

## Think Faith Curriculum Adaptation Policy

This policy applies to

1. All Sydney Anglican Authorised High School SRE Teachers
2. All Generate employees teaching in High Schools in NSW and using the *Think Faith* curriculum.
3. All High School SRE teachers from SRE providers who are using the *Think Faith* curriculum and who agree to adhere this policy (check your SRE provider for more details).
4. High School SRE teachers from other approved providers are **strongly encouraged** to follow these policies.

As a key recommendation of the 2015 review into SRE, the Department of Education requested that all SRE Providers make their curriculum scope and sequence a public document so that parents can see the content of SRE lessons taught in schools.

This policy has been developed to make clear what boundaries exist around curriculum adaptation when using *Think Faith* so that all SRE lessons are delivered within the boundaries of the *Think Faith* Scope and Sequence.

This allows SRE providers to confidently stand by the agreement in their annual assurance to the Department of Education which states that “special religious education and special education in ethics teachers are teaching the curriculum with sensitivity and in an age-appropriate manner”.

This policy also takes into account the larger picture of SRE across all of NSW and seeks to ensure that SRE teachers deliver lessons with the utmost integrity. It also aims to ensure that all SRE teachers are using the *Think Faith* curriculum in a way that safeguards SRE as a vital element in public high schools for years to come.

For Sydney Anglican-Authorised SRE teachers found to be in breach of this policy, your authorising rector can use this policy as grounds to withdraw your authorisation to teach SRE.

If you are not a Sydney Anglican-Authorised SRE teacher, please see your appropriate SRE provider for details about what are the consequences for you should you breach this policy.

### Background:

The *Think Faith* curriculum was written to allow adaptation to the vastly differing High School SRE contexts across NSW. The philosophy of flexible adaptation is evident in the language used to describe lessons as “Stillas” – the Latin word that means “blob”. Just like liquid moulds itself to the container in which is it poured, so too were *Think Faith* Stillas designed to be moulded into a form that best suits your schooling context.

Similarly, the *Think Faith* units were also designed to be flexible. Outside of the launch and landing lessons (which must be used to open and close the learning unit), teachers are free to speed up, slow down and skip certain stillas where needed.

The metaphor used to describe this process is that of visiting a new city. Some tourists may choose only to hit the highlights (the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame Cathedral or the Louvre), while others may focus on a

particular area of interest to them (The Paris Catacombs – not for everyone!). Still, others may want to spend a lengthy time in one location (the Musee D’orsay for lovers of art), while others want to speed through, covering as much ground as possible in as short amount of time.

However, like a tourist is bound by the location they are visiting (you can’t see the Roman Colosseum or the Brandenburg Gate when you’re in Paris), teachers using *Think Faith* must stay within the boundaries of the curriculum itself.

This means not adding in additional lessons from other units, adding additional learning outcomes or even adding in additional Bible verses outside of those selected for that particular lesson.

## 1. Adherence to the Think Faith Scope and Sequence

As part of the Sydney Anglican Diocese’s annual assurance to the Department of Education which enables us to continue as an approved SRE provider, we agree to make our [Scope and Sequence](#) public online. This Scope and Sequence document is also shared with the parents of your students so that they are aware of what is being taught in your lessons.

Implications:

<b>The unit outcomes must match the content of your lessons.</b>	
All material included in your lesson must fulfil the stated outcomes at the beginning of each unit as well as the outcomes in the <i>Think Faith</i> Scope and Sequence. You cannot add to or deviate from these stated outcomes.	
<b>You are free to</b>	<b>You are NOT free to</b>
<p>Pick and choose which activities in the stilla you will use to achieve these outcomes.</p> <p>E.g. you <b>CAN</b> choose only one or two of the provided activities for each of the “Connecting”, “Exploring” and “Forming” sections of the lesson</p>	<p>Add additional outcomes or deviate from the stated outcomes.</p> <p>E.g. you <b>CAN’T</b> import lessons or activities into your class that address additional learning outcomes outside of the approved curriculum.</p>
<p>Pick and choose the which units you will teach and in which order, according to the year group.</p> <p>E.g. you <b>CAN</b> choose to teach 4B unit 2 <i>before</i> you teach 4B unit 1, or chose not to teach 4A unit 3 at all.</p>	<p>Reframe units to replicate a GRE (General Religious Education) approach</p> <p>E.g. you <b>CAN’T</b> teach an Old Testament Unit as though it is a “study in Judaism” or a New Testament Unit as covering “Religious Festivals”.</p>
<p>Create new learning activities which cover the same Biblical Content and Lesson Outcomes but do so in a way that better suits your classroom.</p> <p>E.g. you <b>CAN</b> create new worksheets. You can adapt a groupwork exercise into class discussion (for smaller classes). You can use creative pedagogy to deliver the same learning outcomes to your students.</p>	<p>Create activities based on Biblical content and Lesson Outcomes not found in the curriculum</p> <p>E.g. you <b>CAN’T</b> have a debate about the Creation vs. Evolution readings of Genesis 1 as these are not the stated outcomes for that unit/stilla</p>
<b>The units are self-contained.</b>	

Each unit has been designed to contain unified material to achieve certain learning outcomes. Launch lessons and Landing lessons are key aspects of each unit which must be kept in order to maintain the integrity of each unit.	
<b>You are free to</b>	<b>You are NOT free to</b>
Synthesize various stillas from a unit into fewer lessons  E.g. you <b>CAN</b> combine stillas 1 & 2, 3 & 4 and 5 & 6 into three lessons rather than 6.	Combine units or jump around units to create hybrid-units or hybrid lessons.  E.g. You <b>CAN'T</b> randomly jump from lesson to lesson across several units or combine units into one.

## 2. Adaptation by subtraction, not addition

Teachers using *Think Faith* must follow the rule of **subtraction, not addition**. Teachers may choose to cut lessons, learning activities, and some Bible content. Nevertheless, all lessons **must** include a Bible passage. Teachers may also choose not to cover every single unit and every single learning outcome in the *Think Faith* Scope and sequence. However, they must not add additional learning outcomes or Biblical content.

<b>Subtraction, not addition</b>	
Teachers using <i>Think Faith</i> must follow the rule of subtraction, not addition when choosing which material makes up their lessons.	
<b>You are free to</b>	<b>You are NOT free to</b>
Choose to cut lessons, learning activities, and <i>some</i> Bible content. You can also choose not to cover every single unit / every learning outcome in the <i>Think Faith</i> Scope and sequence.  E.g. you <b>CAN</b> chose which parts of the provided content will best engage your class with the learning outcomes.	Add additional learning outcomes or Biblical content.  E.g. you <b>CAN'T</b> insert your own passages into the learning activities.  Note: The curriculum Biblical content has been approved to represent the theological position of your approved provider. Adding additional content or outcomes may lead to a confusion of the concepts presented to students.
<b>Exception to the rule:</b> All lessons <b>must</b> include a Bible passage which the students have opportunity to engage with in context-appropriate ways.  E.g. Students can access the Bible by reading it, listening to it, through story-telling methodology, and via approved multimedia clips.  Note: if using Bible-storytelling methodologies, the teacher must use appropriate language, terminology and concepts for the school context.	<b>Exception to the rule:</b> If teachers want to add additional multimedia content, they are bound by the Youthworks Multimedia Policy and must submit the content for approval via the <i>Think Faith</i> website.

### 3. Stage 5 content limitations

While Stage 4 units can be taught to any student from year 7-12, Stage 5 units cannot be taught to students in stage 4 (year 7-8). This content has not been approved for students due to more mature themes and concepts.

Stage 5 content limitations	
You are free to	You are NOT free to
Teach Stage 4 units to Stage 5 students (i.e. years 9 & 10)  E.g. you <b>CAN</b> teach units from 4A and 4B to any student.	Teach Stage 5 units to stage 4 students (i.e. years 7 & 8)  E.g. You <b>CAN'T</b> teach units from 5A and 5b to year 7 and 8 students.

### 4. Additional Policies

There are additional policies which inform the teaching of *Think Faith*.

Youthworks Sensitive Issues Framework (update forthcoming July 2021)

Youthworks Multimedia in SRE Policy

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## FAQS:

### **Is the Bible the Curriculum for Think Faith?**

We believe that “all scripture is God-breathed and useful for teaching rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16).

While the Bible is central to all that we do in Christian SRE, the *Think Faith* curriculum does not cover the whole of God’s word. The biblical passages have been chosen because they communicate the core of what Christians believe (the Gospel). Careful consideration has gone into deciding which passages allow students to understand the central Bible message most clearly.

*Think Faith* was written by a team of theologically-trained ministers with many years of experience working with teenagers. The *Think Faith* Project Manager, Dr Kaye Chalwell is an expert in SRE pedagogy – having studied it as her PhD research. This expertise ensures that the biblical content and learning activities in *Think Faith* are appropriate for the age of students and for the education context in which SRE takes place.

### **What do I do when a student asks a question that takes me outside of *Think Faith*?**

While it is sometimes appropriate to address student questions which are outside of the *Think Faith* content, teachers need to be aware that doing so can lead them to cover content which is not appropriate for the students’ developmental capacities and/or not appropriate for a schooling context.

Teachers need not answer questions at the time they are asked. If a student asks a question that might raise a sensitive issue, the teacher is encouraged to defer the question to another lesson, and to run the issue by their advisor (SRE provider or Generate).

Addressing student questions in class is covered in more detail in the Youthworks Sensitive Issues Framework and in Youthworks’ Module 6 accreditation training – “Sensitive issues and Curriculum Boundaries in High School SRE”.

### **Can I jump around from unit to unit and create hybrid-lessons?**

No. As part of the Sydney Anglican Diocese’s annual assurance to the Department of Education to continue as an approved SRE provider, we agree to publish our Scope and Sequence. This Scope and Sequence document is also shared with the parents of your students to ensure that they are aware of SRE lesson content so that they can make an informed choice when opting child into the SRE program.

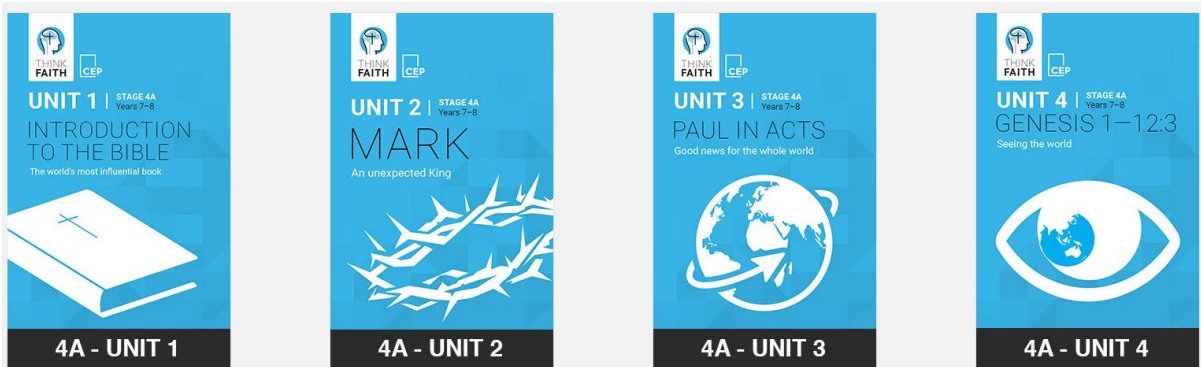
To ensure lesson content aligns with expectations of parents and stakeholders, lessons must be aligned with this document.

### **Does that mean I have to teach each unit in order and not miss any?**

No. You are free to skip units. You are free to teach the stage 4 curriculum units to year 7-12 in any order you choose (see below). However, you cannot teach stage 5 unit to year 7 and 8 – it has not been approved for those grades.

**Option 1: Teach the units in order**

Year 7:



Term 1

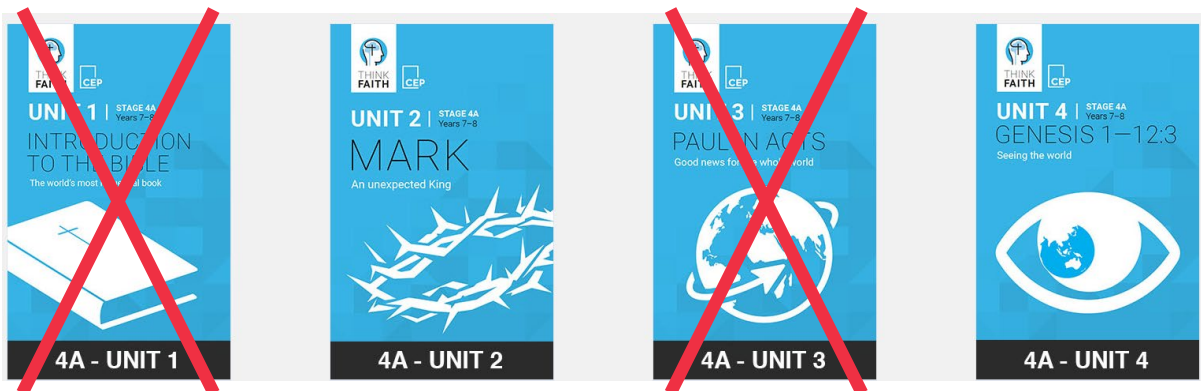
Term 2

Term 3

Term 4

**Option 2: Teach the units in order, skipping some**

Year 7:



Term 1-2

Term 3-4

**Option 3: Teach the units out of order (within the stage for which they are designed)**

Year 7:



Term 1

Term 2

Term 3

Term 4