

Last Update: Thursday, August 17, 2006.
8:08pm (AEST)



Julie Bishop:
Keeping quiet on
whether she will
tie the national
curriculum to
federal funding
(file photo).
(ABC TV)

Summit agrees on national approach to history teaching

A history summit in Canberra has recommended Australian history be taught as a core, stand alone subject in years nine and 10.

The issue was first raised by Prime Minister John Howard in an Australia Day address.

Today historians, teachers and social commentators nussed out a new national approach to the subject.

The summit agreed a national curriculum should be developed for all states and territories, but Education Minister Julie Bishop will not say if she will tie the curriculum to federal funding.

"It's been an extremely productive day and I'm looking forward to working collaboratively with the state and territory education ministers," she said.

"What the Australian Government has done is taken a lead in restoring Australian history to a key place in Australian schools.

"Now we don't run state government schools, but what we're seeking to do is provide the states and territories with the benefit of the advice that has come from the history summit."

Former New South Wales premier Bob Carr, who was involved in the summit, says the specific details of what exactly should be taught is still being worked through.

"It agrees that students should come to an understanding of the character of Australian society by pursuing, over a wide range of years, a series of open ended questions about the character of Australia's society based on a clear chronology of events," Mr Carr said.

But Mr Carr has urged state leaders to adopt the recommendations.

"I think states and territories should feel pretty comfortable moving within this space," he said.

"I'd like to see this happen by cooperation. I'm pretty comfortable with it because we did this in New South Wales, it is compulsory - study for 100 hours subject to an external examination, so we're pretty comfortable with the concept."

<http://abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200608/s1717611.htm>