



Our Ref: 2025/24376

To the Principal
All Western Australian Secondary Schools

Dear Principal

After a busy Term 1, I am pleased to share an update on the work of the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority). The progress made by the Authority has involved the support and input of many teachers and school leaders. I would like to acknowledge the importance of these contributions to the Authority being able to deliver on its remit.

Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) Refreshment

Progress on the WACE Refreshment continues. As I have previously noted, the Board remains committed to its position that modifications introduced to the WACE will be to maximise its value for students as they move into further education, training, and employment, and to minimise impact on schools and teachers wherever possible. This is a significant piece of work for the Authority, and I would like to focus on the elements of the Refreshments relating to vocational education and training (VET) and endorsed programs in this update.

Vocational education and training

As part of the WACE Refreshment, the Board undertook to review VET through research and consultation. The starting point for this work was Certificate IV and above qualifications, including Diplomas. Consultation involved students, school principals across different demographics and metropolitan and regional locations, school systems and sector bodies, industry training councils, TAFE colleges, private training providers, regulatory and policy setting bodies in the training sector, and representatives from the tertiary sector. It was wonderful to have such breadth of representation to inform this work.

The first outcome of the consultation is that the Board has determined that Diploma-level qualifications will no longer receive unit equivalence towards WACE achievement from 2027. This supports quality outcomes for students undertaking VET as part of their WACE studies. The next piece of work in this area is the role of Certificate IV qualifications in the WACE. The Board will develop a specified list of Certificate IV qualifications for senior secondary students that would be identified for inclusion in the WACE. The specified Certificate IV qualifications and the decision to no longer recognise unit equivalence for Diplomas focus on quality outcomes and appropriate pathways for senior secondary students.

I expect the Certificate IV list will be released in the first half of 2026 and will be informed by research and consultation with representatives across education, training, universities and industry for implementation with Year 11s in 2027. In 2026, the Authority will also release criteria and processes to add Certificate IV qualifications to the list.

The Authority will communicate further information about changes to unit equivalents for Diplomas and Certificate IV qualifications over the coming months. The Board is not considering changes to Certificate III or lower qualifications.

Endorsed programs

Earlier this year, the Authority published new criteria for the approval of endorsed programs in the *WACE Manual*. All programs endorsed prior to 2025 will be transitioned to the new criteria in accordance with their expiration date. A detailed analysis of student enrolment patterns and completion rates along with the consultations with schools, students and universities shows students value the opportunities endorsed programs offer.

The Board has determined that university developed endorsed programs will now be called Tertiary Preparation Endorsed Programs (TPEPs). Current TPEPs are endorsed until the end of 2026. As ATAR courses best prepare students for university study, from 2027, students who select a TPEP will be required to complete at least one Year 12 ATAR course. The decision reflects the expectation that students selecting a TPEP have aspirations for university entrance. The Authority will consult with schools that do not offer ATAR courses to ensure their students are accommodated.

Senior secondary

Year 12 Physical Education Studies (PES) ATAR

The school-based practical external assessment (SPEA) will be administered in Term 3, Weeks 2 to 8. Schools will receive their SPEA timetables in Week 6 of this term and must contact the Authority immediately if any issue arises with their students' scheduled SPEA.

It is important that schools ensure that the details in SIRS for the Year 12 PES contact are up to date as this is the primary contact person for all SPEA communications to schools. I encourage schools to remind students that the SPEA is a compulsory task, similar to ATAR course examinations, and must be completed by students for course competition. Frequently asked questions about the SPEA are available on the PES course page at <https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/syllabus-and-support-materials/health-and-physical-education/physical-education-studies>.

Heads of Learning Area – Health and Physical Education and teachers of Years 11 and 12 ATAR PES are invited to participate in a professional learning workshop to support their planning for the SPEA. The workshop will be held on Monday, 5 May, Wednesday, 7 May and Monday, 12 May with sessions running for two and a half hours. Registrations are open at <https://www.scsa.wa.edu.au/events/year-11-and-12-atar-physical-education-studies-school-based-performance-external-assessment>.

Moderation

The Authority's moderation processes for 2025 began in Term 1 with a new schools documentation review to support schools delivering courses for the first time and Small Group Moderation seminars for teachers delivering Year 12 ATAR courses that require their school to take part in the small group moderation process. I am sure teachers are finding the Syllabus Delivery Audit reports with Reviewer feedback on course outlines and assessment outlines to assist the teacher to identify any change/s needed in the documentation useful. The reports became available in late Term 1.

ATAR course examination reports

Each year, the Chief Examiner of each ATAR course examination panel submits a comprehensive report to the Authority. These provide valuable feedback to teachers, Curriculum Advisory Committees (CACs) and new examination panel members. I encourage you to review the 2024 ATAR course examination reports now available on ATAR course pages to enhance your support of staff teaching these courses.

Years 7 to 10

Adopting and adapting the Australian Curriculum version 9 within the Western Australian curriculum

The curriculum support materials for Years 3–10 English and Health and Physical Education have been updated to align with the revised Western Australian curriculum adopted and adapted from the Australian Curriculum version 9 within the *Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline* (the *Outline*). These materials, which include teaching, learning and assessment exemplars, are indicated by 'Updated' in the title and are available at:

- <https://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/home/wa-curriculum/learning-areas/english/p-10-english-teaching> and
- <https://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/home/wa-curriculum/learning-areas/health-and-physical-education/p-10-hpe-teaching>.

Professional learning – Humanities and Social Sciences, Mathematics, Science and Technologies

Online and in-person meetings to support schools with familiarisation with the Western Australian curriculum for Pre-primary to Year 10 Humanities and Social Sciences, Mathematics, Science and Technologies are taking place this term. The Authority will provide teacher relief funding to support schools to be flexible in how staff access this professional learning. Staff can register at <https://www.scsa.wa.edu.au/events/western-australian-curriculum-implementation>.

Consultation – The Arts

As part of the Adopt and Adapt project, the Authority is seeking additional input to further refine the Content descriptions, Achievement standards, and Year level descriptions for The Arts curriculum. To guide this phase of consultation, a meeting will be held in early May with the members of the K–2, 3–6 and 7–10 CACs, along with other nominated individuals. The revised curriculum is expected to be approved for familiarisation in 2026 with full implementation in 2027.

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

This year's NAPLAN was conducted between Wednesday, 12 and Monday, 24 March. I would like to thank everyone who worked so hard in administering the assessment and the many teachers who participated as markers.

The preliminary Student and School Summary Report (SSSR), which provides feedback on how students and cohorts of students within schools performed on NAPLAN tests, is now available for schools. The final SSSR, which includes the NAPLAN writing component, is anticipated to be available to schools in mid-June. The Individual Student Report (ISR) will follow early in Term 3. Further information will be provided through the NAPLAN Update.

Other areas of focus**Equitable access to assessment – adjustments**

You will have seen in the *7to12 Circular* published in March that the Authority has reviewed and published an updated *Equitable Access to Assessment Policy and Guidelines* to assist schools in supporting individual students who may need assessment adjustments.

I again encourage schools to engage with the Authority as early as possible to discuss any issues related to managing students in Years 7–11 who may be eligible for or require specific adjustments in the ATAR course examination. Establishing the best interventions and appropriate adjustments in the years preceding Year 12 is a critical way to support students. Materials to support schools in their application for equitable adjustments for ATAR course examinations are now available on the special provisions page on the Authority website at <https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/assessment/examinations/special-provisions>.

Schools Unique Student Identifier (USI)

The Schools Unique Student Identifier (USI) is one of five national enabling initiatives under the *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement*. The Australian Government identifies the Schools USI as supporting schools with enrolment of students moving between states and territories.

As you know, students in Western Australia from Kindergarten (when registered at a school) to Year 12 have a Western Australian student number (WASN). The Authority administers the WASN and will reduce workload impact for schools by centralising administration of the Schools USI. The Authority will work with the Australian Government to link the Schools USI to the WASN. Schools will be informed about each of their students' Schools USI and the WASN will continue to be the primary student identifier for schools to use in the Authority's data-related processes. The Australian Government has indicated that implementation of the Schools USI will commence from 2027 and further information will be provided soon.

I wish you all the best for a productive and rewarding Term 2.

Yours sincerely



PAULINE WHITE
CHAIR
SCHOOL CURRICULUM AND STANDARDS AUTHORITY

28 April 2025