

**HTAA Statement – National Curriculum &
Teacher Pre-service Training
January 2009**



The National Curriculum Board recently released its History Curriculum Framing Paper and will soon begin the process of syllabus writing for new national curriculum courses in history.

The History Teachers' Association of Australia (HTAA) has been an enthusiastic supporter of the initiative to develop a national curriculum in history. However, from the beginning we have expressed concern about the capacity of current pre-service training programs to prepare history teachers capable of successfully implementing new national courses.

We note that our concern has been echoed by Professor Stuart Macintyre in the Framing Paper:

...successful implementation will require attention to teacher preparation: we need teachers who have undertaken a rich major in history as part of their first degree (and it is to be hoped that an increasing proportion will have also undertaken honours and postgraduate research) as well as attention to history in their teacher training. (122)

Professor Barry McGaw, Chair of the National Curriculum Board, has spoken in similar terms about the need for 'more teachers and better training' (*The Age*, 12 November 2008).

We have written to Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard on two occasions over the past twelve months to convey our view that teacher preparation will be one of the most critical factors affecting the successful implementation of national curriculum courses in history.

We now feel that there is an urgent need for everyone with an interest or involvement in teacher preparation to begin to address this issue. Specifically, what we would like to see is a commitment from all education ministers, universities, state curriculum authorities and teacher employment bodies to a minimum standard, it being that:

- A secondary history teacher will have completed at least one history major in their first degree AND a one year history method program (which may have been undertaken in conjunction with another discipline method).
- A primary teacher will have a firm foundation in the content to be dealt with in the primary section of any national syllabus AND an understanding of historiography and history pedagogy appropriate to the primary setting.

On behalf of the HTAA Executive



Paul Kiem
President



Louise Secker
Vice-President

HTAA represents the history teachers' associations of the Australian Capital Territory (HTAACT), New South Wales (HTANSW), Queensland (QHTA), South Australia (HTASA), Tasmania (HTAT), Victoria (HTAV) and Western Australia (HTAWA).