



Public Information Statement

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INFORMATION STATEMENT

1. Introduction

The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) was established on 1 March 2012 through proclamation of the *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Act 1997* (the Act). The Authority is an independent statutory agency responsible to the Western Australian Minister for Education and Training (the Minister). The Authority's 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.

The Authority superseded the Curriculum Council (Council) in 2012 due to expanded responsibilities allocated by legislation and by the review of the *Curriculum Council Regulations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 (1984–1997) 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*, which sets out the standards and learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that students are expected to acquire), the development and accreditation of courses of study for post-compulsory schooling, and the assessment and certification of student achievement for all Western Australian 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*. Policy and administrative documents relating to the work of the Council have been archived.

At present, the Authority is responsible for the Kindergarten to Year 12 curriculum, assessment, standards and reporting for all Western Australian schools. The Authority sets standards, records student achievement against the standards, and reports on those standards.

To meet its responsibilities, the Authority developed the *Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline (Outline)* that replaced the *Curriculum Framework* mandated for Kindergarten to Year 10 for all Western Australian schools.

The Authority issues the Western Australian Statement of Student Achievement (WASSA) to all Year 12 students at the completion of their senior secondary schooling. The WASSA provides a formal record of what students leaving at the end of Year 12 have achieved as a result of their school education (detailed in Attachment 1) in Western Australia. The Authority also issues the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) to students in Western Australia who meet its completion requirements. The WACE is recognised nationally in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), by universities and other tertiary institutions, industry and training providers.

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 publish an updated information summary every 12 months.

2. Legislation

Enabling legislation

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

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*
- *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*.

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. Under Part 3 of the *Act*, the Authority (Board) is responsible for its functions, records and databases. The owner of the Authority's records is the Board, as provided by the *Act*.

The work of the Authority is supported by a secretariat. 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.

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).

Functions of the Board

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.

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. Arrangements for performance of the Authority's functions

On 1 July 2017, the State Government implemented Machinery of Government (MOG) changes, which included the amalgamation of the Department of Education and the Department of Education Services, and the transfer of the Authority staff to the Department. 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 of Education's *Information Statement*.

The Authority remains an independent statutory body with separate and distinct decision-making responsibilities and accountabilities, but changes to note include:

- The transfer of the Authority's public sector staff led to the creation of the School Curriculum and Standards Division (SCS Division) in the Department. The SCS Division staff deliver the Authority's legislated functions.
- 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*.
- The Authority, as represented by the Board, conducts its functions, as required by the *Act*, independent of the Department.
- Under section 17 of the *Act*, the Board has delegated some of its powers to a specific officer of the Department, i.e. 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 CEO of the Department.
- 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 SCS Division staff are bound by the Department's policies and procedures, including the *Information Release Guidelines*.
- 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 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.

6. 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 which (by arrangement with the Authority) use the Western Australian curriculum
- parents, school administrators and bodies representative of the education sector/systems, including the Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia, Catholic Education of Western Australian, 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 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.

7. 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 for more details)
- data on the standards of student achievement (see Attachment 1 for more details)

The Authority's policy and administrative materials include:

- annual reports
- financial reports
- policy documents
- Board documents
- committee documents
- *School Curriculum and Standards Authority 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.

8. 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 Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) and ATAR course examinations are available free of charge on the Authority website. An 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 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 8.00 am and 4.30 pm on weekdays, or accessed online when available via the Authority's student portal (see Attachment 1 for more details).

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.

9. Disclosure of Data for Research Purposes

Applications for research data will be available from early 2022. Under the Authority's Data Governance Framework, all applications for research data will be assessed by the Board's Ethics Review Committee.

Data fields, where collected by the Authority, include:

- student name, address, date of birth, gender or unique reference number
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status
- main language spoken at home
- main language of parents spoken at home
- most recent educational program or course enrolments
- previous educational program or course enrolments
- educational achievement, notice of arrangement status
- student educational achievement
- student participation in vocational education and training, university or workplace arrangements.

Researchers and research institutions must use the Authority's online application system to apply for data. The online application process and indicative fees for data requests is available from the Authority website.

The Authority's Board makes the final decision on requests to release data for the purposes of research and it bases the decision on recommendations from the Board's Ethics Review Committee.

10. Freedom of Information Applications

Freedom of Information (FOI) applications will be processed in accordance with the *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 facsimile. 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 by facsimile, 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.

11. 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 (see Attachment 1 for more details).

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* as indicated above, 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. Parents or guardians are required to supply a statutory declaration as proof of relationship along with proof of identity to access student information.

12. 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.