SCHOOLS ONLINE THESAURUS
Draft descriptors release 4.6 and general maintenance

Amendment History

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This report outlines changes to the Schools Online Thesaurus in versoin 4.6 and issues arising during the management and consultative process.

A list of new and revised subject terms is included as an Appendix to this report.

1.2 Audience

ScOT Management Group and ScOT Consultative Group.

1.3 Acknowledgements

The ScOT Management Group would like to acknowledge the assistance and advice provided by Steve Sunter, Metadata Analyst for TLF, Anne Camfield from CC and Jenny Millea from *education.au limited*.

2 Process

2.1 Additional content

The Additional Content Project employs ScOT to index information objects from various cultural institutions, such as museums, galleries and state libraries. This project has enabled the development of candidate terms covering a range of topics such as *Distance education*, *Imperial measurement* and *Power failures*.

The Additional Content Project represents an ongoing opportunity to develop candidate terms for ScOT that will flesh out existing taxonomic structures and, occasionally, to create candidate Top Terms and subsequent taxonomies.

2.2 Top term review

Recent work has identified a significant number of 'Top Terms' (terms that have no broader terms), that themselves do not represent broad concepts. Revision of these terms will form the basis of version 5.0.

The revision of Top Terms represents an opportunity to reduce the number of Top Terms in ScOT and provide it with a more logical structure, with Top Terms that represent appropriate high level concepts.

3 Feedback from ScOT Consultative Group

Feedback received from the ScOTCG during the review of draft descriptors for 4.6 are summarised below.

3.1 Additional Content project at TLF

Feedback has been provided that the process of deriving terms from keywords suggested by writers of TLF Additional content projects was a bad approach. The difference between the content arising from the Additional Content project (known as *Resource Assets*) and those from the longer standing and more established resources (called Learning Objects) is relevant to this discussion.

Using ScOT terms in this field implies that this field, and others within the Resource Asset (Title, Description) should be used as a source of terms for further development of ScOT. This is implied by the general observation that a collection that is described with a vocabulary should itself be a source of literary warrant for the vocabulary. Most of the candidate terms proposed for 4.6 are derived from the Additional Content project.

While it is implied it is not required, *by the Additional Content project*, that terms derived from the Resource Assets are added to ScOT. No given collection should become the dominant source of literary warrant for a controlled vocabulary that is designed to serve the metadata requirements of a number of different collections, which is the ostensible purpose of ScOT.

However, the Project Brief for phase 4 of ScOT is clear about using the TLF Additional Content project as a source of new terms. The ScOTMG accepts feedback from ScOTCG on this process and will carefully investigate possible revision of this brief for the following ScOT development phase. No candidate terms in 4.6 are rejected on the sole basis of their origin in the Additonal Content project.

3.2 Specifications – issues arising

The following feedback relates closely to the ScOT Quality Assurance Specifications version 1.3; the *Specifications* and other relevant documentation is available at
http://www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/partnerships/scotpapers.htm

3.2.1   Qualifiers for non preferred terms

Feedback from the ScOTCG recommends use of option number two for selecting Qualifiers for non preferred terms. In this option the preferred term is used as the qualifier for a non preferred term, (and if a compound term, abbreviated to a single word where possible). This shall be added to the ScOT Quality Assurance Sepcifications.

3.2.2   Proper names

While there was no feedback on discrepancies between published authorities used to determine the proper noun status of a term, the general issue of proper names was raised. There is curricula warrant for management of proper names, for example "Personalities of the 20th century" taught within History strands.

The question remains whether or not ScOT is a suitable vocabulary within which to manage such terms. Currently the *Specifications* state that no proper names are eligible for inclusion in ScOT. There is one discussion paper on proper names in ScOT (http://www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/resources/qualifiers_in_scot_v1_0.doc). Of the proposed models in that discussion paper, the current model used in ScOT development is based most closely on option 4.3.1. Option 4.3.2 may be a sensible extension of current practice, where

notes are incorporated into ScOT that instruct indexers to use proper names in uncontrolled keyword fields where appropriate in metadata records. This issue will be discussed further within the ScOT Management Groups.

3.2.3   Inverted terms

One term proposed was *Elements (Chemistry)*. This was proposed as a non preferred term for Chemical elemts.

After feedback from the ScOTCG this term was rejected. This is consistent with ScOT Specifications that state that "Inverted terms used as entry terms are not permitted" (*Specifications*, 4.7.1).

3.3 Historical subject terms

Feedback from the ScOTCG indicates that some of the cadidate terms "would only be needed if there are historical resources". This observation reflects the current role played by TLF Additional Content as a source of literary warrant.

The Additional Conent project creates Resource Assets derived from cultural institututions in Australia and New Zealand. Many of these institutions are museums, libraries and archives. Unsurprisingly they are collections of mainly 'historical resources'. To the extent that the Additional Content is used to generate new terms for ScOT, there is a risk of introducing historical bias to ScOT development.

The feedback on historical terms is valuable. Determining the proper historical scope of ScOT will inform principles and processes for further ScOT expansion. This issue will be discussed further by the ScOTMG.

Terms rejected in 4.6 on the basis of their narrow historical context are:

Baths (Swimming)

Correspondence schooling

Diggers

Dreadnoughts

Emporia

Emporiums

Hand cranked cameras

Industrial welfare

Public baths

4 Summary of changes

4.1 Version 4.6

The following table summarises the changes made in this release of Version 4.6 of ScOT.

	Version 4.5	Version 4.6
No of subject terms	8, 959	9, 067
Preferred subject terms	7, 173	7, 234
Non preferred subject terms	1, 786	1, 833
Top terms	181	168

5 Appendix

5.1 Subject terms

5.1.1 New subject terms

The following are new subject terms that have been added for Version 4.6. Non preferred terms are in *italics*.

Air forces

Air raid shelters

Air raids

Aircraft carriers

Assisted migration

Assisted passage

Aussie Rules

Australian Rules

Barracouta boats

Battleships

Blackouts

Bomb shelters

Bomber aircraft

Bombs

Bush tucker

Catapults

Causeways

Celebrities

Cemeteries

Cockatiels

Cockatoos

Constant volume calorimeters

Corellas

Data security

Deep frying

Dependent territories

Depth charges

Distance education

Doctors

Dole

Electrical power failures

Elevators

Eucalypts

Faxing

Felling

Fire brigades

Fire engines

Firefighting

Flares

Flying doctors

Food parcels

Food stamps

Football

Fox hunting

Frying

Gaelic football

Galahs

Gaming (Casinos)

Gaming (Computer games)

General practitioners

Graveyards

Gridiron football

Harbours

Highrise buildings

Horse drawn vehicles

Imperial measurement

Indigenous foods

Indigenous medicine

Isolated communities

Jetties

Kakapos

Lifts

Lorikeets

Medical practitioners

Medical specialists

Melting point

Military aircraft

Military uniforms

Offences

Outback communities

Pan frying

Parades

Parakeets

Parrots

Piers

Ports

Post offices

Power failures

Prosperity

Rabbit hunting

Regattas

Remote communities

Remote education

Revolutions (Conflict)

Rosellas

Rugby league

Rugby union

Semi detached houses

Small game hunting

Smoke alarms

Smoke detectors

Soccer

Soldiers

Sports uniforms

Stars (Celebrities)

Stir frying

Street lighting

Switchboards

Tanks (Armed forces)

Telegraphy

Telephone exchanges

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Town houses	Unemployment benefits	Victorian architecture	*Wharfs*
Tunnels			*White water*
Two way radios	Vandalism	Vineyards	Yacht racing

5.1.2   Rejected subject terms

The following are new subject terms that were rejected during the ScOT Consultative Group review. Non preferred terms are in *italics*.

Baths (Swimming)	*Emporiums*
Correspondence schooling	Feet (Measurement)
Couta boats	Hand cranked cameras
Diggers	Industrial welfare
Dreadnoughts	*Native medicine*
Elements (Chemistry)	*Police officers*
Emporia	Public baths

5.1.3   Modified existing subject terms

Here are listed existing Version 4.5 subject terms in ScOT that have been modified (for example addition of qualifiers, or alternative BTs assigned) with subject term development for Version 4.6.

Bridges	Steam
Dams	Steam trains
Fruit	Steamships
Fruits	Tanks (Containers)
Gear ratios	Tram drivers
Measurement	Trams
Measuring instruments	Transport
Midwives	Transportation
Nurses	Wildlife sanctuaries
Prisons	
Proportions	
Ratios	
Revolution (Angles)	
Sanctuaries (Religious buildings)	
Signalling	

5.1.4   Deleted terms

The following terms have been deleted from ScOT.

Coastal settlement

Cohesion

Nucleated settlements

6   Sources

ATED   Australian Thesaurus of Education Descriptors (Third edition, 2003)

LCSH   Library of Congress Subject Headings Authorities (via external site). See
            http://lcauth.dra.com/LCAUTH

MeSH   Medical Subject Headings (2005)

A&AT   Art and Architecture Thesaurus (2000)

SCIS   SCIS Subject Headings. 5th edition (2001)

APAIS   Australian Public Affairs Information Service thesaurus (March 2005)

SONZ   Subjects of New Zealand (2003)

TAGS   Thesaurus of Australian Government Subjects (2002)

TLF   The Learning Federation