommodate. Many primary schools try to integrate specialist subjects such as music or art with classroom themes.

Say, if it’s the Prep’s planning day, the specialists take all of the prep grades for that day and they plan their units of work. The idea is supposed to be that we, the specialists, are the ones that have the last planning day. So by that stage, we have everyone’s units in and we have an idea of the topics that they’re doing… (CS 140-153)

There were also other school activities that needed to be tied into what the music programme offered.

I would say the years that I know there is a concert in third term, I do less (dance and drama) in the other terms. Because I know that it is going to be a dance and drama focus in the third term. (I.L. 109-113)

These activities are, of course, in addition to any other things that teachers might believe it was important to offer students.

5.3.3 The CSF as a resource for planning
The CSF was not really considered as a resource for ideas. Resources were usually thought of as materials to aid practical music making. At primary level, Peter Leyden percussion charts, ABC song books, Upbeat programmes, Kool Kats, and Micrologic were frequently mentioned. Surprisingly, many teachers still remembered and valued A guide to music in the primary school which was a Victorian Education Department publication from the early 1980’s.

I loved that. That’s what I taught from. That’s what I structured my whole programme on when I taught music back in '82, '83, up through to '85. (VM 213-220)
The question one could ask here is why curriculum planners chose not to use the knowledge that already existed in this document and which is still clearly valued by music educators.

At secondary level, resources were conceived of more in terms of equipment available and to some degree, facilities, rather than teaching materials. This perhaps reflected the more eclectic and fragmented nature of music teaching at secondary level. It also reflected the need to cater for more individual learning rather than group learning as musical abilities diverged. Music learning at secondary level was to some degree seen to require an element of self-directedness and exploration. Having particular types of facilities was consequently regarded as valuable.

The principal has said ‘I’ll give you $40,000 yesterday’ but the money isn’t the issue. The issue is that this room gets used ten times a week as a band room. And even though it is over-sized, you put some keyboards in here and you’ve got no room. So the problem is the facilities. (AV 130-131)

I mean we’ve got all these small practice rooms. So what I do is that I try to timetable it so that when the instrumental staff aren’t using them that’s when the kids can use them. (CD 57-62)

Computers were seen as potentially an important resource but something that was still being worked toward. Their potential lay in their ability to link advanced musical skills to the limited abilities of students taking music especially at Years 8 and 9.

The kids in the classroom, they listen to boom, boom, boom... all of that stuff. The music technology incorporates that style of music but makes it a bit broader, gives creative choices. (LC 134-136)

5.4 Teaching

In terms of what to teach at which stage of school, the description of programmes at various levels given in Chapter Four would suggest that teachers did have some sense of there being a line of development which made certain activities more appropriate to certain ages. This did not seem to come from the CSF but more from experience. For some teachers this experience directly conflicted with the CSF’s descriptions of students.
They suggest, I think in Level Two, that the children are going to sing in parts and rounds. Now, the children are not—they don’t have developed enough voices to be confident enough that they can cope with that. (HCo 324-331)

But I find that, as far as performing and composing, they’re not really at that stage. I don’t know, maybe in some other schools where you’ve got a large number of kids involved in learning instruments that may happen. (KJ 232-238)

For most teachers, the vagueness of the CSF was seen as a bonus which essentially allowed them to develop their programmes and then fit them to CSF outcomes. Programmes were generally not conceived in abstract but in response to students.

Actually you might introduce one song and it goes fantastically. Or, you might know that those kids are particularly suited to just one type of music. So, yeah, it’s good you can be a bit more flexible. (AM 196-198)

We went on what we feel the kids would want to do, given that the programme is designed to engage kids in their schooling and get them to be at school and be involved in their school. (CP 396-398)

At the same time, teachers saw themselves as firmly in control of what went on in their classrooms. The apparent absence of the teacher in CSF descriptions suggests that learning is largely a by-product of students’ inherently exploratory and self-directed natures. Most teachers pointed out that it was actually much more difficult to teach students to do the things that the CSF expects.

To create practical work you’ve really got to be there directing it all the time, keeping it under control. (AV 362-364)

So, I had to do all the scripting for that as well. It was a lot of work and parents say you can tell work has been put in and that the teacher has guided these kids right through the whole thing. So it was worth it in the end. (CM 275-277)

5.5 Assessing and reporting

It is mainly at reporting time that music teaching and the CSF really link up in a concrete manner. All schools report students’ attainment of CSF levels as part of the usually twice yearly reports that go home to parents. This is required by the Department of Education, and schools have to submit their report pro forma to regional offices. CSF levels are, however, only one among several aspects of students’ work that are reported home to parents. The degree to which they are
actually considered an important feature of reporting varies from school to school and teacher to teacher. Usually it is not the reporting aspect of the CSF that is problematic as much as it is the assessment aspect.

5.5.1 Assessing

Assessing students in music can be a fairly emotive issue. Although students and their parents expect students’ work to be assessed, there is some question over what is actually being assessed by CSF outcomes. Typically, teachers provide a description of what the outcomes are, what students actually did to meet the outcomes, a CSF level assessment, and a letter grade assessment indicating the students’ standard of work or performance. There may also be a comment. All this can make for a quite complicated record. The separate assessment of CSF levels to actual work done suggests that students are being measured against a benchmark as well as in terms of their own progress.

Teachers were often very uncomfortable with this. Various strategies were adopted to get around benchmarking individual students.

The most common strategy was to simply say that, if students are of a certain age or in a certain class, they are automatically working at a certain level. This is actually suggested in the CSFII (p.2). In effect then, teachers only have to decide whether the student is beginning the level, progressing through it, or has completed it. Because each level takes about two years, teachers can adopt the formula that in the first year, students are ‘Beginning’ and then ‘Consolidating’, and at the end of the second year they have ‘Established’ it. If the subject does not run for the full two years, as in many secondary schools which might offer music for a term or semester only, teachers may only say that a student is ‘Consolidating’. Or teachers may base their assessments on standards of work as indicative of achievement or progress in the level. In effect, there is little individual assessment involved in determining a student’s CSF level.

Well, it just means that basically the band forms are well and truly there at the end. In the classroom, well they’re sort of still beginning.

(I.C 301-303)

I don’t make any great assumption. In Grade 1, you’re beginning Level One. And then in Grade 2, you’re consolidating Level One, you know.
And so, you know, they’re all established in a level by the time they’ve finished that double year. (HB 235-239)

This does not mean that teachers do not treat assessment seriously, only that they are conscious of its contentious nature.

You know what the CSF is like in Level Six and Seven—it’s hard to get up that high for these kids. You might have a Year Nine kid who is still level 5.3. What can I do? They haven’t done music—they do it as an elective. You know, it makes me...I hate doing that because it makes me feel like I am failing. (CM 351-359)

Am I saying, you know, that they’ve done really well with what I’ve taught for this year, or am I saying that they’re consolidating against some standard? (JH 541-542)

Given the way that practical activities usually work in the classroom (i.e. in large groups), giving any sort of individual assessment is often difficult.

It’s like with the little ones. We’ll just have a good look and see whether they’re all beating in time or whether they’re marching in time. (HCo 261-262)

I’ve got all the classes in a book with their names. And, any learning outcome that I’m covering, I use a sheet of that and just scribble down comments. Even if it’s just putting plusses or minuses beside kids’ names. Because it’s so hard...if you don’t get it down then it’s gone. (LM 262-266)

Composite classes can also provide difficulties. Schools do not necessarily create these classes according to CSF levels.

...but then we have got a class of Grade Fours and Fives together, so you have got two different CFS levels as well. And I have really got to watch, watch as to what level that kid is actually in. So that’s a little more difficult. (PR 208-212)

Ultimately, most teachers’ assessments focus more on how well students respond to the activities that teachers have offered. This might be set out as a list of indicators.

I put in lists of things like ‘beat’, and I put ‘clap hands’, ‘claps in time to the music or rhythm’— you know, that sort of thing. (AM 216-218)

The CSF outcomes also consist of indicators which are supposed to be used as the basis for teachers’ assessments (CSFII-The Arts, p.2). These are fairly vague descriptions of personal characteristics such as ‘explores ways of
communicating ideas about their environment using a range of compositional processes’ or ‘uses knowledge of music from different times and places in clearly developing own music ideas’ (CSFII-The Arts, Music 4.1). There was little indication that teachers found these to be relevant and generally they were not used because it was felt that parents would not understand them.

I report to my specific things because the outcomes aren’t written in language that can be sent home to parents. I don’t believe. I try and make it intelligible, I suppose. So someone can actually look at it and see what you are doing. (HCA 260-266)

Teachers’ indicators usually referred to what that teacher valued in his/her students or what they actually did. Overall there was a sense that music teachers were not particularly preoccupied with assessing students’ abilities or development. Where they had to, they wanted to ensure that they made an accurate assessment of students. As one teacher pointed out, assessing children’s work is very personal anyway and it doesn’t always result in comparable results.

Actually, having done that activity where there were three of us moderating on specific activities, I can just see how broad people are in their assessments. I was working with people from two private schools and I was astounded that, in certain cases, I felt their assessment was really too low, and then in other cases I thought they were unreasonable—too high. (CS 223-230)

Assessment consequently focused on how hard a student had actually worked and improved in the class, not on the abstract standards of the CSF.

5.5.2 Reporting

As with assessing, reporting is often something that teachers do because it is required by the system. It is expected that school reports will contain references to CSF levels as part of the report. Because schools reported on student achievement long before the CSF was introduced, the CSF attainment levels are often something of an appendage to the body of the report. With CSFII, it was expected that schools would relate the body of the report (what students do in the class and how well they do it) to CSF outcomes. It is not uncommon, therefore, for schools to frequently revise the format of their reports.

We’ve been changing our report over and over again recently because we haven’t quite got the right format. (I.M 261-266)
Well with the reporting, they have changed it every time since I have come here. (PR 195-196)

One of the biggest issues in reporting is being able to express in meaningful language what the student has done in class and how this relates to CSF outcomes. The language of the CSF is typically seen as opaque—outcome statements are not regarded as something parents will understand. They are, consequently, reworded or replaced with the school’s own outcome statements which then become the *de facto* CSF outcomes. This would tend to contradict the claim made in the CSF that ‘learning outcomes are stated in terms that are measurable’ (*CSF-The Arts*, p.2).

I wonder whether a lot of parents would look at it as a lot of jargon, you know. You have really got to look at it and say what does it really say. I said to the Principal, [what was said in the report] is not really the wording of the CSF. She said it doesn’t matter as long as the parents can understand it. (PR 200-203)

We’ve had to have evenings where the parents have to come in, in order to learn how to read the report. (CM 375-382)

Even then, the CSF assessment levels of ‘Beginning’, ‘Consolidating’ or ‘Established’ are also seen as obtuse.

We do them on a computer and we’ve got to give ‘consolidated’, ‘established’ or ‘beginning’. I mean parents just don’t know how to interpret them. It doesn’t mean anything to them. (Hca 269-272)

In particular, the fact that these assessments are often tied simply to stages in the level means that teachers don’t regard them as useful assessments of how well the student is actually working.

For instance, because Level Three is a two-year course, I refuse to give the Grade 3’s a “1” because I feel that then there’s nothing else to do. So I’m inclined to make the point in my comment. I will bring out what they’re particularly good at, or if there is a particular area they’re not coping very well with, or if they’re doing a fabulous job on everything. (Hco 400-402)

But I think that with reporting the parents want to know where their kids are at in terms of the marks. Have they got an “A” or an “E”? Or, you know, where are they at? They want to know what they’re like in class and that’s really what they’re interested in. (JSI 229-230)
The size of the reporting requirements is generally regarded as onerous particularly in primary schools. A full-time music teacher may take twenty-two or twenty-three classes of twenty-six or more students meaning that there are over six hundred reports to write. While there is an expectation that these will be individualised, finding the time and accumulating the data that would allow you to produce 600 individual reports is not always easy.

Oh, a ridiculous thing we have. Very time consuming. We have a description, which I write, and then we have a comment and then we have a little chart and you tick them off where they are, you know. And you’re supposed to write 350 reports and they’re all supposed to be personalised and individual. (HB 248-260)

The teaching process is not, in itself, individualised. Teachers often end up looking for or reporting on how well the student works within the group. CSF levels are then just rationalised in terms of time spent on tasks. Individualising the report can be done by using pieces of written work as reference.

I try to get some written evidence as well. I mean, I get the kids to keep a folder. They have three pink folders from Grade 3 onwards and we keep every year’s work. (CS 309-314)

The focus on written work represents a paradox in a subject which is so strongly conceived of by teachers as practical. Much practical work results in no lasting documentation to which teachers can refer. Hence, the checklist approach becomes useful because teachers can quickly jot down and retain a record of what students have done over half a year.

At secondary level, where the practical emphasis drops a little and where teachers are likely to see fewer students more often, individualised reporting is perhaps easier. However, it is quite common for the instrumental programme to operate entirely outside of the CSF. Students usually received a separate report which deals with technical skill on the instrument.

As far as CSF reports, we report on Years 7 to 10 but not VCE or Instrumental Music. With instrumental teaching the CSF just doesn’t fit. (AV 401-404)

As a result, it is at the point at which students begin to develop specialised individual skills or a personal musical trajectory, that the CSF’s appropriateness as a reporting tool waives.
5.6 VCE

There are two notable breaks in learning not really recognised by the CSF. The main one occurs when students move from primary school into secondary school. Whatever continuity of learning is achieved from being in one school with one music teacher for seven years is upset when students shift into the more diverse and compartmentalised world of secondary school. The other disjuncture occurs at VCE. The CSF was not widely seen to link in well with the VCE.

I think that the real disadvantage with the CSF is that it doesn’t link into the VCE. It should, I mean the CSF should, with all subjects not just music, should be progressing towards kids being able to do VCE. (CD 165-168)

In particular, aural work, which has no particular significance in the CSF, suddenly becomes a major feature in the VCE music courses. Some schools address this by offering VCE Music Performance Unit One or Two at Year 10.

I had all of the band form in Year Ten do VCE Unit One and Two. (LC 192)

Alternatively, teachers reconfigure their Year 10 subject as a preparatory subject for VCE Solo Performance. In this case it usually follows the VCE course structure rather than the CSF.

We’re primarily developing skills heading towards VCE. So, by the time that they get to Year Eleven and Twelve, their aural work is happening and they’re doing composition and arranging and all the usual sort of thing. (MH 151-160)

In itself, the VCE creates some problems for teachers. Small numbers choosing music often requires that teachers take composite classes of Year Eleven (Unit 1/2) and Year Twelve (Unit 3/4) students. One school actually had composite classes of Group Performance and Solo Performance each with its separate study design or syllabus. In either case, the composite class involves simultaneously addressing two courses in the one class.

We offer group performance and solo performance, because of the numbers, together in the same classroom. And your teaching is made more difficult by the difference in structure in the courses. It is very difficult now with the new separate study designs, and fine differences
between the courses, too. You have to tell these kids that it’s almost the
same, even though it’s a bit different. (TS 11-33)

5.7 Summary

There was a fairly strong sense among teachers that learning should be and
could be developmental. However, this was conditional on circumstances that
provided students with the continuity that would allow skills or knowledge to
develop. Most of the teachers interviewed in this study were practitioners with
some experience and had been at their schools for many years. Their presence in
the school offered stability to the music programme out of which a
developmental teaching programme could be created. Developmental learning
was something that followed from a developmental teaching programme not
from cognitive development.

A few of the teachers interviewed were able to provide evidence of the
alternative situation where music learning had been an infrequent or interrupted
occurrence in the lives of their students.

They have had six people in six months. So, for a while there I think
they saw me as someone who might disappear as well, you know. After
a couple of terms they decided, ‘Oh she is hanging around. This is a
really class now. We will do it’. (LL 183-188)

Well, see it depends. Music only occurs if there is a specialist... When
there’s no specialist, the class teachers are too scared to even touch it. So
you’re almost starting at square one each year [with the students who
have missed out before]. (JH 240-251)

For teachers who had established a long running programme, development was
not simply something that came out of the students. It was something that
teachers provided. As such the CSF’s concept of developmental learning was
usually regarded as too abstract. Teachers had to devise and document their own
developmental plans and then relate them to the CSF in order to accommodate
the reporting expectations of the school or the Department of Education. There
was little evidence to show that the CSF was very helpful in this. Learning with
and through students about how their learning takes place was probably more
significant.
Chapter Six—
Teaching and learning as a reflexive cycle

In this chapter, I examine the nexus between teaching and learning. Teaching in the context of the school is presented as the basis for student learning and I show how teachers themselves must learn how to teach students in the school context. I begin the chapter with an overview of the school structures in which music teachers’ work. I then examine how music teachers bring agency to this structure. While teachers have personal skills and interests, they must constantly adapt them to meet the learning needs of their students. This strategic adaptation is examined from three different perspectives: becoming a music teacher; developing the music programme; and, responding to changed circumstances. The chapter shows how teaching and learning involve a reflexive relationship between teacher and students.

6.1 Introduction

In Effective Research Studies Three and Four, I examined my own work and the work of other teachers within one school. In those studies, the work of the teacher was shown to be highly contextualised. As a form of technology for teaching and learning, the school shapes and directs teachers’ work in particular ways. This is not recognised in the CSF where the existence of teachers and the school is treated as an incidental aspect of learning. The neglect, in the CSF, of the basic elements of the education system gives rise to an idealised conception of learning. As shown in Chapters Four and Five, this idealised conception has little real value because teachers can not, or do not, relate it to their own aims and methods. This is not simply conservatism or laziness on the part of teachers. Teachers work within the structure of the school to develop student learning but their work is hardly predictable. They are constantly adapting and renewing their work to provide better opportunities for students.

In this chapter, I examine the contention that what teachers teach is strongly grounded in the specific school situation. The goals that teachers set are informed responses to student interest and needs. There are no ideal situations but there are diverse interests and needs. Providing students with the greatest opportunities within the resources available in diverse situations is the primary concern of teachers. Even though consistency of standards (of student achievement, of judgement of student ability, or of curriculum implementation
across a system) is a goal of the CSF, it is not an evident priority for teachers who are largely focussed on what takes place in their own school communities. It is possible to question whether the process of setting generalised goals or system outcomes is of value when there is not a great deal of consistency of resources, programme delivery or communities across the state.

6.2 The structures of music education

No two schools are exactly alike. It is likely that each of the thirty-two different teachers interviewed in this study could have provided an individual case study of music teachers’ work in their respective schools. Apart from the differences between primary, secondary and Prep-12 schools, there were notable differences between large and small primary schools. Large primary schools (of 600 or more students) were often able to tag a teaching position specifically for a full-time music teacher. Small primary schools had to make arrangements to release a teacher on a part-time basis to teach music, if they did not wish to leave it to the individual class teacher. Or, they could employ a part-time contract teacher. Secondary schools all had at least one dedicated music teacher, if not more. As shown in Chapter Four, programme development at secondary level was rather less predictable than at primary level and resulted in quite diverse offerings. As such, there is no one model of what a music programme should be nor is there any consistency in delivery of music education across the state.

While teachers retain a fair degree of agency in deciding what and how to teach students, they work within clearly prescribed structures and routines. They also have little choice over whom they teach. The relationship between teacher and students, while fundamental to education, is not entirely predictable. Teachers may teach a particular class one year but not the next. Or, they may change schools (voluntarily or involuntarily) and find that they have to operate according to different procedures or expectations. They will certainly find that students themselves change over time. Giddens’ (1984, p.5) stratification model of action provides a useful summary of how teachers negotiate the predictable and unpredictable.
Figure 3. The contexts of teaching after Giddens’ (1984) stratification model of action

The role of the music teachers was central to the provision of music education in all of the schools that I visited. While this might appear to be a fatuous statement, it is not an assumption built into either the CSF or the theory of OBE. Griffin’s (1998, pp.9-10) fourteen distinctions between traditional forms of content-based learning and those based on outcomes (quoted on pages 68-69 above) regard the presence or intervention of the teacher as some how getting in the way of learning. Traditional learning of this form is characterised by ‘non-specific, not necessarily observable outcomes’ and ‘decontextualised objectives’ derived from ‘what the teacher is able to and likes to teach’. It results in a situation where ‘no prediction of learning is possible’.

It should be evident from my discussion in Chapters Four and Five that the CSF has had little impact on the way music teachers go about their work. But this does not mean that teachers approached music education in an arbitrary way. The data presented in those chapters suggests that teachers are strongly outcome focussed but that they do not regard the CSF outcomes as useful. The goals or outcomes that teachers set at the school level for their students are planned for, concrete and measurable. They are also worked out specifically in relation to the students and their needs, and they are constantly monitored. In fact, teachers’ practices align with many of the practices that Griffin (1998, pp.9-10) suggests is derived from outcome-based programmes—‘specific and observable changes
in the student’, ‘teacher as facilitator using a variety of instructional techniques’, ‘real-life materials based on various learning styles’, ‘develops independence and responsibility’.

6.3 The music teacher as an agent for learning

Although it is true that all school education is heavily dependent on the existence of teachers, many school music programmes exist directly as a result of an individual teacher’s work. In this respect, music as a subject is typically more fragile than English, Maths or Science and more directly attributable to the work of one person. This throws emphasis on to the skills that the individual music teacher brings into the school and on that individual’s ability to make those skills work within the school. Provision of music education is not a certainty in any school.

It is not uncommon, particularly at primary level, for the position of the music teacher to be an accidental and somewhat insecure one. Teachers such as JB, LH and HB came to music teaching as class teachers with an interest in music. In the case of JB, her musical background consisted entirely of having learnt the recorder as part of her primary training. It is expected that all primary teachers should receive some basic introduction to music in their training and that this should be carried through into their class teaching. But, as LM observed about her own school, this rarely happened.

I would dearly love the classroom teachers to do more music themselves, but I suspect that not a lot of music is taken in the classrooms. And it’s a problem that all of our network members find—we all find the same problems. (LM 33-36)

Consequently when a class teacher, such as JB, shows some interest or confidence in providing music to his or her classes, this is often noticed by the rest of the school and arrangements are made to extend their skills to other classes. In JB’s case, this involves her remaining as a class teacher and swapping classes with other teachers for half an hour per week in order to give some music instruction.

I’ve done classroom as well as being the computer teacher. This year, actually, I’ve been doing music teaching in the three lower grades. And we do sort of a platoon system where one teacher takes art and the other
teacher takes library. Because we’re so small, we don’t have enough money to have a music teacher. (JB 16-26)

In LH’s case, her interest in music led to her school appointing her as an unofficial music teacher. However, this appointment was only temporary and was about to end. Having to provide LOTE, Art and Physical Education as well as Music had stretched the school’s staffing and resources to the limit. LH was about to return to being a class teacher. For some schools, the solution to this problem was to combine the roles of Art, Music and School production co-ordinator into one position. HB obtained her position as music teacher and school production co-ordinator by gradually expanding her art teaching position to incorporate whatever other jobs needed to be done so that she could remain a specialist teacher.

The indirect route into music teaching is not found only in primary schools. KJ and JaS came to music teaching as English and Maths teachers respectively. They stepped into the role of music teacher at the request of their schools in order to fill staffing gaps. As with many teachers fulfilling the same role, it was usually their personal musical background—piano lessons, secondary school music experience or family background in music—rather than training that permitted them to take on the role of music teacher. This would suggest that the music programme is not so much a given as something that has to be constructed and maintained. Almost all of the teachers interviewed were directly and solely responsible for their music programmes and the programmes reflected their interests and strengths.

There is no one else on the staff that teaches music, so you are really on your own. It can be a big ask for someone in those circumstances. Obviously, what I do depends very much on what I feel comfortable with. (KJ 280-283)

The evidence presented in Chapters Four and Five would suggest that there is some predictability as to what students will be able to do at certain ages and that teachers tend to reproduce similar programmes across different schools. At the same time it would be wrong to assume that this musical development just happened. As LM observed, most class teachers would prefer not to teach music and as a result little music would occur in most schools if someone did not take
responsibility for it. Many students' musical skills and experiences were directly attributable to the work of a single teacher. But providing this experience is not simply a case of finding a person and putting him/her in front of a group of students. The involved process of building a music programme and delivering music education to students can be illustrated with reference to the biography of one primary school music teacher, JH.

6.4 Habitus and trajectory of a music teacher developing a music programme

JH came to her fairly small primary school with certain skills which she was able to offer and which formed the basis of her initial teaching.

I actually don't belong to the Department (of Education) as such. I'm an individual music teacher. I have a Bachelor of Arts (Music) degree from Deakin University and my main interest is piano. I've been part of this school for at least fifteen years, having first come across to the school as a parent... just as a parent coming in and helping. I started over at a kindergarten first of all with my second child playing the piano and nursery rhymes basically. I slowly moved into the primary school. I then started off a small little recorder group and threw in a little bit of percussion and it slowly grew. Then I started taking some classes—music classroom sessions. And just very slowly it developed from there. None of the teachers at the school at the time had any expertise in music so they were very grateful to have somebody come in and do that. (JH 1-19)

Although initially a volunteer and later a casual teacher, JH follows a highly structured programme which she built up over fifteen years. From this basis, her programme develops according to the students whom she takes each year.

So the first half of the year is what I call a modified Kodaly with the junior grades. I implement the Upbeat programme and we move more heavily into that in the middle school area. That depends from year to year because it depends on the composite grades and what they are and what I have taught them before. I tend to work my programme as learning notation and move it around either to recorder or keyboard or things like that...I don't think I've had the same programme from one year to another. (JH 29-38)

The programme can also change according to the variable character of classes.

This year we didn't do recorder at all because it just didn't seem appropriate for this particular grade. And one of the reasons I didn't do recorders this year is because, with Grade 3-4, their classroom was this one—very noisy. They are a group of mostly boys—very, very noisy
generally. And I just wasn’t prepared to do it being so close to the other classes. We have enjoyed working with the bongos and we have used some percussion. We had Coco’s Lunch in this past term and I tend to use a lot of their material anyway. But, this grade, they really got into a lot of percussion—they were just that type of group. (JH 121-129)

All of her class teaching takes place on a Wednesday. On other days, JH also provides all the instrumental teaching for the school.

Perhaps what you also need to understand is that I am here three other days a week, possibly four days, a week. Because I also take private piano students—keyboard—I teach clarinet, and I have got some recorder students as well. I guess I am working on the fact that something like thirty percent of my class are also my private students. (JH 84-87, 106)

Although this is JH’s programme, it is not necessarily transferable from one school to another. While JH has ownership of the programme, it does not result in a rigid formula.

I also teach classroom music at Sxxxxxx [school] and I haven’t quite got the private teaching going yet. And, I’m just wondering whether I can move (the class programme) along at the same sort of pace, not having the private students. (JH107-110)

The music programme also requires resources. In particular, the development of the music programme assumes a certain accumulation of resources. The existence or non-existence of resources has the power to change the programme.

We had been using the library—combined library/art room—but that has been used as a classroom. So, all the specialist classes have actually had to go from classroom to classroom. Where I would normally have had a keyboard session with the Grade 6 I have had to change that. I’ve stayed reasonably close to my usual routine but obviously the keyboard and recorders had to go. (JH 123-6, 133-6)

Developing the music programme was as much of a learning process for JH as teaching work.

At the start, I think I had about eight or nine students, which is all I could cope with because I was still studying. But, that was probably the best thing I ever did for my own studies as well. [The school band] I am still dealing with how that is going to happen in the long run. At the moment, I am it and I have the one hour session. The majority of the kids are my students so I tend to deal with the familiarisation part in the lesson. I can see I am going to have to take a few violin lessons just to help the orchestra. (JH 157-172)
As with most music programmes, teaching extends beyond the classroom to extra curricular activities and school productions. These have to cut across the normal school routine.

Initially it [the school production] was the responsibility of our Principal who started all of this in the first place. And he actually has got theatre background and he totally did the whole thing. All I did was the musical direction. But when he left it had sort of set a precedent and I was happy to take it over... (JH 200-204)

One of the reason I have chosen “The Wiz”, was because of how the Grades were set up. So they are learning their little songs and their dialogue just with me in small groups...And then I have two sessions in the afternoon and one session I call lunch sessions. I have got Prep to 2 involved in that. The ‘Oz people’ have learnt their songs in class, the ‘Munchkins’ have learnt their songs. I am in the process now of starting the 2’s and 3’s with some of the dialogue. And then I just pull out the Grade 6’s when I need them. (JH 200-257)

Thus, JH entered teaching with a certain habitus—that of the studio teacher—and a certain capital or set of skills. She gradually accumulated further skills, resources and ideas in order to provide opportunities and experiences for her students. JH recognised that her aims probably reflected those of the classical studio teacher.

I guess being a private piano teacher I emphasize notation. And it can be done without too much trauma. (JH 101-105)

This experience is modified by the experience of working with class groups.

If they actually get some experience, hands-on experience, of having played an instrument—it doesn’t matter what it is, whether it is a triangle or a tube percussion—if they go away satisfied and they are fairly confident in doing something like that, I feel my job is done. (JH 303-310)

Providing music education is the first step toward developing musical skills and experiences in students. This is as much of a learning process for the teacher as it is for the student. The teacher gradually develops a repertoire of skills and strategies that allow him/her to know how to develop musical learning in students. As with learning in students, learning how to teach relies less on innate ability and much more on determination, commitment and a developed understanding of your students. A programme is developed strictly in relation to students in a school where objectives are set, worked toward and then assessed.
before moving on to new objectives. Objectives and, hence, outcomes can only be established with a knowledge of your students and a knowledge of where their needs and interests lie. These objectives will change and develop as students change and develop through their participation in a teaching/learning programme. JH made no reference to the CSF as either a resource or a benchmarking tool for determining how her students were developing. There appeared to be no need for a detailed description of how student learning progressed when it could be observed every day in practice.

6.5 Teaching as structured improvisation

JH’s experiences were reflected throughout the cohort of thirty-two teachers. JSt’s and LL’s experiences as contract teachers moving from one school to another demonstrated the need to have a basic set of skills (a habitus) that would form the basis of their teaching practice. However, as they both noted, not all schools were the same. So they had to be able to continually adapt and modify their programmes.

Well, I can tell you what I do because my music programme goes with me, particularly since I went back to teaching in 1994. Quite often you walk into a school and there’s nothing really written down anywhere. There might be some bits of paper in the drawer and that’s about it. So I have developed a programme that I take with me. There’s guidelines and I’ve got two boxes of CDs and a box of cassettes that I’ve built up myself and which I take with me. Quite often, there aren’t any audio resources.

(JaS 53-58)

It is quite possible that a music teacher will come into an already established music programme. While there is usually an expectation that teachers will be responsible for their own classes, coming to teach in an existing programme usually means having to modify your teaching to fit in with existing programme goals established by other teachers.

The first year or so that I came here, I tried to carry over what I’d been doing at Gxxxxxx [school]—composition-based, use improvisation, use percussion instruments and all that kind of stuff. And it wasn’t appreciated in the same way as when it was at Gxxxxxx and it was damn hard work.

AB: Are you saying it wasn’t appreciated by the kids?
And by some of the other staff. So I just decided to go with the flow and go back to staff and stave—pretty straight sort of keyboard, guitar sort of stuff. (AD 93-100)

It may also mean having to adapt your programmes to suit the facilities.

What you want is to work in small groups so you can send them off somewhere. But, there's not the rehearsal space or the instruments. The rehearsal space is difficult and then the whole classroom management thing is difficult. (AD 142-145)

At the same time, a teacher tends to have a specific set of goals in mind even if they may be subordinated to the contingencies of facilities and programme or school expectations.

A better classroom programme? Well, the facilities would be a major thing of course—being able to arrange rehearsal places and so on. I think, probably, computers could play a big part in change. If those facilities were in place, you know, given the sonic possibilities of keyboards and computer recording and so on, I'd probably try and head back towards more of a creative approach ... (AD 187-199)

AD’s experiences suggest that he had clear goals in mind but that these had to be adapted to suit the situation. AD was also able to report on the case of an instrumental teacher (KW) with whom he had worked at both his present school and at a previous school. In AD’s present school, KW was Director of Music and had successfully built up a large instrumental programme over eighteen years. At his previous school, however, KW had not found the same responsiveness in the students or parents and had not been able to develop the instrumental programme with the same success. Eventually, he left this school to concentrate on his more successful other school. This would suggest that there are no real formulas for excellence or success, only different contexts and responses. What works well in one school may not work well elsewhere despite the teacher’s best efforts.

Coming into a new school means learning how to make your programme work. For JF, this initially meant trying to emulate the programme left behind by her predecessor. When this did not work for her, she decided to push the music programme in a different direction.

Well, when I came here, I replaced someone who was an absolutely brilliant musician. And I’m not a musician so it was like chalk and cheese. He played—he’s got his own band—and so he played a lot of
music for the kids and he had them sort of doing some really creative stuff to his music. That was just absolutely brilliant but there's no way I could possibly in a hundred years ever do that. But, I still had a gift to offer the children. I had the ability with instruments. I had the ear to know if they were in tune. I decided where I was headed and, then, I sort of just set it up. (IF 378-383; 419-427)

However, there are two factors that will push what a music teacher does in the music programme in specific directions. One factor is the resources available in the school for teaching music.

I was a classical player and that was what I did right through university, that's what I did. Well, I got a rude awakening when I got to this school. All they had were guitars and drum kits. And I thought, 'what am I going to do?'. All I had done before was choirs and piano. I had to rethink. I had to go and get the drum book and figure out how to play rock beats and just basic chords on a keyboard. I had to be prepared to do that and I started enjoying it. (CM 294-311)

The other factor is the students with whom the teacher is working and learning how to teach.

I either learned what I had to do with these kids—what the music teacher had left them with—or I wouldn't have survived...It is really hard to incorporate theory with these kids. They don't want to know. It's less of a battle if you just go, 'Okay. You are going to get on the keyboards. You've got this list of scales, these are the chords, now this is how it happens'. (CM 300-305)

Accumulating resources is usually a slow process. In the school situation, resources can often mean more than just buildings and equipment. Parents can also be a key resource that determines how the programme develops.

We had absolutely nothing and you are supposed to teach music. So I bought a class set of those keyboards...Then, just gradually, we kept adding to things as we went. We added the strings, we added the band equipment, we added a parents support group, we have added until we have what it is today. (DS 105-109)

I reckon it is only possible really in an ordinary government school like this because the community has supported it. I reckon because the community are arts-oriented and like artistic things and are willing to pay for it, that is the only reason we have survived to the degree we have. And a lot of parents in those days commented about how they saw music as a positive experience for their kids. A number of kids were in there not necessarily because they wanted to do music but because their parents encouraged them to do this. (DS 112-121)
Schools then are fairly strongly linked to communities and teachers to their students. This usually means having to tailor what is desirable to what is possible. Most teachers were aware of how the school and the community determine the nature of what was possible and make the music programme possible or not possible.

I am excited that the school allowed the programme to happen. Because you are looking at a slightly different culture of kids. Still great kids but, you know, slightly different in culture. You haven’t got the pool of music teachers and the interest out there in the community. (JS 167-172)

The parents are very supportive of having a music programme. We’ve got a junior school and senior school choir this year and that’s where the interest and the skill development has occurred, because the parents have got high expectations. And also with Metro Music we’ve got them as an after school programme. But again, a push from parents, you know—“you need to learn instruments”. (LH 425-433)

The expectation of consistent standards would make sense if every school and every community in the nation was the same in character, resourcing and goals. There was no evidence of this type of consistency among the schools I visited.

6.6 Summary

In this chapter, I have shown how teachers’ work is highly embedded in the schools and communities within which they work. In the case of music teaching, it can be a struggle for schools to put teachers and programmes in place. In many schools, it is the agency of a dedicated individual that makes music education possible. There is little evidence to suggest that music education thrives in the absence of dedicated specialist music teachers. Learning cannot, therefore, be regarded as an abstract or independent process. In schools, it is something that follows from teaching.

Having a teacher in place is merely the beginning for most music programmes. Developing musical learning in students is a long-term project in which the teacher accumulates various forms of capital that will be passed on to students. This accumulation includes, firstly, the cultural capital of knowing how to foster learning. This capital always has to be worked out in the context of the school and it develops gradually the longer that the teacher works with students. This is as much of a learning process for the teacher as it is for the student. The teacher
gradually develops a repertoire of skills and strategies that allows him/her to know how to extend the musical experiences of students. As with learning in students, this learning how to teach relies less on innate ability and much more on determination and commitment. It grows as teachers adapt their teaching to the needs and interests of their students, as they develop performing groups and as they involve students in school productions. Alongside this accumulation of cultural capital, teachers also accumulate other forms of capital to aid the teaching-learning process—better rooms, more equipment and support from parents.

It can be seen, then, that teaching involves a reflexive cycle of teaching, learning and accumulating strategies to foster learning in students in specific situations. Teachers focus on providing students with an experience of music best related to their interests within what the school can make possible. Relationships with parents and the community also influence what is possible. All of these factors make learning in music education highly contextualised. It also means that music education in schools remains fragile and unpredictable. It is questionable as to what degree such fragility is amenable to the implementation of standards or measurable outcomes in students. Certainly, there are no evident standards for programme provision to schools.

The CSF largely ignores the central role of the teacher and the school in delivering education. It also ignores the reflexive nature of education in which standards can only be set with a knowledge of specific students in specific situations carrying out specific tasks. This renders its complex formulations and benchmark standards as being abstract to the point of irrelevance. Teachers treat the CSF as irrelevant because it has little to tell them about how to teach their particular students or how to develop teaching and learning programmes in their particular communities. There appears to be little purpose in developing such detailed curriculum formulations when they provide little practical advice to teachers.
Chapter Seven—
Rethinking the change process

In this chapter, I examine the effectiveness of the dominant Australian approach of driving educational change from above through the production of policy guidelines and directives. I begin by looking at how governments currently conceive of educational improvement and contrast this with how teachers regard it. I then look at how governments develop solutions to the issues they identify and contrast it with how teachers develop solutions to issues at the school level. The goals of policy-makers and those of teachers are shown to be rarely in alignment. Consequently, the impact of much educational reform remains superficial where the reforms are seen by teachers as irrelevant to the process of teaching and learning. I conclude that much of the policy-driven change in education, as evidenced in the CSF, is concerned with creating the appearance of change rather than with delivering educational benefits.

7.1 Introduction

Elective Research Studies Two and Four looked briefly at educational policy development in the area of curriculum and technology innovation. It was evident there that educational initiatives often come about as issues identified by people who work on the periphery of the education system. That is, politicians or bureaucrats often look to the education system to provide solutions to problems that are not basically educational—the need for better economic performance, for better employment opportunities, for creating new types of industries and employment, or simply as demands to be more ‘innovative’. The education system does play its part in the economic development of the nation. But, at the school level, the economic fortune of the nation is more likely to be regarded as an indirect or secondary outcome of all the things that schools do and an external rather than an educational issue.

Since the early 1990’s, the role for government in directly managing and directing the economy has generally been shrinking through a process of deregulation and privatisation. It is surprising that during this period, Australian governments have taken a much greater regulatory approach to education. This has usually been in the form of increasing the level of management of state-funded education through an increase in the publication and distribution of
directives or through developing mechanisms (such as system-wide testing) that purport to measure system performance. These same measures are generally not applied to independent or private schools. Although it is not evident that this increase in directives necessarily produces better system performance, it is evident that, in the case of curriculum development, centralised production of curriculum standards retains wide appeal among system administrators as a symbol of management. It would appear that governments have needed to find new purposes or rationales for their existence now that their role in the economy has shrunk. One solution to this is to manage more directly all of those areas of responsibility that are not viable for private industry and that are still left to government (such as state-funded education).

In order to justify greater intervention in education, governments have needed to identify issues and problems that require their attention and intervention. These issues are then used to drive educational change. For much of the past decade, the educational issue of most significance would appear to be how to find a role for government in managing what schools do, although this is not typically how the issue is presented. Rather, it is presented as a need for meeting the economic challenge, establishing national consistency and providing standards by which the effectiveness of schools might be assessed (Dawkins 1989). The solution is provide a bureaucratic structure to monitor the work of schools and teachers. In this chapter, I will consider how this solution is received by teachers and how it impacts on what they do.

7.2 Teachers—players or spectators in the system?
As an example of educational change, the CSF is predicated on a problem that is not widely identified within the system by schools and teachers. The politicians’ concerns for standards, consistency and measurability are generally not shared by teachers in schools, because politicians’ concerns reflect an interest in better or different forms of management rather than better educational outcomes. A more questionable aspect of the process that led to the national Profiles and the CSF was that teacher inconsistency and school differences were identified as contributing to the problems of education. As such, the role of schools and
teachers in providing a solution was downplayed. The development of Statements and Profiles, and the CSF was consequently assigned to ‘experts’ outside of the system. It focused on child development as the basis for learning and consequently conceived of education as simply an age-based unfolding of inherent human abilities. Within this scenario, the teacher is relegated to the ‘guide-on-the-side’ who observes, monitors and reports on this development but is seen to be largely outside of the process.

There seems to be little precedent for this conception of the teacher prior to the appearance of the national Profiles or CSF. And, it is generally not how teachers conceive of their work with students.

You’re responsible for a group of kids, not a subject. So your commitment is to the student. (CD 132-134)

Teachers are also aware of educational issues and problems. Usually these relate directly to those in the school and among the students, and to how the conditions of learning can be improved. Teachers set their own standards and goals in relation to the students they teach and the school conditions within which they work. As a result, standards and goals within this framework have practical elements of implementability and measureability built into them.

We set about trying to re-engage kids in their learning and providing them with subjects which we think they will enjoy participating in and also bringing into place a seamless structure in the school to give them support. (CP 179-182)

And it’s not that you’re teaching Level Four to Grade Sixes, it’s that they’re really good at this so you have to expand their skills and strengths. (CD 220-222)

Schools and teachers are in a much stronger position to implement solutions to the problems they see and to evaluate the efficacy of their solutions. The students are there in front of them and either respond to what is offered or do not. An obvious gap in the CSF has been the lack of any real research or mechanism in the CSF itself to determine whether teachers or students have responded to its formulations.
7.3 Macrostructures and microstructures

By downplaying the significance of the school and the teacher in the learning process, the CSF aims to establish a new agenda for education where the management focus is redirected back to a central authority. Throughout this research, I have presented this as a move away from a school-based curriculum development process to a centralised one. However, it would be wrong to perceive the system as a macrostructure where power and agency feed down from the top. The developers of the national Profiles and CSF certainly had, I believe, the intention of placing greater control in the hands of system planners and regarded the system as working in this way. But the reality is that, on its own, the CSF cannot deliver the standards that it sets. The CSF cannot be implemented without the microstructure of schools, teachers and students.

While the CSF adds a new layer of dedicated curriculum developers, the real power of delivery rests at the level of the school and the individual teacher who usually regard the work of system planners as of limited value.

Well the CSF has probably had very little effect. It has just meant re-expressing what we’re doing anyway in a form which fits in with the CSF. I couldn’t say that it has contributed anything at all to music education. (AD 172-178)

So our courses fit with the CSF, but the CSF is not what drives them. You know, the course is there and the CSF has been adapted to fit the course. Not the other way around. (CP 349-351)

From the perspective of teachers, CSF implementation was conceived of by politicians and administrators as a one-way relationship in which the documents were given to schools ready-made and schools put them into practice. This is different to the standard teaching-learning cycle that characterises school learning where teachers develop their programmes on the basis of the feedback that they get from students and parents.

The performance night doesn’t cost a lot—we don’t have to have costumes, we don’t have to have sets. We need lights but we’ve got some lights here. So it’s really very cheap to put on and yet the kids get such a buzz. This place was rocking. The next day and the following week, the kids were asking me “when are we going to have the next one?” (JaS 381-385)

But these kids have so many other issues that are more important than music to them. Things are very different here and you have to accept it.
And that’s one thing I learnt in music teaching is that your standards fall. (MA 433-439)

Teachers saw the absence of a feedback mechanism in the CSF as making it an abstract document with little connection to educational practice. Teachers do not see themselves as having input into the CSF and, therefore, do not have a sense of ownership. System planners have no means of determining if or how teachers are making use of the documents and consequently, no criteria for determining whether the CSF is achieving any of its goals.

I didn’t find it [CSFII] so good. It didn’t answer any of my problems with it [CSF1], it just created more. (CD 211)

The politicians are making the policies and not the educators, and that’s the trouble. They’re politically driven instead of educationally driven, but anyway… (HB 306-307)

The teachers interviewed saw their responsibility as lying with their students, parents and communities, not with politicians and bureaucrats. Consequently, the CSF has not fundamentally altered what schools, teachers, and students do in terms of teaching and learning. Schools and teachers still develop their standards in relation to the community within which they work.

7.4 Responding to reforms

Conceiving of education as a cyclical process involving teachers and students in a mutual learning cycle in the context of a school means that intentions to improve learning need to be understood in terms of changes to that process. As has been shown, the CSF largely ignores the existence of schools and teachers, and as a result barely impacts on the teaching/learning process. In Chapter Five, it was shown that teachers responded to the abstract formulations of the CSF by adopting an accommodating position where imposed expectations were interpreted in terms of what was already done. This minimised the impact of the reform. It is not so much a strategy for resistance as it is a means for accommodating a range of contingencies and expectations, of which the CSF is only one.

As part of our triennial review that we had last year, there were two things that came out. One was we had to upgrade our language skills and the other was we had to improve our retention rates. (MA 182-184)
We have two languages in Year Seven. It is another parameter we have got work around. (JS 153-155)

It depends on the charter priorities in the school and ours are technology, literacy and numeracy. (TS 305-309)

I think, ideally, they were wanting about nine hundred (students) and they do limit the Year Seven intake. But then the region steps in and tells them they have got to take a few more. (MH 207-210)

And the other thing that we have is a lot of integration kids doing music. (LC 250-256)

Teachers are flexible but limits to their flexibility are imposed by the character of the school. The school is really designed to maximise the efficient use of resources—teaching/learning takes place in large groups with limited resource budgets and facilities. Changing the nature or character of the school as a technology for delivering education was outside of the scope of the CSF as an educational reform. Consequently, it produced only cosmetic changes that did not alter the basic structure of educational delivery.

Teachers themselves have clear aims or goals for improving their programmes, so any new requirements for change are necessarily an addition to personal intentions. New ideas, resources and reforms may or may not add to the capital/knowledgeability of actors but they will be tied to existing resources and structures which, after all, have undergone a long process of formulation and refinement. The personal intentions of music teachers were mostly to shape and extend student experiences.

I just push that because I just feel it is important that they find their own identity and their own creativity rather than emulating (CM 88-90)

My aim is to try and get kids involved as much as possible, and kids tend to get more involved by actually doing it than by sitting around and talking about it or writing about it. (CP 333-339)

The prevalence of these intentions cannot be attributed to a specific programme or documented philosophy but they can be said to represent foundational goals to which most other aspects of education are accommodated.
7.5 Summary

The measurable and concrete objectives which teachers set at the school level can be contrasted with the vague objectives that educational policymakers generally seem to set at the system level. Where teachers establish practical objectives in relation to students that they know and in contexts for which they are very much responsible, policymakers develop largely abstract goals with little regard for practices inherent in the system. Teachers are in an immediate position to determine whether their objectives are being met and can adapt their practices or their objectives if they are not successful. Policymakers have shown little concern to measure the success of their reforms and have no procedures for evaluating or improving their effects.

As a programme for delivering reform, the CSF demonstrates all the flaws that Griffin (1998, pp.8-9) identified in traditional programmes of content-based learning: ‘non-specific, not necessarily observable’ outcomes; ‘plans developed to deliver a body of knowledge’ or ‘transmission of content’ involving ‘lists of decontextualised objectives’; an ‘emphasis on the’ policymaker ‘as a transmitter of specialised information’; ‘narrow source of materials’; ‘delayed feedback’; and, teachers ‘responsible for following a predetermined course’. This can be contrasted with how teachers work in developing programmes in schools which reflect many of the benefits Griffin associates with OBE: ‘specific and observable’ outcomes delivering ‘changes to students’. Programmes are designed as ‘facilitators of learning’ and use a ‘variety of text, media and real-life materials’. ‘Plans are developed to achieve an outcome’ with ‘results reported immediately after performance in understandable terms’. It requires teachers to ‘develop independence and responsibility for self-monitoring’ and to ‘develop communication, inquiry, conceptualising, reasoning and problem-solving skills’ (Griffin 1998, pp.8-9).

Teachers responded to the vague or cosmetic objectives set in the CSF with cosmetic changes to their practices. Since there were few actual changes to the system structure of school, classes and timetables, existing practices developed within this structure continued to be relevant. Since teachers’ or schools’
concerns and problems were not a motivating factor for the development of the CSF, schools and teachers retain little sense of ownership of the CSF. This lack of ownership is compounded by implicit problematising of schools and teachers that exists in the CSF. This fundamental lack of ownership renders the CSF impotent because schools and teachers retain their power over educational implementation.

Ultimately, it can be argued that there is little real need for curriculum development at the state level. Teachers are professionals who expect to develop curricula as a normal part of their work. They do not require the assistance or guidance of non-professionals who neither understand nor are particularly interested in the complex processes of education at the school level.
Chapter Eight—
Summary of findings

8.1 Introduction
The aim of this research has been to examine the impact of the CSF for music on the practices of music teachers. Four basic contentions were developed in order to consider different aspects of the impact that the CSF has had on the work of music teachers. These contentions were based on the findings and critiques developed in the four Elective Research Studies and they related to the practicality of the philosophies, theories and assumptions underlying the Victorian CSF for The Arts (Music). The dissertation aimed to test and inform these contentions through an analysis of the practice of thirty-two music teachers.

8.2 Contention one
Contention One considered the appropriateness of the principles of Aesthetic Education as a basis for a curriculum framework for music and the arts. This drew on the conclusions made about Aesthetic Education philosophy and its rival, Praxial Music Education in Elective Research Study One. In this Research Study, it was shown that the differences between the philosophies amounted to a debate over the definition of terms. Both philosophies ultimately placed emphasis on covert processes that will always remain problematic for teachers who usually require concrete demonstrations or products on which to base their judgements about students’ learning. It was suggested that this problem could be minimised by adopting a less philosophical and more pragmatic approach where teachers focus on musical activities and outcomes without being concerned about the individual’s response.

In Chapter Four of the Dissertation, I looked at how a range of teachers structured their programmes across Years Prep-10 and compared this with the expectations written into the CSF. It was evident from the interview data that teachers emphasise the practical aspects of music making and saw music largely in terms of active/practical involvement rather than as reception or aesthetic
experience. In its present form, CSF/II consists of two strands—'Arts Practice' devoted to performance and composition; 'Responding to the arts' devoted to responses to music. It was shown that teachers emphasise the former significantly over the latter although this changes as students get older. In the early stages of music learning, there appeared to be little happening in classrooms that conformed to a 'Responding to music' outcome. Perhaps only at secondary level does 'Responding to music' obtain much significance as an intellectual pursuit, although teachers do introduce it at upper primary level.

The multi-arts aspect of the CSF which draws on Aesthetic Education and which gives rise to generic outcomes across the arts was shown to elicit little sympathy among music teachers. Music teachers see themselves as teaching music even where they incorporate dance, drama or art. Nevertheless, there was significant evidence that the description of the subject as Performing Arts at Levels One and Two reflected what teachers actually did with students in Years Prep-2. Movement/dance/physical activity to music was widely incorporated into music classes but few music teachers conceived of this in terms of actual dance or drama learning. Only two teachers saw themselves as having sufficient dance or drama training to really be able to develop this aspect. Most teachers saw movement as developing music co-ordination skills and, to some degree, as standing in for the 'Responding to Music' outcome.

At Level Three, the evidence suggested that the multi-arts appellation no longer seemed appropriate to what teachers expected of students. This level was widely regarded as a stage when students were physically and mentally capable of developing personal musical skills and the focus on individual musical abilities really started here. It was common for music teachers in most schools to manage school productions and concerts. In this respect, music teachers would also teach some sort of drama or dance. But, this would occur across all levels, including secondary schooling, and was not confined only to Levels One and Two. In this sense, teachers were also 'Arts' teachers but more from necessity than out of a conviction of the unity of the art forms.
Music was widely conceived of by the teachers in this study as a practical and creative subject focussed towards performance. This would suggest a praxial approach is more in line with what teachers do than is the aesthetic approach of developing responsiveness to music. It is true, however, that teachers ultimately gauged the success of their programme in terms of its ability to engage students and provide enjoyment rather than in terms of how well it developed students' practical skills. These aesthetic goals could only be measured in terms of how students expressed them through participation, involvement and voiced enthusiasm. At the same time, teachers were not concerned to assess at an individual level the depth of this personal responsiveness. It was welcomed but seen as unpredictable. It could be concluded then that teachers balance practical and aesthetic goals in a pragmatic way that the CSF does not really reflect.

While the field of school music education did appear to have certain consistent forms of delivery (habitus) and content across quite diverse school situations, this was not effectively modelled in the CSF. In particular, the shifting balance of teaching theory and practice which occurs as students develop over their schooling is not really taken into account in the CSF.

8.3 Contention two

Contention Two looked at the value of the developmental profile as the basis for curriculum planning. The purpose of a developmental profile is to establish benchmarks against which student achievement can be measured and toward which programme planning and delivery should be aimed. This drew on Elective Research Study Two which examined how the idea of profiling had obtained significant attraction for Australian educational planners even if there was little agreement on what the actual benchmarks were across the nation. In reality, benchmarks were shown to be fairly arbitrary standards which planners just invented. There appeared to be no comparability between benchmarks set in different states and no way of determining in what sense these reflected the actual cognitive or physical development of children or the existing patterns of learning. On the basis of the conclusions drawn in Elective Research Study Two, Contention Two suggested that the developmental aspect of the
framework would not be useful either in its assumptions of continuity or in the actual outcomes standards that it set.

The evidence presented in Chapter Five and, to a lesser degree, in Chapter Four suggests that teachers paid little attention to the CSF for planning or for evaluation of student learning. Teachers had little interest in benchmarks and no real interest in assessing student achievement against abstract standards. Teachers set their own goals and standards with a knowledge of what their students were like and what they could achieve with these students in their own programmes. How these students compared with those in other schools was not seen as relevant. Consequently, the CSF was not widely used as a programme planning tool and teachers generally did not teach specifically toward the CSF outcomes at different levels. The CSF had more use at assessment and reporting time because of the statutory requirement that it form part of the students’ report. Teachers, however, did not assess the abstract outcomes as they appeared in the CSF but rather the tasks that they had set students in class. It was usually then a case of deciding how those assessment tasks could be seen as representing CSF outcomes. The obscure language of CSF outcomes was seen as an impediment that schools usually solved by rewriting the outcome statement. So, even in the last stage of the learning cycle—the student report—the CSF existed only indirectly. What may have been reported as a CSF outcome could just as easily have been a school’s or teacher’s own outcome or a translation of what appeared in the CSF.

The CSF’s focus on continuous learning development was shared by those full-time primary school music teachers who worked with all students in the school over a number of years. This is not to say that they agreed with how the CSF represented this development, only that they also aimed to, and could see how to provide, a developmental programme over seven years. Primary teachers whose own careers were spread over a number of schools, or who taught in schools where the music programme had been interrupted or only recently established, were conscious of the fragility of musical development. The experiences of secondary music teachers in this study also indicated that learning development was much less certain and predictable than the CSF indicated. In all cases,
whatever development occurred could always be seen to be attributable to the work of the teacher rather than to an innate human musicality.

It can be concluded, then, that the CSF has had minimal impact upon the teaching cycle which can be conceived of as one of planning-delivery-assessments-reporting. While the CSF viewed learning development as occurring in a particular way, it had little to tell teachers about how to actually realise this development. As such, it was not considered a central resource in music teachers’ work. The CSF could not be conceived of as having added capital to teachers work or to that of the field of music education, even as much as some of the curriculum materials that it replaced and which were still highly valued by teachers. In particular, the CSF’s focus on assessing development is largely at odds with teachers’ goals of providing musical experiences that produce this development. Since the CSF does not draw on or reflect the goals of the field very well it is largely sidelined by teachers who cannot easily relate it to their work.

8.4 Contention three

Contention Three looked more generally at the notion of providing standards, benchmarks and frameworks and their value in relation to teachers’ work. This contention drew on Elective Research Studies Three and Four where I examined my own teaching and the work of other teachers in my school. In those studies, it was shown that teachers set their own goals in relation to the students they teach and the resources that are available. This mix of goals-students-resources means that teachers are highly attuned to context in which they work and it means that locally-developed goals and programmes always take precedence over externally-set goals or programmes.

In Chapter Six, I looked at how teachers developed or adapted their programmes by focusing on a few individual teachers who were able to describe how they had developed their programme over a number of years. While these teachers had a specific set of skills which formed the basis for their teaching aims (habitus), these skills were not fixed. Teachers adapted and built on their skills
according to need. These needs could be such aspects as personal intentions to
develop their programmes, the perceived needs of students, or school
expectations of the programme. The educational process was seen as a dynamic
teaching/learning cycle where teachers learn from teaching students how to
teach them better. This always took place within the constraints imposed by the
character of the school. The effect of the school context can usefully be
summarised in Giddens’ (1984, p.5) stratification model. The concept of
structured improvisation was seen as a useful way of describing the
teaching/learning process and how teachers approached it. Structured
improvisation is necessary because resources, facilities and students cannot be
taken for granted either from one year to the next or from one school to the next.

A framework such as the CSF or the national Profiles attempts to establish
universal benchmarks by which individual achievement can be measured. In
doing this, it ignores most of the typical features of education such as teachers,
classes, schools with specific resources and facilities, and the character of the
community in which the school is set. A taxonomy of standards for the idealised
student can only be meaningful when one isolates the student from the very
context of education for which the taxonomy is being produced. On the other
hand, it is this same context and the relational nature of education to which the
teacher is highly attuned. Carried out in isolation from the context of education,
centralised curricula provide a rigid and inflexible model from which to work.
Unlike the teaching/learning cycle there is no feedback mechanism built into a
curriculum framework. In the teaching/learning relation, this feedback is
fundamental to making education work. Consequently, it can be understood why
teachers attach little significance to CSF outcomes. It always requires adaptation
to the school situation and to what the teacher does and so the supposed
outcomes or benchmarks must always be adapted and realised in terms of
specific practices and programmes. This effectively dissolves the status of CSF
outcomes as benchmark. Although potentially a resource, there was little
evidence that the CSF added much to the capital of teachers in terms providing
an understanding of how students learn or how teachers could improve their
teaching.
8.5 Contention Four

Contention Four looks more broadly at educational change and the change implementation process. This again draws on Elective Research Study Four where an apparently straightforward educational programme was seen to result in unpredictable outcomes because of the variety of ways in which teachers adopt and interpret the programme in the context of their school. This is not presented as problematic but rather as an inevitable characteristic of the field that needs to be taken into account in any reform programme. The educational system as a field consists primarily of relations between schools, teachers and students who all retain an element of independence. The contention then is that successful educational change would have to be predicated on a recognition of this set of relations and would have to work with an assumption of teachers’ professional knowledge being a resource rather than a hindrance.

In Chapter Seven, it was shown that teachers bring clear aims and goals to their teaching or students. Most teachers fitted the CSF to these personal aims in such a way that its effect was largely absorbed into existing practices (habitus). As a policy for change, the CSF was only one among several expectations that teachers and schools attempted to meet. Expectations, such as those coming from students or parents, are more immediate and figure more importantly in teachers’ work and in the workings of the field generally. The education system then should be conceived of, not as a pyramid where power emanates from above, but as a network of relations between teachers, students, parents and administrators in which no one entity has a controlling position. Policies, such as the CSF, emanating from the administration can produce some effect—usually on what teachers do—but do not necessarily impact on the other points in the network such as what students are interested in or what parents expect of the school. It has been demonstrated that the CSF is little more than a policy document and was not intended to impact on resources and facilities. Effectively, then, the changes the CSF produced were more cosmetic and symbolic than substantial. As a programme for change initiated by politicians rather than educationalists as this may perhaps have been all that was intended. From an educationalist’s perspective, cosmetic or symbolic changes remain
relatively unimportant as they must still attend to the more concrete expectations of students and community. Given the option to interpret demands for symbolic change in their own way, teachers adopt an accommodating position whilst continuing to deliver programmes in accordance with what they perceive to be the more concrete and important needs of their students.

8.6 Limitations of these findings
Although it is evident that the CSF for music has not impacted strongly on music teachers’ practice, Contentions Three and Four attempt to make a more general assessment of impact of the CSF as both a resource and process for educational change. These contentions deal with the nature of teachers’ work and its essentially practical, rather than theoretical, basis. The primary assumption underlying this research is that ultimately all theory is interpreted in terms of a practical implementability. Practice is seen as much more responsive to context and consequently contains much greater diversity than can be accounted for theoretically. This was examined with reference to the practice of music teaching in schools but the assumption of a diversity of practice means the responses of music teachers to the CSF cannot be taken to represent those of all teachers.

In the course of data collection, some evidence emerged from teachers who had experience teaching English, Maths or Primary classes that they regarded the CSF differently in their teaching in these areas to how they saw it in relation to music teaching. Their use of the CSF in music teaching did not vary significantly from that of other music teachers in other schools. But as English, Maths or Primary class teachers they may have used the CSF differently or had different expectations for use of it placed upon them particularly with regard to assessing literacy or numeracy skills. This was not explored in any depth in this research. Contentions Three and Four made some broad generalisations about the value of the CSF as a curriculum process on the basis of a narrow selection of teachers’ experience. This could only be validated through further research which examines the experiences of teachers in a range of other subjects.
8.7 Suggestions for further research

The data presented in this research indicated that the CSF has had little impact on music teachers' work or upon their understanding of how learning develops. Each of my four contentions could form the basis for further research.

Teachers in this research clearly showed that they understood music education as a practical learning experience which aimed for enjoyment and encouragement. The ambitious expectations of both Aesthetic and Praxial music education philosophies appeared hardly relevant to teachers who always had to work within a framework of what was achievable within the school context. This conclusion would suggest that more work needs to be done in explicating a framework for school music education that is grounded in the social realities of school teaching and learning. This would avoid the more abstract psychological and philosophical speculation on which both Aesthetic and Praxial philosophies are based. Such a framework could be developed as a distillation of existing music education practises as they are found in schools. My research showed that there was a significant commonality of practices across a range of schools. This appeared to occur because teachers responded intuitively to student interests, needs and abilities as they developed. A more formalised documentation of these intuitions would provide the basis for a grounded philosophy that was both practical and relevant to what teachers wished to achieve.

In examining Contention Two, I showed that teachers had little time or interest for benchmarking student achievement. The apparently abstract standards and descriptors bore little resemblance to how students’ learning really developed. At the same time, it was evident that teachers did aim to teach for developmental learning and did want to know how this could be developed. However, they were more likely to use resources other than the CSF to guide them because it had relatively little to say about teaching. Part of the problem with the CSF was its generic art nature and broad descriptions that needed to be interpreted in the musical terms. Clearly, there is a need for further research to develop a specifically musical development framework. As with a grounded philosophy of music education, this would be based on teachers' knowledge and
on what is possible in the school context. Teachers continue to value even out-of-print publications that incorporate this type of knowledge. Further research could re-investigate these publications and update them as one step toward developing a more teacher-focused developmental learning framework.

In examining Contention Three, I argued that developing an education programme is always based in the school context. Consequently, there is little actual need for the state to provide detailed descriptions or explanations of how learning takes place. The learning and teaching process cannot be separated, and the learning process needs to be experienced by each teacher who will remain largely in control of the directions that their students' learning takes. For the music educators researched, there was little value in providing detailed and abstract curriculum formulation such as the CSF because teachers already knew how to develop curriculum with real standards in relation to real students. Some evidence emerged among the teachers I interviewed that the CSF had more relevance in the teaching of English or maths than it did in music. More research will need to be carried out to determine the impact of the CSF in all KLAs. The CSF for other KLAs is perhaps less philosophically driven than that of The Arts. Research in other learning areas could examine whether the setting of benchmarks and standards has any value for teachers in areas other than The Arts or even for other Arts subjects such as in the Visual Arts. It could also examine the philosophical basis for the CSF in other KLAs and determine whether particular philosophical biases exist and whether they produce positive or negative effects.

In examining Contention Four, I argued that the lack of research into the impact of the CSF remains a problem for curriculum development, even if the CSF is found to be highly valued in most other learning areas. Without a mechanism for feedback from users (i.e. teachers), all curriculum products developed at a bureaucratic level are likely to be remote and impractical because they derive from the needs of politicians and administrators rather than educators. Given that the teachers in this study reported little change to their practice as a result of the CSF, there appeared ultimately to be no benefit in the process of centralising curriculum production. More research will be needed to provide a costs-benefits
analysis of the processes of state-based curriculum development. It is an expensive process requiring many administrators who largely duplicate the real work of teachers. As a process, it is being widely adopted by governments in Australia with little attention being paid either to its efficacy or its cost. A cost-benefit analysis would examine the products, the benefits they provide and the resources required to produce these benefits. Such an analysis would be in keeping with the community’s expectations for accountability and economic responsibility.
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Appendix 1

To <<Principal>>,  
<<School>>,  
<<Address>>,  

Dear <<Principal>>,

I am writing to invite your school to participate in a research project I am carrying out under the auspices of the Deakin University Faculty of Education as part of a doctoral degree in education. This research is examining the implementation of the CSF in music teaching in selected state primary and secondary schools. The purpose of the research is to collect data about music teachers' opinions of the CSF and its usefulness to their work.

The research is focussed in the Northern Metropolitan Region because the economic and cultural diversity of this region will allow the research to provide a snapshot of the diversity and richness of music education practices in state schools. Your school has been selected among several from the Northern Metropolitan region as a possible site for study that will represent an aspect of this diversity.

In order to do this research, I would like to interview a music teacher/co-ordinator from your school. This interview would take place during Term Four 2001 at a time and place convenient to the school and teacher, and would last for no more than an hour. If you believe your school can usefully contribute to this research and your music staff are agreeable to this, I would appreciate it if the music co-ordinator could complete the attached brief survey/expression of interest form and return it in the reply paid envelope by September 1st. This is a preliminary survey only and a more formal consent will be obtained prior to any detailed data being collected. If your school does not have a music teacher or cannot participate in the project, I would appreciate it if you could return the blank survey form in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

I am also attaching for your information a copy of the Department of Education approval for this research, a copy of the Deakin University Ethics Committee approval and a more detailed description of the research and how it is to be carried out.

Thank you for the time you have taken in reading this. I hope that you school will respond positively to the invitation to participate. It is my intention that the research will contribute to a greater sharing of ideas among teachers and will document the work of state schoolteachers.

Yours truly,

Andrew Blyth

Andrew Blyth  
13 Standard Ave.  
Box Hill 3128  
Victoria  
Tuesday, June 29, 2004
Appendix 2

Expression of interest in participating in a research project - Implementing Curriculum Reform in Music Education

This research is examining how music teachers make use of the CSF in their classes. It is being carried out by Andrew Blyth who is a state secondary school teacher and a Doctoral student in Education at Deakin University. The aim of the research is to find out what music teachers think of the CSF and to determine how useful the CSF is for planning and assessment.

This form should be completed by a music teacher. By completing and returning the form you will be expressing interest in being interviewed about your music classes and how music teaching takes place in your school. If your school is chosen for study, a more detailed explanation of the research and a more formal agreement to participate will be provided. Arrangements will be made with you to be interviewed at a time and place that is convenient to you. The interview will last no more than an hour. Your participation in the research can be withdrawn at any time if you subsequently change your mind.

School: <<School>>

Teacher's name: _______________________________________________________

School phone no.: _____________________________________________________

Please fill in the following details about your school's music programme.

What year levels is classroom music taught at? ___________________________

How many classroom music teachers are there in the school? _____________

How many years have they been teaching music (in total)? ________________

Does the school offer instrumental tuition? ________________________________

If so, how many instrumental staff teach at the school? ____________________

I am interested in being interviewed about how I use the CSF in my music classes

Signature: _____________________________________________________________

Please sign this assent form and return the form in the reply paid envelope.