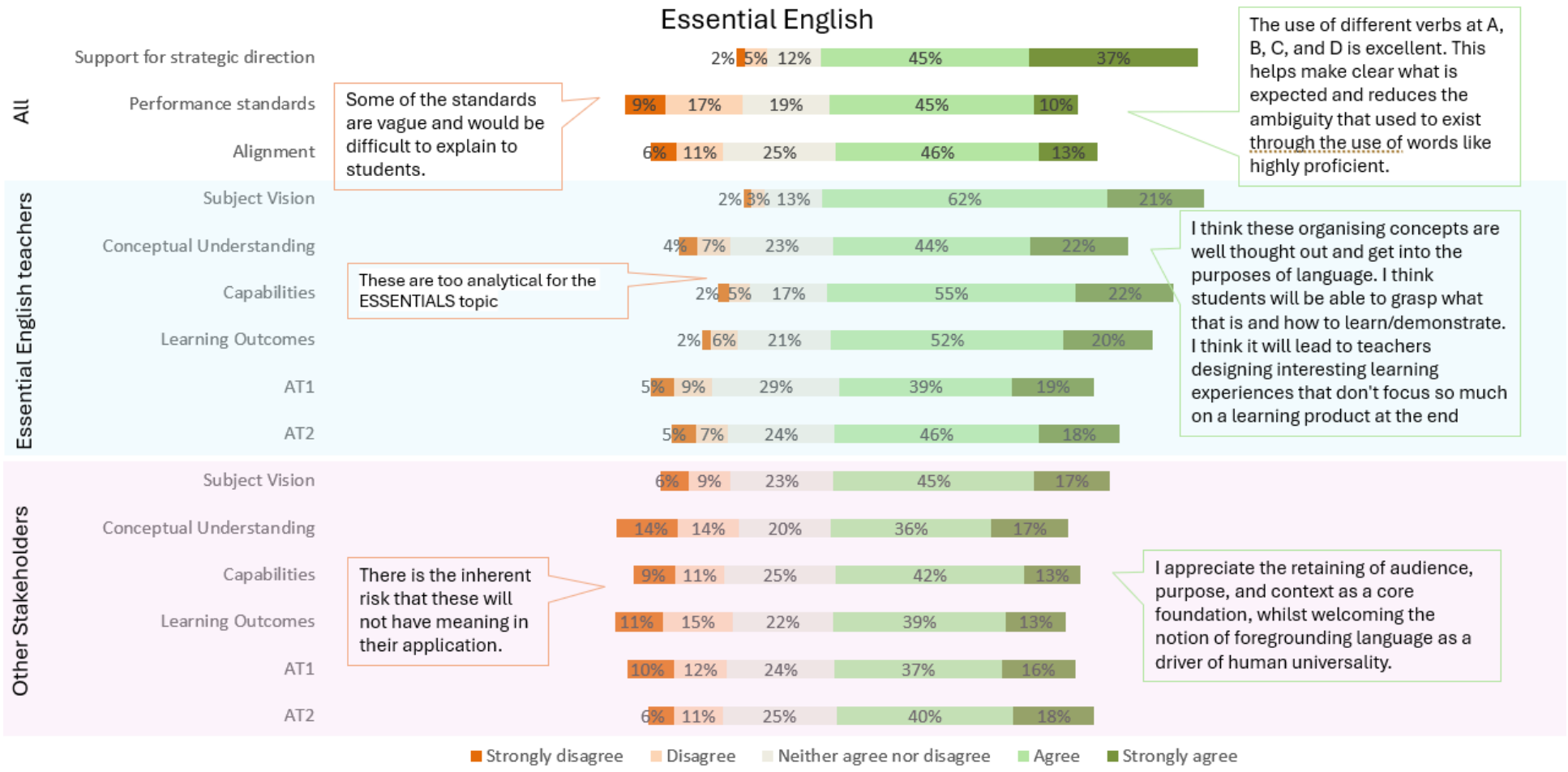
**Public consultation summary | date: 23/11/2026** **SUBJECT: ESSENTIAL ENGLISH (Stage 1)**

Respondents were broadly supportive of the proposed renewal of Stage 1 Essential English and recognised its strong focus on authentic communication, student agency, transferable capabilities and real-world learning. The vision for learning, conceptual understandings, capabilities and most learning outcomes were generally well received, with many respondents recognising the proposal as a meaningful attempt to modernise Essential English and strengthen its relevance to contemporary contexts.

Feedback primarily focused on how the renewed subject would be enacted in practice, particularly for students with diverse learning needs and varying levels of literacy development. Respondents highlighted the importance of clear language, practical examples, assessment guidance and implementation support to promote accessibility, consistency and confidence in interpretation. This feedback has informed targeted refinements to the subject design and will help shape the guidance, exemplification and implementation resources that will support successful enactment of the renewed subject.




Deep Authentic Learning

Student Agency

Natural Evidence of Learning

Metacognition

Capabilities

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| WHAT WE HEARD | HOW WE'RE RESPONDING |
|---|---|
| **Theme 1: Respondents supported the contemporary direction of the subject and sought clearer connections between capabilities, concepts and English learning.**<br>Respondents were broadly supportive of the focus on real-world communication, student agency, transferable capabilities and authentic learning. The Vision, Context, Conceptual Understandings and capabilities were generally well received. Feedback sought greater clarity about how capabilities, concepts and disciplinary knowledge work together to support communication development and requested practical examples to support consistent interpretation and implementation. | • Strengthening implementation guidance that explains how concepts and capabilities connect to English disciplinary knowledge and communication development.<br>• Making more explicit how conceptual learning supports the transfer of knowledge and skills across different contexts, communities, workplaces and experiences beyond school.<br>• Providing practical examples and implementation guidance to illustrate how concepts and capabilities can be enacted through authentic learning and communication. |
| **Theme 2: Respondents sought greater clarity about learning expectations and how students demonstrate growth.**<br>Respondents generally supported the direction of the Learning Outcomes, including the emphasis on learner agency, metacognition and personal voice. Feedback suggested that some Learning Outcomes would benefit from clearer, more accessible language and greater clarity about what students are expected to know, do and demonstrate. | • Refining Learning Outcomes to improve clarity, accessibility and practical application.<br>• Clarifying the role of personal voice, agency and metacognition within learning and assessment.<br>• Strengthening the accessibility of subject language while maintaining the intent of the learning outcomes. |
| **Theme 3: Respondents sought greater clarity about assessment expectations and evidence of learning.**<br>Respondents recognised the value of assessment approaches that support authentic communication and student growth. Feedback sought greater clarity about what constitutes appropriate evidence, how portfolio-based assessment supports reliable judgements, and how assessment expectations can be applied consistently across diverse contexts and learner needs. Some respondents also sought greater clarity about the purpose of reflection within the subject. | • Providing clear guidance in implementation about evidence requirements and assessment expectations.<br>• Strengthening implementation support to promote consistent assessment judgements across schools.<br>• Clarifying the purpose of reflection as a means of understanding language, communication and learning processes rather than personal disclosure.<br>• Supporting the implementation of assessment approaches that remain accessible for learners with diverse literacy needs and experiences. |
| **Theme 4: Respondents identified opportunities to strengthen the clarity and progression of the performance standards.**<br>While respondents broadly supported the assessment design criteria and performance standards, feedback sought clearer progression across achievement levels and stronger visibility of key constructs such as personal voice, collaboration, reflection and disciplinary knowledge. | • Refining assessment design criteria and performance standards to strengthen clarity and progression.<br>• Clarifying the role of collaboration, analysis and text creation within the assessment framework.<br>• Strengthening the relationship between disciplinary knowledge, communication development and assessment.<br>• Enhancing guidance and exemplification to support consistent interpretation of achievement standards. |

