



Steve Delaney sees much to be excited about in the new Technology syllabus which is mandatory for Year 7 in 2019 and Year 8 in 2020...

Whenever teachers are presented with a new syllabus there are always mixed feelings of fear and excitement. The inevitable, “Oh, we’re going to have to make new programs!” and, “When are we going to have time to do it all?” statements are usually two of the first concerns that arise in faculty meetings.

There is good news.

Not much necessarily has to change. The current Technology Mandatory syllabus has allowed us scope to explore some innovative and engaging units of work, such as Bottle Rockets, Battlebots, Coding and Fantastic Foods, and these units map nicely to the new syllabus content requirements.

Hands-on

The increased focus on Engineered Systems and Digital Technologies may sound scary at first, but it really does set the pathway for including interesting units of work in your curriculum, and can act as an ideal pathway into Stage 5 subjects, such as iSTEM, IT Engineering, Design and Technology, IST and IT Multimedia.

The picture becomes even clearer if you complement these pathways with the flexibility in focus areas associated with the Materials Technologies context focus, and shape your curriculum to suit the needs of your students and the strengths of your faculty. In this way, the Materials Technologies context focus makes it possible to focus on particular ‘traditional’ hands-on subjects like woodwork, metalwork, polymers, graphics, electronics, textiles and more.

Things are getting exciting, right?

What else is cooking?

The addition of agriculture to the food focus certainly adds a twist to the traditional focus. However, ingraining that link and producing food and fibres as a part of the learning experience can really add some awesome experiences to how we deliver this aspect of the curriculum. My great hope is that this change assists us to improve students’ (and parents’) views on Food Technology as a viable, academic, Stage 5 subject option, as some tend to believe that this subject is just about ‘cooking’. So whilst we may only be talking about a change in Year 7 and Year 8 at the moment, there may be positive follow-on developments in this subject area which encourage more students to learn about the science of food and agriculture.



Keeping it real with coding

I guess the scariest part of the syllabus change for most is going to be coding. You can understand why. In a number of schools, computing subjects may not be taught in TAS and this is generally an area where our more experienced teachers may not be as experienced. However, there are cool coding options such as [The Starlab Mars Rover](#) and [Lego ev3 Mindstorms](#). [Scratch](#) is also very easy to learn. It is free and students can create quite complex games using a range of 'drop and drag' style tools. There are also plenty of code-able robotic options starting to emerge too!

With each new syllabus we take the familiar and the new, and, together, we find a way to make the best choices for our students. I'm excited!

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