



International review of curriculum and assessment frameworks

Thematic probe

Control and supply of textbooks

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Preface

The information which follows was collated in early 1996 in response to a request from the, then, School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA), now the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).

The data provided in this thematic probe relates to Australia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland and the USA.

Users should be aware that the data has not been reviewed since 1996, when it was sourced from the International Review of Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks Project work in progress files, which have since been made available and updated as the *INCA* Archive on this website. For information on textbook supply via the *INCA* website, see under 'curricula (age 3-19)', sections 5.x.6.

Summary data on textbook supply across the countries of the *INCA* Archive is also provided in the comparative tables accessible via the *INCA* homepage (www.inca.org.uk).

Control and Supply of Textbooks

As the following analysis shows, most countries in the international review of curriculum and assessment frameworks operate free market systems of textbook production and supply, although there are some exceptions. Prescribed textbooks are a means of controlling curriculum and structure, 'allowing teachers to concentrate on method' (Japan). Textbooks are not intended to replace official guidelines on teaching style (France) but do have a considerable influence on the breakdown of subject matter and course sequence (Germany). Commercial considerations may have an unintended impact, e.g. the large numbers of students in California, Florida and Texas mean that these states, through their requirements, exercise a considerable influence on the content of textbooks in the US as a whole.

Production

Textbooks are produced by the State in Japan, Korea, New Zealand (some), and Singapore, by the *Cantons* in Switzerland, or by commercial publishers who have to satisfy State/local guidelines regarding

- **content** (Ministry in France, *Länder* in Germany, Hungary, Japan, Singapore, *cantons* in Switzerland, and 21 USA states)
- **format** (France, Germany)
- **quality** (Germany)
- **cost** (Germany, Italy).

Selection

Books to be used in individual schools are:

- **prescribed** by local boards (Japan).
- **chosen from official lists** by (teams of) teachers in France, Germany, Hungary, Singapore and Switzerland. In some areas of Germany, the inspectorate may have to grant permission and/or representatives of parents and students may be consulted.
- **chosen by teachers without restrictions** in Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden and in post-compulsory schools in Switzerland.

Supply

Textbooks are:

- **provided free of charge**, on loan, by central or local authorities in France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden and Switzerland. All Japanese students receive a complete set of new books annually, to keep.
- **Purchased by parents** for students in all phases of education in Italy and Singapore (grants for needy students) and for post-compulsory students only in France, Japan, and Switzerland. To contain costs, the frequency of change is controlled in Italy (unspecified intervals), France and Japan (at least four years between changes), and in Kentucky USA (six-yearly cycle).

Extracts from individual country Archives:

International Review of Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks (1996)

AUSTRALIA - TASMANIA

Parents are responsible for buying stationery and textbooks prescribed by the school. Some schools incorporate the stationery and book charge in their annual levies while others keep this charge separate. Parents have the right to expect that if the charge is incorporated into the levies it will be clear which amount is for books and stationery.

FRANCE

Under French law, the textbooks produced by private or public educational publishers for teaching at the various levels of school education are based on the curricula and official recommendations of the (national) Ministry of Education. Once publishing houses have received the Ministry's official recommendations/guidelines, they have a minimum 14 month period in which to produce the textbook(s). Textbooks must be designed to conform with a curriculum previously agreed with the Ministry and the cover or title page must state which class and level of teaching the textbook is intended for. Textbook publishers also produce teachers' manuals to accompany the relevant student text- and work-books. These are written under the responsibility of the author and do not replace official texts providing guidelines on teaching methods and the curriculum. Textbooks intended for use in school must be approved by the national Minister of Education. There is also a National Commission which approves/monitors **all** publications intended for a young audience. That is to say it monitors (in terms of propriety, etc.) all books, not just school textbooks, which are destined for a young (children, adolescent) audience.

Who chooses which books are used in each class?

There are no prescribed teaching methods or materials for primary or secondary education. Teachers are free to choose their teaching methods and materials. Teachers in each school usually agree on the particular materials they wish to use from the (approved - see above) range available from private educational publishers. Teaching materials are usually published for use nationwide. Local or regional associations and documentation centres in the *régions* or *départements* sometimes produce teaching materials as a local supplement to those published for national use.

Teachers are expected to develop clear criteria for the selection of school textbooks and the latter must conform with the curricula in force/recommended Ministry of Education curricula. One of the criteria for selection is expected to be that the textbook stands alone, that is, it does not depend on the provision of support documents. Groups of teachers in each subject meet under the chairmanship of the school principal (or equivalent) to discuss their proposed criteria for the selection of textbooks and their proposed list of textbooks. These criteria and the list are then put before the school's *Conseil d'administration* (board of governors), which includes some parent members. This *Conseil* makes its opinion known, but the final decision is that of the 'teaching council' (the council of all relevant subject teachers). Their decision must be made public no later than the June preceding the start of the school year for which any decision will be relevant. Textbooks must leave teachers free to choose their own teaching methods, which can be suitably adapted in accordance with the needs of different groups of students. Use of textbooks from the school's recommended list does not exclude teachers from using any other method which he/she deems fit.

Head teachers use their own commercial judgement to select the publisher/bookseller from whom to acquire the approved textbooks. It is generally expected that a school's list of recommended textbooks should not be changed too often, e.g., the same textbooks should be used for four

consecutive years in lower secondary education. Any change of textbook or purchase of supplementary textbooks during the course of the school year is prohibited. Teachers are also expected to use the same textbooks for classes of the same level.

Are textbooks provided by the State, the school or do parents buy them?

A decree issued in 1985 affirms that the State funds expenditure relating to the provision of textbooks in *collèges* (lower secondary schools, age 11+ to 15+) and special schools and teaching materials for collective use in vocational *lycées* (*upper secondary schools, age 16-19*).

Generally, textbooks are loaned free of charge to students in compulsory education (primary school since 1890 and public and private sector *collèges* since 1977). Parents are expected to contribute towards the cost of damaged or lost textbooks provided by the State on a sliding scale: the full cost of brand new textbooks; 50 per cent of the original cost of a textbook which is being used for the second year; 30 per cent of a book in its third year of use; 20 per cent in the fourth year etc. Such income must be used by schools to repair the damaged textbooks or to renew lost ones.

In primary education, the *communes* (via the municipal budget) are responsible for ensuring that there are adequate funds in their budget to pay for textbooks. In about 10% of cases, however, parents pay, e.g. in small communes in which budgets are restricted. Head teachers/principals receive a specific budgetary credit per teacher and per subject to cover the cost of teachers' textbook issued (not loaned) to teachers on request. Funds not required for textbooks can be used for other educational materials, audio-visual equipment/documents etc., especially those which are produced by the *Centre national de documentation pédagogique (CNDP)* (National Centre for Educational Documents/Information).

Small, individual items of equipment required, e.g. exercise books, some books, items of stationery etc. are provided by a student's family. Families are consulted when lists of such materials are compiled for the next/following school year.

As the final two years of *lycées* (the *première* and *terminale* classes, students aged 16-18) are not compulsory, families pay for supplies and textbooks required for this phase. They either acquire these individually (book shops can offer a 5% reduction on textbooks sold to individuals) or through an association (e.g. a parent-teacher association), in which case reductions may be as much as 20-45 per cent. There is no maximum price limit for textbooks. VAT of 5.5 per cent is charged on school textbooks.

Nationally devised testing material is provided for teachers in primary and lower secondary schools through a computerised data bank. Teachers are invited to make use of this freely and when they so wish to assess the progress of their charges. Teachers are also provided with such testing/assessment material in hard copy, as computerisation has only just been introduced (1996).

GERMANY

The School Book Committee in the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs in each of the *Länder* formally controls the list of approved textbooks in each subject area for use in the classroom. Books produced by commercial publishers are approved:

- if they are in line with the general principles of the Constitution and the educational objectives set out in Education Acts;
- if they are compatible with the syllabuses and with educational research findings for the various types of schools;
- if the quality of the binding is appropriate and the price justifiable.

External criteria such as the number of pages are taken into account for approval purposes insofar as the size and format should be consistent with the contents which are laid down in the syllabuses, the chosen approach to the subject and the age of the students. Textbooks for religious education also require the agreement of the church authorities.

In most types of school, textbooks are still the decisive instruments in planning and the textbooks in use frequently appear to have a greater influence than the appropriate curricula on the standards and breakdown of subject matter and on the sequence planning of course content.

Who chooses which books are used in each class?

Each Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs regularly publishes a list of the textbooks approved in the *Land* concerned. (These lists also contain some of the legal and administrative provisions governing the free supply of teaching materials and the approval of textbooks, along with indications of the criteria to be used by those who are appointed by the Ministry of Education to assess textbooks.)

The school staff select books from the wide range of approved titles for use in their schools. This selection is generally made at meetings of teachers of the same subject or of the whole staff, although in some cases the approval of the schools' inspectorate is required; some *Länder* also have rules for consulting parents' and students' representatives.

Who is responsible for producing textbooks?

Textbooks are generally produced by specialist commercial publishers. Directives and curricula are important reference points for textbooks, which must be based on current directives and curriculum norms.

Are textbooks provided by the State, the school or do parents buy them?

To enable students, regardless of their income and social circumstances, to have access to all the teaching materials used in schools, teaching materials, and textbooks in particular, are provided free of charge in all *Länder*. The costs are borne either by the bodies (e.g. local authorities) responsible for setting up and running the schools, or by the *Land* authorities. Generally speaking, students attending state schools receive textbooks and certain other teaching materials (e.g. pocket calculators) free on loan, whereas expendable items (stationery, drawing instruments, materials for needlework and handicrafts) must be provided by parents and students. However, the rules vary from one *Land* to another. Whether children in private schools are supplied with free teaching materials also depends on the *Land* concerned. In some *Länder* students/parents are required to contribute to the total cost of teaching materials by paying for certain materials themselves. Some *Länder* do not operate a loan system but provide grants to purchase materials; these grants may depend on parents' income or the type of school attended. The prices of textbooks are checked to see whether they are reasonable. If a price is raised, approval of the textbook concerned may be withdrawn. In addition, competition between textbook publishers helps to ensure that prices remain reasonably low.

HUNGARY

The obligatory character of the National Core Curriculum means that in local curricular variations, teaching subjects and school textbooks:

- the principles of the National Core Curriculum are to be honoured.
- the areas and topics of the different cultural domains must be included.
- teaching materials and activities which contribute to meeting the objectives of general and detailed development should have priority.

- teaching materials and activities which contribute to meeting the objective that every student must be given the chance to fulfil at least the minimum competencies, should have priority.

Teachers select materials which are consistent with the National Core Curriculum.

ITALY

Textbooks	State prescribes	Produced by	Selected by	Purchased by
Primary	no	commercial publishers	Individual teachers.	Parents
Compulsory secondary	no	commercial publishers	<i>Collegio dei Docenti</i> (comprising all teachers in the school and including parents representatives), which chooses one or more textbook(s) per subject.	Parents
Post compulsory	no	commercial publishers	<i>Collegio dei Docenti</i> (comprising all teachers in the school and including parents representatives), which chooses one or more textbook(s) per subject.	Parents

Source: Italian EURYDICE Unit (1995) EURYDICE National Dossier for Italy.

The government annually takes steps to reduce the financial burden on families by issuing a circular

- recommending that, given the same educational value, less expensive books should be chosen
- forbidding any change in textbooks during the course for which they were adopted
- allowing students to use earlier editions of dictionaries, atlases and textbooks.

JAPAN

Schools may only use textbooks approved or compiled by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (*Monbusho*). The contents of the Course of Study (prescribed by the Ministry of Education) are faithfully reflected in the textbooks, teachers' manuals and programmes of work in each school.

Commercial publishers must secure authorisation of textbooks by the Minister of Education, who calls on the advice of the Textbook Authorisation Council and others.

Textbooks are subject to minor revisions every four years and to major revisions with the inception of new Courses of Study; and are provided in every subject except physical education. The prescribed curriculum and the structure provided by the textbooks allow teachers to concentrate their planning on pedagogy rather than on the design of the curriculum or the detailed planning of what activities or content to provide.

Are textbooks provided by the State, the school or do parents buy them?

Ministry approved textbooks are provided free (by central government) in all compulsory schools (whether publicly or privately funded). All children in compulsory education are given (by central government) a complete set of new textbooks at the beginning of each school year, no matter whether they are being educated in Japan or in some other country. These books are the students' own property. Although some supplementary materials are used, the textbooks (provided in graded series) determine in very large measure the curriculum as experienced by the students. Students are taken systematically through the text until its completion at the end of the year/grade. Post-compulsory, upper secondary school students buy their own textbooks.

Who is responsible for producing textbooks?

Textbooks are of two types. The first are privately published and subject to Ministry of Education approval. Almost all schools use them and there are about 602 titles in all. Textbooks of the other

type are written by the Ministry and used for some high school vocational courses for which there is little demand and in special education institutions. There are only about 40 of these.

Who chooses which books are used in each class?

Textbooks must be selected from those having Ministry authorisation. Selection is at the discretion of the appropriate board of education in the case of public schools or, in the case of national and private schools, of the principal. Textbooks to be used in public schools are adopted by local boards of education every three years.

With reference to textbook use in Japan, Harold Stevenson, a developmental psychologist at the University of Michigan who has conducted cross-cultural studies of education for three decades, staunchly affirms that the Japanese are not mechanical rote learners. He believes that an analysis of textbooks shows that they are designed to elicit active thinking in Japan. The books often require students to integrate information from old lessons with material from their current ones and to use their imaginations. The textbooks, he says, do not present a group of problems with answers, as do American textbooks. Instead, students get a few variations of a problem that they have studied. They also get very difficult examples, which no one is expected to work correctly. Stevenson also states that Japanese teachers, like the textbooks, give students the basic building blocks of learning. They then try to elicit a change in thinking encouraging their students to solve a new problem with old tools. Teachers use a multitude of approaches. In the earliest years, for example, students carry a maths box. This is essentially a games box that includes colourful puzzles and tricks that explain maths and are explained by maths. They use them frequently and, when children make mistakes at solving maths problems, the teacher asks them to explain their thinking at the board. Educators assume that most of the errors that are made will be common ones and that seeing the problems incorrectly worked and then corrected will be valuable to everyone in class. Teachers use the correction process gently, as part of the instructional method, and have a different attitude to errors. In the primary school years, there is little grading and students almost never repeat a year.

KOREA

The Ministry of Education compiles and authorises textbooks. In accordance with Article 155 of the Education Law, which guarantees equal opportunity in education and defines the curricula for different schools (to ensure quality of education), school curricula are the criteria for educational programmes and textbook development.

In addition to textbooks as curriculum materials, the Educational Broadcasting System (EBS) was opened in 1990 in order to 'support school education and expand the opportunity for education'. EBS currently has one TV and one FM radio channel and a staff of 492. The Ministry of Education is responsible for policy-making, programme organisation and administrative and financial support, whilst EBS take charge of actual education broadcasting (planning, organisation, production and delivery) and the Korean Broadcasting System is responsible for transmission. The Ministry of Education subsidises the EBS to around 60 per cent of its budget and suggests the basic format of all programmes.

Educational broadcasting programmes (TV) are on air for seven hours and 40 minutes every day (17 hours on Sundays) and for 20 hours every day on radio. In addition to school education programmes (which follow the prescribed curricula and also include programmes on foreign language conversation, vocational education, environmental education, home discipline, culture, music, art and Korean unification) there are also correspondence/open university programmes and social education programmes for children, youth, parents and the public.

The national Ministry of Education expects the Municipal and Provincial Education Authorities (MPEA) to make every effort to develop and disseminate various teaching-learning materials other than textbooks. All schools, for example, are encouraged to utilise multimedia programmes and materials, such as radio/television programmes, audio-visual materials, computers etc. in combination with textbooks.

THE NETHERLANDS

Schools are free to determine curriculum content and to choose appropriate teaching methods and materials. Textbooks are produced by commercial publishers. Teachers choose textbooks for their classes. Textbooks are supplied by the school.

NEW ZEALAND

One of the distinctive features of the New Zealand education system is the quality of curriculum resource materials developed by School Publications, now known as Learning Media (currently an arm of the Ministry of Education, though soon to be established as an independent Crown Agency). Learning Media staff are responsible for the editing and publication of the national curriculum statements and associated curriculum resource materials. Learning Media's products are distributed free to schools, although additional copies can be purchased if required or by members of the public. Production deadlines are closely matched with the development of the new curriculum materials and regular meetings of the Ministry's Policy, Curriculum Functions and Learning Media staff take place to coordinate the development and production of curriculum support materials.

Textbooks do not require state approval because the New Zealand approach is not that of a textbook-based curriculum. However, some curriculum-related resources are developed with government funding and are published by Learning Media or the New Zealand Council for Educational Research. In addition, curriculum-related resources are published in the private sector. The Ministry of Education runs an on-line telecommunications network with links to many schools. Curriculum-related materials from state and commercial sources are available in a range of databases via this medium.

The Ministry of Education does fund the writing and production of a limited range of curriculum-related resources. Writers come from many backgrounds. Learning Media produces most of these on a contract basis.

Early childhood and school teachers and heads of departments select the books to be used in schools. If schools decide to use set texts, they may be provided by the school from their operational budget. Students may have other books recommended to them, in which case parents would buy them.

SINGAPORE

Textbooks produced by private publishers have to be reviewed and approved by the Ministry of Education before they can be included in the approved textbook list.

Textbooks are produced by private publishers, as well as the Curriculum Development Institute of Singapore (CDIS) which is a division of the Ministry of Education.

Teachers and heads of departments in schools select textbooks based on the (Ministry of Education) approved list.

Parents normally buy textbooks, but needy students can apply for free textbooks.

SWEDEN

Textbooks are very often published by commercial firms. Teachers have the right to use or not to use a textbook in the subject they are teaching. Teachers are also free to choose whatever textbooks they need.

Textbooks are provided by the school at both compulsory school and upper secondary school level.

SWITZERLAND

Primary

Each *canton* has full authority to decide which teaching materials will be permitted or obligatory. Such material is drawn up either by the *canton* itself or in collaboration with other *cantons*; it may be drawn up jointly with other authorities within a region. The material is paid for by the *canton* and the borough. In some cases the teaching staff may choose the material they use from among that recommended by the *cantonal* authorities. Obligatory material is generally for mathematics, foreign languages and, in particular, the mother-tongue language.

In Switzerland, 'DIY' teaching-materials are illegal as the main core of instruction: only textbooks approved by the educational authorities in different regions of these countries are allowed to be used as the main basis for teaching. In Switzerland, each *canton* publishes its own approved textbooks.

Secondary (compulsory)

In principle, the *cantons* prescribe textbooks, but the schools and teaching staff do have a certain freedom of choice in the matter.

Post-compulsory (pre-university courses, Gymnasium)

In principle, the choice of teaching material is left to each school. There is consequently no national body which regulates the material used for teaching; for reasons of language, the choice of material, at least in some subjects, is under strong influence from abroad.

Cantons are responsible for the *gymnasium* curriculum. This means that compulsory standard Swiss textbooks are non-existent. In this free market situation only a few textbooks written by teachers have acquired reference-work status.

It is only at upper secondary level that parents are expected to pay for text-books.

USA

Textbooks are produced by private corporations, with about ten such corporations dominating the industry. Textbook selection is a local decision. However, 21 of the 50 US states (mostly in the South) recommend textbooks at state level after some process of review against state curriculum guidelines. In some cases, state education funds may only be used for the purchase of approved books. Because so many students are located in Florida, Texas, and California (which operate the textbook adaption scheme) the curriculum and textbook guidelines of these states exert a strong influence on the content of textbooks in the United States.

Kentucky

Kentucky adopts textbooks on a six-year schedule, grouping purchases so that as nearly as possible, the same amount of money is expended each year on textbooks. A review team, selected each year, designs an evaluation instrument for reviewing bids, evaluates bids from publishers, and recommends items for adoption to the State Textbook Commission. The Commission determines listings for the State Multiple List, which is then sent to all local districts. Districts have an

opportunity to review items on the State Multiple list, request samples, talk with vendor representatives, and decide which they will use locally.

Maryland

Maryland does not use a state adoption process. Each district makes its own decisions about textbooks and other curricular materials.

Control and supply of school textbooks

Australia, Germany, Switzerland and USA have 'federal' structures and the majority of educational powers are constitutionally exercised at sub-state level. Information is therefore EITHER not available, OR may apply only to parts of the countries concerned.

	Eng	Aust	France	Germ	Hung	Italy	Japan	Korea	Neth	NZ	Sing	Sweden	Switz	USA
State prescribes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	YES	-	-	-	-	-	-
Teachers choose from State-approved lists	-	-	-	YES	-	-	YES	-	-	YES ¹	YES	-	YES ²	-
Teachers choose freely	YES	YES	YES	YES ³	YES	YES	-	-	YES	YES	YES	YES	-	YES
Provider of books	School	Parents	School	School	?	Parents	School	?	School	School	Parents ⁴	School	School	varies
Means tested subsidy											YES			
	Eng	Aust	France	Germ	Hung	Italy	Japan	Korea	Neth	NZ	Sing	Sweden	Switz	USA

Key: England, Australia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan , Korea, Netherlands, New Zealand, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, USA.

Notes:

- 1 **New Zealand:** Learning Media produced textbooks and other resources. Formerly an arm of the Ministry of Education, it is now an independent Crown Agency.
- 2 **Switzerland:** *Cantonal* authorities determine or approve books. In upper secondary teachers choose materials and parents pay for textbooks.
- 3 **Germany:** Different provisions apply in different *Länder*.
- 4 **Singapore:** Free books are available for needy students.