The Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) Indicators

Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) Indicators are statements that briefly describe performance at each level of the five core skills. Each core skill has two indicators except for numeracy which has three indicators.

The five core skills are:
- Learning
- Reading
- Writing
- Oral communication (speaking and listening)
- Numeracy.

Learning

The rapid rate of change affecting all aspects of contemporary life has implications for participation in community, social, training and work spheres. Crucial to adapting to rapidly evolving environments is an individual's orientation towards learning, and the range of strategies they can draw on to assist their learning.

An adult's learning performance is described against two performance indicators.
- The first learning indicator addresses the awareness of self as a learner, planning and management of learning.
- The second learning indicator addresses the acquisition and application of practical strategies that facilitate learning.

ACSF level	Performance indicator	
1	1.01	Demonstrates some awareness of self as a learner
	1.02	Takes first steps towards developing explicit learning strategies
2	2.01	Demonstrates some awareness of learning strengths and areas of need, and begins to plan and manage the learning process
	2.02	Applies a limited range of learning strategies in structured and familiar contexts
3	3.01	Plans, implements and adjusts processes as required to achieve learning outcomes and begins to seek new challenges
	3.02	Experiments with new learning strategies in familiar contexts and applies some strategies in less familiar contexts
4	4.01	Accepts new learning challenges, explicitly designing, reflecting on and redesigning approaches to learning as an integral part of the process
	4.02	Adapts a range of familiar strategies to new contexts and experiments with new approaches
5	5.01	Self directs learning, actively designing and managing learning processes appropriate to the context
	5.02	Draws on a broad and expanding repertoire of strategies to facilitate personal and professional learning

Reading

The ACSF core skill of reading describes a reader's performance in making meaning from different text types, including their awareness of an author's purpose and intended audiences, of their own purposes for reading, and of the role they themselves play in the construction of meaning.

Drawing on a broad range of theories and research, the reading core skill recognises the degree to which a reader can:
- articulate a purpose for reading and pose questions that reading may answer
- select texts and locate information appropriate to needs and interests
- draw on, and make connections with, prior knowledge and experience
- use semantic and syntactic cues
- interpret and analyse texts where meaning may be embedded or implicit
- critically evaluate the purpose of a text, examining the relationship between the intended audience and the text, including unstated power relations and positioning of the reader
- reflect on meaning, taking into account the understanding of the world and cultural knowledge presumed by the text, and of the reader's own position in relation to it
- self monitor, drawing on a range of strategies to aid comprehension when meaning is lost.

An adult's reading performance is described against two Performance Indicators.
- The first Reading Indicator addresses audience, purpose and meaning-making.
- The second Reading Indicator addresses reading strategies.

ACSF level	Performance indicator	
1	1.03	Identifies personally relevant information and ideas from texts on highly familiar topics
	1.04	Uses a limited range of strategies to locate specific information and construct meaning from explicit and highly familiar texts
2	2.03	Identifies and interprets relevant information and ideas from texts on familiar topics
	2.04	Uses a number of reading strategies to identify and interpret relevant information within familiar text types
3	3.03	Evaluates and integrates information and ideas to construct meaning from a range of familiar, and some unfamiliar, texts and text types
	3.04	Selects and applies a range of reading strategies as appropriate to purpose and text type
4	4.03	Interprets and critically analyses complex texts
	4.04	Applies appropriate strategies to construct meaning from complex texts
5	5.03	Organises, evaluates and critiques ideas and information from a range of complex texts
	5.04	Draws on a broad range of strategies to build and maintain understanding throughout complex texts

Writing

The writing core skill identifies a set of skills, knowledge and strategies concerned with the ability to shape written language according to purpose, audience and context. Effective writers employ a combination of strategies, including 'big picture' strategies (e.g. audience and purpose) and strategies around the 'mechanics' of writing (e.g. spelling and punctuation). The writer needs to consider the appropriate text type to convey the message in each context.

The writing skill includes traditional pen and paper modes of writing. In different contexts it can also include other forms of writing such as computer literacy (e.g. word processing, chat or emailing), and other technologies such as mobile phone SMS.

The core skill of writing recognises the following:
- Writing performance is influenced by whether the writing fulfils its purpose and meets the needs of its intended audience
- Writing performance at higher levels includes the ability to write for an increasing range of purposes and audiences
- Writing performance at higher levels incorporates increasing depth of knowledge and skill in writing in specialist areas.

An adult's writing performance is described against two Performance Indicators.
- The first Writing Indicator addresses audience, purpose and meaning-making.
- The second Writing Indicator addresses the mechanics of writing.

ACSF level	Performance indicator	
1	1.05	Conveys a simple idea, opinion, factual information or message in writing
	1.06	Displays limited vocabulary, grammatical accuracy and understanding of conventions of written text
2	2.05	Conveys intended meaning on familiar topics for a limited range of purposes and audiences
	2.06	Produces familiar text types using simple vocabulary, grammatical structures and conventions
3	3.05	Communicates relationships between ideas and information in a style appropriate to audience and purpose
	3.06	Selects vocabulary, grammatical structures and conventions appropriate to the text
4	4.05	Communicates complex relationships between ideas and information, matching style of writing to purpose and audience
	4.06	Displays knowledge of structure and layout employing broad vocabulary, grammatical structure and conventions appropriate to text
5	5.05	Generates complex written texts, demonstrating control over a broad range of writing styles and purposes
	5.06	Demonstrates sophisticated writing skills by selecting appropriate conventions and stylistic devices to express precise meaning

Oral communication (speaking and listening)

The core skill of oral communication recognises the following:

- that there are a range of ways to interact and that these are determined by audience, context and purpose. Where there are more than two speakers participating in the one conversation, participating effectively becomes more complex and requires each person to draw on an increasing range of communicative strategies. Understanding what strategies to use as both speaker and listener will be determined partly by the medium used for the exchange and partly by accepted patterns or rules that govern the particular form of interaction
- use of register i.e. various styles of language available for speaking. Choosing the appropriate style depends on the context, purpose, participants, subject matter and channel of communication.

Oral Communication across the five levels reflects:

- fluency and sustained interaction
- use of generic structures (vocabulary, grammatical forms and relationships between utterances as they occur in specific types of spoken and other aural texts)
- use of appropriate paralinguistics (non-verbal communication) to support the communicative process
- aural information processing demands (reflective response to aural spoken texts, which may be spoken or, for example, music).

An adult's oral communication performance is described against two Performance Indicators.

- The first Oral Communication Indicator primarily addresses speaking.
- The second Oral Communication Indicator primarily addresses listening.

ACSF level	Performance indicator	
1	1.07	Gives or elicits basic information in a short, simple spoken context
	1.08	Listens for basic information in short, simple oral texts
2	2.07	Uses everyday language to provide information or maintain a conversation in familiar spoken contexts
	2.08	Listens for relevant information in oral texts across familiar contexts
3	3.07	Selects and uses appropriate strategies to establish and maintain spoken communication in familiar and some unfamiliar contexts
	3.08	Derives meaning from a range of oral texts in familiar and some unfamiliar contexts
4	4.07	Demonstrates flexibility in spoken texts by choosing appropriate structures and strategies in a range of contexts
	4.08	Applies appropriate strategies to extract main ideas from oral texts across a range of contexts
5	5.07	Establishes and maintains complex and effective spoken communication in a broad range of contexts
	5.08	Displays depth of understanding of complex oral texts which include multiple and unstated meanings

Numeracy

Numeracy in the ACSF is about using mathematics to make sense of the world and applying mathematics in a context for a social purpose. Numeracy gives meaning to mathematics and mathematics is the tool (the knowledge and skills) to be used efficiently and critically.

Numeracy involves understanding and applying mathematical skills. It also involves drawing on knowledge of the context in deciding when to use mathematics, extracting the mathematical information from the context and choosing the appropriate mathematics to use. Numeracy requires reflecting on and evaluating the use of the mathematics, and being able to represent and communicate the mathematical results.

An adult's numeracy performance is described against three Performance Indicators.

- The first Numeracy Indicator addresses the identification of mathematical information and meaning in activities and texts.
- The second Numeracy Indicator addresses the use and application of mathematical knowledge and problem solving processes across a range of mathematical skill areas.
- The third Numeracy Indicator addresses the way informal and formal language, symbolic and diagrammatic representations and conventions of mathematics are used to communicate.

ACSF level	Performance indicator	
1	1.09	Locates and recognises key mathematical information in simple activities or texts
	1.10	Uses simple mathematical and personal problem solving strategies in highly familiar contexts
	1.11	Uses everyday informal oral language or highly familiar written representation to communicate simple mathematical information
2	2.09	Identifies and comprehends relevant mathematical information in familiar activities or texts
	2.10	Selects and uses appropriate familiar mathematical problem solving strategies to solve problems in familiar contexts
	2.11	Uses informal and some formal oral and written mathematical language and representation to communicate mathematically
3	3.09	Selects and interprets mathematical information that may be partly embedded in a range of familiar, and some less familiar, tasks and texts
	3.10	Selects from and uses a variety of developing mathematical and problem solving strategies in a range of familiar and some less familiar contexts
	3.11	Uses a combination of both informal and formal oral and written mathematical language and representation to communicate mathematically
4	4.09	Extracts and evaluates the mathematical information embedded in a range of tasks and texts
	4.10	Selects from, and applies, an expanding range of mathematical and problem solving strategies in a range of contexts
	4.11	Uses a range of informal and formal oral and written mathematical language and symbols to communicate mathematically
5	5.09	Analyses and synthesises highly embedded mathematical information in a broad range of tasks and texts
	5.10	Selects from, and flexibly applies, a wide range of highly developed mathematical and problem solving strategies and techniques in a broad range of contexts
	5.11	Uses a wide range of mainly formal, and some informal, oral and written mathematical language and representation to communicate mathematically