



Public Information Statement

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Acknowledgement of Country

Kaya. The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) acknowledges that our offices are on Whadjuk Noongar boodjar and that we deliver our services on the country of many traditional custodians and language groups throughout Western Australia. The Authority acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We offer our respect to Elders past and present.

Accessibility

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Information statement

1. Introduction

The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) is an independent statutory authority that is responsible to the Western Australian Minister for Education, and since December 2021, the Western Australian Minister for International Education. The Authority was established on 1 March 2012 through proclamation of the *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Act 1997* (the Act).

Our role is to:

- develop and accredit school curriculum
- assess student achievement in relation to the curriculum through the administration of standardised testing and Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) examinations
- certify senior secondary achievement
- report on the standards of student achievement.

Our vision is to provide quality curriculum, assessment and reporting of standards of achievement for all students studying the Western Australian curriculum, so that they become confident, creative learners and active, informed citizens who contribute positively to society.

This information statement is published by the Authority in accordance with the requirements of section 94 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1992* (the *FOI Act*). The Authority is pleased to comply with this requirement and welcomes enquiries under the *FOI Act*. The Authority will review and update the information statement as required.

Historical background

The Authority was established on 29 February 2012 through the proclamation of the *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Act 1997* (the Act).

The Authority replaced the Curriculum Council (the Council) in 2012, assuming expanded responsibilities allocated by legislation and by the review of the Curriculum Council Regulations 2005. Consequently, the Council's ongoing operational and business functions, and assets, rights and liabilities were transferred to the Authority.

The Council was established on 1 August 1997 under the *Curriculum Council Act 1997* and replaced the Secondary Education Authority (1984–97) and its predecessor, the Board of Secondary Education (1970–1984).

The creation of the Council followed a major review in 1994–1995 of school curriculum processes and procedures. The Council was given statutory responsibility to develop a *Curriculum Framework* for Kindergarten to Year 12 (K–12) schooling for all Western Australian government and non-government schools. A review of post-compulsory education occurred in 1998, which resulted in the creation of a structure for post-compulsory schooling that was outcomes-focused and consistent with the *Curriculum Framework*.

Former Tertiary Entrance Examination (TEE) subjects, wholly school assessed and vocational subjects were replaced by fifty-two (52) Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) courses and twelve (12) vocational education and training (VET) industry-specific courses with a new system of

curriculum assessment and certification for senior secondary education developed and implemented in three phases. This process was finalised in 2010.

In September 2015, Australia's Education Ministers endorsed the Foundation to Year 10 (F–10) Australian Curriculum. After consultation with teachers and other stakeholders, Western Australia 'adopted and adapted' the F–10 Australian Curriculum for Pre-primary–Year 10.

In 2016, the Authority undertook a review of the *Act* to clarify its role as a Test Administration Authority for the National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) testing. This led to the *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Amendment Bill 2017* that added a new statutory function to conduct and promote, or participate in, research involving students to the Authority's remit.

Following the Machinery of Government changes implemented on 1 July 2017, the work of the Authority is supported by a Secretariat. The Authority has formed a Service Level Agreement with the Department of Education to provide staffing and corporate services for the purpose of enabling the Authority to perform its functions. The Secretariat carries out the legislative and administrative functions as directed by the Board, the Director General of Education as the Authority's Chief Executive Officer and the Minister for Education.

The Authority's business functions have not transferred to the new Department of Education. Under the *Act* (Part 3A, s.19A & 19I), the Board is responsible for its business functions, records and databases, and as such it remains the owner of the Authority's records.

On 4 December 2020, the *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Amendment Regulations 2020* (the Regulations) were published in the Government Gazette. These regulations amend the *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Regulations 2005* and allow the Board to disclose relevant information to applicants requesting student data for research purposes.

The Authority's leadership in Western Australia has seen collaboration with the Association of Independent Schools WA, Catholic Education WA and the Department of Education in facilitating the transition to NAPLAN online.

In addition, the Authority is a regulatory body responsible for school compliance and assessment as well as data evaluation of public, Catholic and private independent schools' performance. All records created or received as a result of the Authority's functions can only be accessed and managed by authorised staff (refer to the *Act*, Part 4, section(s) 21 and 22 and Part 6, section 32).

Management of the Authority's student data and existing Student Information Records System (SIRS) has been enhanced with the development and phased implementation of a new Student Records Management System (SRMS). The SRMS is designed to enable the Authority to meet its key reporting remit under the *Act*. The SRMS provides for the storage of student registration data, achievement data, NAPLAN and OLN data, vocational education and training data and state-level reporting data across Pre-primary to Year 12 (P–12).

To meet its responsibilities the Authority has developed the *Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline (Outline)* that replaced the *Curriculum Framework* for all Western Australian schools.

The *Outline* sets out the mandated knowledge, understandings, skills, values and attitudes that Pre-primary to Year 10 students are expected to acquire in the eight learning areas identified in the Alice

Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (2019), Principles of Learning, Teaching and Assessment, expected standards of achievement, and requirements for reporting on student achievement. It also provides comprehensive information that schools can use to plan student learning programs, assesses student progress and reports to parents. The syllabuses published in the *Outline* are mandated for use by all teachers.

The *Outline* is informed by *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)* and the Australian Curriculum. The *Outline* includes *Kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines*, but these are not mandated because Kindergarten is a non-compulsory year of schooling.

Senior secondary schooling in Western Australia covers students in Year 11 and Year 12.

The Western Australian Statement of Student Achievement (WASSA) is provided to all Year 12 students at the completion of their senior secondary schooling. The WASSA provides a formal record of what students leaving school at the end of Year 12 have achieved as a result of their school education in Western Australia (detailed in Attachment 1).

The Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) is the certificate that students in Western Australia receive on successful completion of the WACE requirements at the conclusion of their senior secondary education. It is recognised nationally in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), and by universities and other tertiary institutions, industry and training providers.

While students typically complete a WACE in their final two years of senior secondary school, there is no specified time limit for completion. Study towards achievement of the WACE can be undertaken over a lifetime. It should be noted that the WACE requirements may change over time. Individuals continuing to work towards achievement of the WACE after they leave school will need to meet the WACE requirements current at that time.

As students come from diverse backgrounds and have varying needs, senior secondary schooling in Western Australia offers a wide range of courses and programs that enable students to study courses similar to those offered in other parts of Australia and provide multiple pathways to university, training and employment.

Five types of courses and two types of programs are available:

- Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) courses
- General courses
- Vocational Education and Training (VET) industry specific courses
- Foundation courses
- Preliminary courses
- Vocational Education and Training (VET) credit transfer
- Endorsed programs.

ATAR, General, Foundation and VET industry specific courses contribute to the WACE. VET credit transfer and endorsed programs can provide unit equivalence to contribute to the WACE.

Additionally, the Authority develops and oversees the Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (OLNA) which is designed to enable students to successfully meet WACE requirements of demonstrating the minimum standard of literacy and numeracy. The WACE is recognised in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), and internationally by universities and other tertiary institutions, industry and training providers.

2. Legislation

Enabling legislation

The Authority operates under the *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Act 1997*.

School Curriculum and Standards Authority Amendment Act 2017

In 2017, the *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Amendment Bill 2017* was passed to amend the Act. This amendment allowed the Authority to clarify its role as a Test Administration Authority for national testing, including the National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) testing; and to conduct, promote or participate in research involving students.

Section 32B (6) of the *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Amendment Act 2017* introduced the statutory function to conduct and promote, or participate in, research involving students.

On 4 December 2020, the *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Amendment Regulations 2020* (the *Regulations*) were published in the Government Gazette. The purpose of the *Regulations* is to support the Act with respect to the disclosure of relevant information to applicants requesting such data.

Administered legislation

The Minister also administers the following related legislation:

- *Education Service Providers (Full Fee Overseas Students) Registration Act 1991*
- *School Education Act 1999*

In the performance of its functions, the Authority complies with all relevant written laws set out in its annual report, accessible to the public via the Authority website.

3. Organisation structure and functions

The Authority is administered by a Board consisting of seven members, including a Chairperson appointed by the Minister. The Director General of the Department also holds the position of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Authority under section 20 of the Act and Part 3 of *Public Sector Management Act 1994*.

Under a Service Level Agreement between the Department and the Authority, the core business functions described by the Act are carried out by the School Curriculum and Standards Division (SCS) of the Department of Education (the Department), located in the Authority's Cannington office. The SCS Division staff are also bound by the Department's policies and procedures, including the *Information Release Guidelines* in matters relating to the Department records. The Authority's information release policy and processes guides the management and release of the Authority records.

Under section 17 of the Act, the Board has delegated some of its powers to the Executive Director – School Curriculum and Standards (Executive Director – SCS). In exercising the delegations of the Board, the Executive Director – SCS is accountable to the Board. In exercising all other functions, the Executive Director – SCS is accountable to the Director General of the Department.

The Authority maintains a Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Declaration (code of conduct) that is reviewed annually. The Authority Board and Committee members, and the Department staff

and contractors supporting the delivery of the Authority's remit are required to read and acknowledge their acceptance of the code of conduct annually (signature required) to protect the integrity of the Authority's functions and related activities.

Funding to support the functions of the Authority is appropriated to the Department. The Board is then funded in the form of a grant paid to the Authority.

The Authority's *Public Information Statement* relates to its legislated functions only. Information disclosures related to financial management, public sector standards, employment and personnel records are covered in the Department's *Information Statement*.

Functions of the Board

Under Part 3 of the Act, the Authority Board is responsible for its functions, records and databases. The Board is responsible for

- setting standards of student achievement and for the assessment and certification of student achievement according to those standards
- developing an outline of curriculum and assessment in schools that, taking account of the needs of students, sets out the knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes that students are expected to acquire and guidelines for the assessment of student achievement
- developing and accrediting courses for schools
- maintaining a database of information relating to
 - the participation by students during their school years in education, training or employment as provided for by the *School Education Act 1999*
 - the achievement of students during those years
 - records of assessment in respect of students.

The owner of the Authority's records is the Board, as provided by the Act.

4. Statutory committees of the Authority

The Authority has two advisory committees with delegated authority that are chaired by Board members.

The Curriculum and Assessment Committee, which has 13 members, is an expert committee whose members have expertise in curriculum development and the post-schooling options available to students.

The Standards Committee, which has five members, is an expert committee whose members have expertise in education standards and the correct interpretation of student achievement results in relation to standards.

In addition to the two statutory committees, the Board can appoint other advisory committees to assist the Board in the performance of its functions.

5. Public participation in policy formulation

The Authority serves:

- students and teachers from Kindergarten to Year 12 in every school Western Australia

- students and teachers in international schools using the Western Australian curriculum by arrangement with the Authority
- parents, school administrators and bodies representative of the school sector/systems, including the Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia, Catholic Education of Western Australia, the Department of Education, pre-schools and early learning centres, home educators, Training and Further Education (TAFE), universities, national education authorities and the community of Western Australia.

Opportunities for community consultation occur through stakeholder feedback via the Authority's email or telephone contacts, and representation on committees, working parties, and other forums, as required.

Members of the public (including students, parents, teachers, and staff of tertiary institutions, employers and interested members of the public) may be affected by the decisions of the Authority in the areas of curriculum provision, syllabus changes, certification, assessment procedures and tertiary entrance examinations.

Members of the public are able to put forward their views to the Authority either by email to info@scsa.wa.edu.au or by writing to the Executive Director, SCS at the Authority's address.

6. Authority records

The Authority's functional records include:

- Examiners' reports
- information brochures
- syllabuses and support materials
- documents related to the development and accreditation of school curriculum
- documents related to the assessment of student achievement in relation to the curriculum through the administration of standardised testing and Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) course examinations
- certification of senior secondary achievement (see Attachment 1)
- data on the standards of student achievement (see Attachment 1)

The Authority's policy and administrative materials include:

- annual reports
- financial reports
- policy documents
- Board documents
- committee documents
- strategic plan
- the *Service Level Agreement* between the Authority and the Department.

From 1 July 2017, information held on administrative matters listed below are covered in the Department's *Information Statement*:

- employee relations
- financial management, contracting, fleet management
- industrial relations, information management, land and property management

- legal services, occupational health and safety, personnel
- establishment (staffing), staff management and development
- the Department's information and communications network, and systems and telecommunications.

Note: prior to 1 July 2017, the above listed administrative records were considered functional records of the Authority.

7. Access to Authority records

Many of the Authority's publications are available from its website, free of charge, including annual and statistical reports. The most recent ATAR course examinations are available free of charge on the Authority website. A Freedom of Information (FOI) application is not required to access them.

Other records are available for public inspection, by arrangement, at the Authority's offices at 303 Sevenoaks Street, Cannington between 8.30 am and 4.30 pm, Monday to Friday. With prior notice, documents can be made available in alternative formats, including large print, electronic format, and audio or braille. Interested individuals should contact the Authority to discuss their requirements and estimated timeframes to provide alternative forms.

To make an appointment to inspect specific documents, email your request to info@scsa.wa.edu.au.

It should be noted that library facilities are not available to the general public.

Legislated costs

The following services are available to individuals, at a cost:

- duplicate copies of certificates issued at Year 10 (before 1993) or Year 12
- results check of ATAR course examinations (time limit for request applies)
- statement of question/section marks awarded in ATAR course examinations (time limit for request applies)
- equivalence statements.

These documents can be purchased at the offices of the Authority between 8.30 am and 4.30 pm on weekdays, or accessed online when available via the Authority's student portal (see Attachment 1).

The scale of fees and charges applicable under the *Act* has been set by the *Regulations* and appeared in the *Western Australian Government Gazette* on 22 October 1993. A current price list is available on the Authority website.

8. Disclosure of data for research purposes

Under the Authority's Research Governance function, all applications for data to support research involving students will be assessed by the Authority's *Ethics Review Committee* (ERC) who will make a recommendation to the Board whether to approve an application. The considerations that the ERC will make are described in the Authority's principal legislation (including the *Regulations*).

The data fields that the Authority may disclose, subject to Board approval include:

- the student's name, address, date of birth, gender or unique reference number
- whether the student has identified as of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin
- the main language spoken by the student at home

- the main language spoken by the student’s parents at home
- the educational programs or courses in or for which the student was most recently enrolled or receiving home education
- any educational programs or courses in or for which the student was previously enrolled or receiving home education
- the student’s educational achievement
- whether the student is or was participating in an option other than school in accordance with the *School Education Act 1999* section 11B.

Researchers and research institutions must apply for data using the Authority’s online application system. Details of the application process for data requests will be made available on the Authority website.

9. Freedom of Information Applications

Freedom of Information (FOI) applications will be processed in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act 1992 (FOI Act)* and the Authority’s policy and procedures. Should individuals require access to documents pursuant to an FOI application, the charges structure set out in the *Freedom of Information Regulations (1993)* (the *FOI Regulations*) may apply.

A person who wishes to obtain access to one or more documents from the Authority must make a valid FOI application:

- (a) in writing, with proof of the applicant’s identity and address
- (b) with enough information to enable the requested documents to be identified
- (c) with an address in Australia to which notices under the FOI Act can be sent
- (d) with any other information or details required under the FOI Regulations
- (e) with any application fee payable under the FOI Regulations.

An FOI application may be lodged in person, by post or digitally. Where the FOI application is lodged by post, it is regarded as having been lodged with the Authority at the end of the fifth day after it was posted. Where an FOI application is lodged digitally, it is regarded as having been lodged with the Authority on the day it is transmitted.

FOI applications should be addressed to:

The Freedom of Information Officer
 School Curriculum and Standards Authority
 PO Box 816
 CANNINGTON WA 6987

FOI applications will be responded to as soon as possible within 45 days of the Authority receiving the request, and the application fee of \$30.00 (correct as of date of printing). Records are made available or released in accordance with the *FOI Act*.

If access is refused, the applicant seeking the information may choose to exercise their rights under the *FOI Act* to appeal against a decision. If an appeal is made, the Authority undertakes an internal review of the decision regarding access to documents.

10. Application for Amendments to Authority records

The Authority amends records provided by schools only on the formal advice of schools. Fees and charges may apply to amend personal names on certificates and student results as provided for in the Act (see Attachment 1).

A member of the public may gain access to Authority documents concerning their personal records by making an application in accordance with Part 3 of the *FOI Act* using the Authority's *Freedom of Information Application Form*, outlining the records they wish to inspect. The individual may then request a correction to any information about themselves that is incomplete, incorrect or misleading.

All requests must include proof of identity or authorisation. Third parties making an application on behalf of another individual must provide a completed *General Authority to Act* (found at the end of the *Freedom of Information Application Form*) together with proof of identity. Parents or guardians are required to supply a statutory declaration as proof of relationship along with proof of identity to access student information.

11. Relevant legislation and publications

- *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Act 1997*
- *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Regulations 2005*
- *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Amendment Act 2017*
- *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Amendment Regulations 2020*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1992*
- *Freedom of Information Regulations 1993*
- *State Records Act 1999*
- *School Education Act 1999*
- *Education Service Providers (Full Fee Overseas Students) Registration Act 1991*
- *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*
- *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Annual Report*
- *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Board Strategic Plan*
- *Department of Education Annual Report*
- Policies of the School Curriculum and Standards Authority
- Policies of the Department of Education
- *Education Service Providers (Full Fee Overseas Students) Registration Act 1991*
- *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*

Attachment 1

Student Results and Data

Please visit the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) website for a current list of fees and charges that may apply. All requests must include proof of identity or authorisation. Parents or guardians are required to supply a statutory declaration as proof of relationship along with proof of identity to access student information.

From 2016 onwards, Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) certificates and student results data are available online via the Authority's student portal. Students can download digital copies of documents in their folio of achievement by logging into the student portal using their Western Australian student number (WASN) and password.

<https://www.scsa.wa.edu.au>

YEAR 10 RECORDS*

- Junior Examination results Year 10: 1912–1973
- Lower Secondary Studies Years 9 and 10: 1987–1990
- Lower Secondary Studies Year 10 only: 1991–1993
- Achievement Certificate Years 8–10: from 1973–1986

* Please check with the school or the District Office for Year 10 results after 1993. The Authority ceased keeping Year 10 records after 1993, as this responsibility was transferred to schools.

YEAR 11 ONLY

(When students did not study Year 12)

- 1985 onwards

YEAR 12 RECORDS

- Leaving Examination results: 1912–1975
- Tertiary Entrance Examination results: 1976–1985
- Certificate of Secondary Education Grades: 1976–1985
- Certificate of Secondary Education Years 11 and 12: 1986–1996
- WACE Results: 1995 onwards; 2016 onwards can be downloaded via the Authority's student portal
- Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) Course Report: 2016 onwards reports can be downloaded via the Authority's student portal

OTHER RECORDS

Kindergarten to Year 12

- Enrolment data only: 2016 onwards

Year 12 – Western Australian Statement of Student Achievement (WASSA)

A statement of student achievement is issued to all Year 12 students at the completion of their secondary schooling. From 2016 onwards, the WASSA certificates can be downloaded via the Authority's student portal. The WASSA formally records, as relevant:

- achievement of WACE requirements
- achievement of literacy (reading and writing) standard
- achievement of numeracy standard
- achievement of exhibitions and awards
- school grades, school marks, and combined scores in ATAR* units
- school grades and school marks in General and Foundation units
- completed Preliminary units
- completed Vocational Education and Training (VET) industry specific units
- successfully completed VET qualifications and VET units of competency
- completed endorsed programs
- number of community service hours undertaken (if reported by the school).

*The ATAR is calculated by the Tertiary Institutions Service Centre (TISC) and is not included on the WASSA.

Externally Set Tasks (EST)

From 2016, all students enrolled in a General Year 12 course and/or a Foundation Year 12 course are required to complete the EST developed by the Authority for that course. The EST is compulsory and forms part of the school-based assessment and student results data is reported to the Authority.

Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (OLNA)

- Year 10 – 2014 onwards
- Year 11 – 2015 onwards
- Year 12 – 2016 onwards

NAPLAN (for Western Australian students)*

- Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 – 2013 onwards

*NAPLAN data is also available through the Department and schools.

Awards

- Year 12 (2016 onwards) – certificates can be downloaded via the Authority's student portal.