



Our Ref: 2026/8246

To the Principal
All Western Australian Secondary Schools

Dear Principal

Welcome to the school year. I am pleased to outline some of the work the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) is undertaking in 2026.

Adopting and adapting the Australian Curriculum version 9

This year sees the implementation of a further four learning areas as part of the Authority's work on adopting and adapting the Australian Curriculum version 9 within the *Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline* (the *Outline*).

Humanities and Social Sciences, Mathematics, Science and Technologies are now in implementation and the revised curriculum for these learning areas is live at <https://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/home/wa-curriculum/learning-areas>. Online briefings will be scheduled soon, including repeats of the briefings offered in 2025.

The Arts and Languages (Pre-primary to Year 10) now enter the familiarisation phase. The Authority will support schools through online and in-person briefings and workshops throughout the year. Information will be provided through the *7to12 Circular*.

Please encourage and support your staff to participate in the professional learning in 2026.

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

NAPLAN 2026 will be held from Wednesday, 11 to Monday, 23 March. The initial registration and demographic information (via SRGDG file) for all students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 must be uploaded to the Authority by Thursday, 12 February in preparation for this assessment.

Information about the responsibilities of Principals and NAPLAN coordinators to manage the administration of NAPLAN, including the provision of adjustments for students with disabilities, is published in the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority's (ACARA's) *NAPLAN National protocols for test administration* at <https://www.nap.edu.au/naplan/for-schools/national-protocols-for-test-administration>.

The Authority's training modules for Principals, NAPLAN coordinators, Test administrators, Scribes and School technical support officers are now available. I encourage you, and members of your team, to complete the relevant training at your earliest convenience. Remember to check the Authority website for information for schools at <https://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/home/assessment/testing/naplan/schools>.

An online briefing to support schools to prepare for NAPLAN 2026 is scheduled for 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 17 February. The briefing will be repeated at 3.30 pm on Wednesday, 18 February. Register via <https://www.scsa.wa.edu.au/news-and-events/all-events/naplan-2026-preparation>.

Registrations

Student registration is particularly important because of NAPLAN, Abilities Based Learning Education, Western Australia (ABLEWA) and Brightpath. See the *Data Procedures Manual* for information about registering students and the *Activities Schedule* for key dates, both at <https://www.scsa.wa.edu.au/publications>.

Pre-primary to Year 10: Teaching, Assessing and Reporting Policy

I thank everyone who was involved in our consultation on the *Pre-primary to Year 10: Teaching, Assessing and Reporting Policy* and the *Policy Standards for Pre-primary to Year 10: Teaching, Assessing and Reporting*, which were reviewed in 2025. The updated documents are available at <https://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/home/policy/teaching-assessing-and-reporting-policy>. A summary of changes will be included in the *7to12 Circular*.

Equitable access to assessment – adjustments

I have written previously about the Authority's commitment to all students having access to curriculum and assessment appropriate to their needs. Appropriate curriculum and assessment recognises and supports individual students who may need assessment adjustments to allow them to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills.

I again encourage schools to work with the Authority as soon as possible to discuss any issues related to students in Years 7–11 who may be eligible for or require specific adjustments in an ATAR course examination. This allows schools to discuss interventions and implement appropriate adjustments for school-based assessment before Year 12.

The core aim of the *Authority's Equitable Access to Assessment Policy and Guidelines* (see <https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/assessment/equitable-access-assessment-policy>) is to ensure all students have the opportunity to take part in and complete assessments fairly and equitably. Queries about equitable access and adjustments should be emailed to the Special Provisions Consultant via specialprovs@scsa.wa.edu.au.

Courses for teaching in 2026

Principals are reminded to ensure their teachers teach the course syllabuses approved for 2026. The Authority's ATAR and General course syllabuses for Year 11 were updated on the Authority website in January. The syllabuses now incorporate the revised course rationales, aims and statements about the General Capabilities.

Minor syllabus changes for teaching in 2026 were communicated through Edition 7 (Part 2) 2025 of the *7to12 Circular* in the following courses:

- Year 11 Economics ATAR
- Year 11 Mathematics Specialist ATAR
- Year 12 Accounting and Finance ATAR
- Year 12 Computer Science ATAR
- Year 12 Earth and Environmental Science ATAR
- Year 12 Engineering Studies ATAR
- Year 12 Geography ATAR
- Year 12 Health Studies ATAR
- Year 12 Mathematics Methods ATAR
- Year 12 Media Production and Analysis ATAR
- Years 11 and 12 Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR
- Years 11 and 12 Drama ATAR
- Years 11 and 12 Psychology ATAR.

Syllabus development and review

The Authority's regular syllabus review processes continue in 2026. I thank everyone who contributed to the 2025 feedback and consultation processes on the ATAR and General courses for Aviation, English and Materials Design and Technology.

Work will continue on these courses in 2026; work will be finalised this year on the ATAR Languages and the General Arts courses, and the General Framework for Languages that commenced in 2024.

In December 2025, the Board approved the following courses for syllabus review in 2026:

- Years 11 and 12 Business Management and Enterprise ATAR and General
- Years 11 and 12 Health Studies ATAR and General
- Years 11 and 12 Human Biology ATAR
- Years 11 and 12 Mathematics Applications ATAR
- Years 11 and 12 Mathematics Methods ATAR
- Years 11 and 12 Philosophy and Ethics ATAR
- Years 11 and 12 Politics and Law ATAR.

Additionally, the Authority will share information about courses under consideration for development with associated Curriculum Advisory Committees in Term 1.

Further information about syllabus review will be provided via the *7to12 Circular*.

Assessment of Years 11 and 12 students

It is important to ensure that assessment of students, particularly in Years 11 and 12, is manageable for students and teachers. We must ensure students are not over assessed and they are afforded plenty of time for the teaching and learning aspects of their courses to be well prepared for assessment. The minimum requirement stated in the syllabus for each course is to assess each Assessment Type **at least once** over the year/pair of units.

WACE Refreshment

Work on the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) Refreshment is progressing. The C grade equivalent for ATAR courses was applied for Year 12s in 2025. This support is important to students taking on the challenge of ATAR courses.

WACE Refreshments relating to vocational education and training (VET) qualifications and endorsed programs will be in place for Year 12 in 2027. Students will need to be aware of the associated changes towards the achievement of a WACE and schools must consider impacts on Year 11 subject and program choices, and the guidance provided to students.

From 2027, Year 12 students:

- will no longer receive unit equivalence towards WACE achievement for Diploma level qualifications
- completing a Tertiary Preparation Endorsed Program (TPEP), formally referred to as university developed endorsed programs, will need to complete at least one Year 12 ATAR course to have the TPEP receive unit equivalence towards WACE achievement.

Early this term, the Authority will publish the specified list of Certificate IV qualifications identified for inclusion in the WACE. The Authority will also publish the criteria and process for Certificate IV qualifications to remain on, or be added, to the list.

Circulars

It is important that teachers and school leaders stay abreast of the latest developments in the Authority's work and professional learning opportunities. I encourage everyone to register to receive the *Kto6* and/or *7to12* Circulars at <https://www.scsa.wa.edu.au/>.

Vote of thanks

I again thank everyone who contributes to the work of the Authority. The engagement of people in roles across the school systems/sector, schools, our formally constituted committees, including the Curriculum Advisory Committees, the Secondary Principals Advisory Forum, working groups and panels, and the staff of the School Curriculum and Standards Division is integral to the Board's delivery of our vision for our students and the Western Australian community. We look forward to your continued involvement in 2026.

I wish you all the best for the year ahead.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'P White'.

**PAULINE WHITE
CHAIR
SCHOOL CURRICULUM AND STANDARDS AUTHORITY**

4 February 2026