Video Transcript – Year 11 and Year 12 2015-16 WACE Update

Hi. I’m Allan Blagaich, Chief Executive Officer of the School Curriculum and Standards Authority. I want to update you on the progress we’re making with implementing the arrangements for the Western Australian Certificate of Education, the WACE, from 2016.

So, where are we at?

In late 2014 we published the WACE Manual 2015-16 for Year 11s in 2015 and Year 11s and Year 12s in 2016. It is on our website along with the WACE Manual for Year 12s in 2015.

We’ve uploaded support materials for the Year 11 courses in the form of sample assessment and sample course outlines and sample assessment tasks.

These will assist teachers with their planning. They illustrate what needs to be provided to students at the start of the year (a unit/pair of units). This material is also what needs to be submitted for the syllabus delivery audit we are running for the very first time this year. I will explain more about that audit later.

The support materials are samples. They indicate approaches that can be taken. In particular, we expect they will assist recent graduates and teachers who are new to Western Australia.

## OLNA

We’ve been able to confirm that around two thirds of Year 10 students have demonstrated the minimum standard required of them required by the end of Year 12.

Foundation Courses that provide a focus on functional literacy and numeracy have been developed for those students requiring extra support and ongoing reassessment in Year 11 and possibly Year 12 to meet WACE eligibility.

I want to emphasise that the standard required is expected to be demonstrated by the **end** of Year 12. Students who have not yet demonstrated the standard in Year 10, through the OLNA, or by prequalifying through Year 9 NAPLAN should not be considered to have failed. They may simply require more time to develop their skills or some additional support. The OLNA helps us to identify who needs that additional support.

So, with the right support through Years 11 and 12, we expect that most of these students will achieve the standard by the time they finish school.

The support materials for the OLNA now include a writing guide and sample questions. These materials will help teachers, students and parents and can be found on our website.

The dates for the OLNA in 2015 have been set. These dates cannot be extended or changed. Alternative dates are not available for schools or individuals who make arrangements to undertake activities or travel that prevent completion of the OLNA during the assessment window.

I said last year that we would consult with deputy principals about the processes for conducting the OLNA. We convened a group of about fourteen deputies and asked them what worked well with the OLNA and where we could improve. We also requested written feedback from the sector/systems and analysed general feedback from schools.

In the main, the feedback focused on the administration of the assessment and the information provided to schools.

Taking the feedback from last year’s OLNA, we have collected most of the procedural information for schools in one easy-to-use handbook. This was made available on our website in early December and emailed to principals on the thirteenth of January.

Schools will find the new SIRS reports of student performance helpful when reporting to parents. Each report shows the categories of achievement and any components that a student needs to sit or resit.

We have also made our information more specific about disability adjustments.

There is also some advice about maximising your network in the OLNA handbook on the site.

I have remind you that it is the school’s responsibility to provide adequate access to the OLNA.

## The website

Most recently, we’ve updated our main website. You’ll note that where there are differences between Year 11 and 12 the screens are split. This will support people when they are identifying information that is relevant to their needs.

The WACE 2015-16 website will stay in place until the end of the year. The information on that website is for Year 11s in 2015 and can also be accessed through the Authority’s main website.

# What will we be doing in 2015?

The WACE examinations provide a moderation tool for ATAR courses so we are beginning with a focus on the General and Foundation courses.

In the past, moderating Stage 1 and Preliminary courses has been minimal. That is something that we need to change.

All students and teachers need to have confidence in the comparability of school marks and grades between schools.

### Syllabus delivery audit

While there is a lot of continuity between past practices and the new course structure I want to acknowledge that there is an element of ‘newness’ to all of this.

We are introducing the syllabus delivery audit I mentioned earlier. To complete the audit, we will be asking all schools delivering Year 11 General and Foundation courses to provide us with copies of the assessment and course outlines they have provided to their students. We will also be asking for copies of each school’s assessment policy.

These are documents that schools are required to provide to their students at the start of Term 1. To support schools with the WACE changes, we have halted consensus moderation for 2015 to allow for a focus on the syllabus delivery audit.

Where there are indications that additional help is needed, we will provide it.

### Document and grading reviews

Document and grading reviews will be held for all courses where there is evidence that they are necessary.

The evidence will come from Stage 3 results from 2014 where the school mark distribution and the school’s examination mark distribution were significantly different in 2014.

The syllabus delivery audit for General and Foundation courses may also indicate that follow-up is required for some schools.

### Externally Set Tasks

You will know by now that we are introducing externally set tasks – ESTs – as part of our moderation processes for Year 12 General and Foundation courses. The ATAR course examinations will continue to provide us with options for the statistical moderation of school marks.

We will be letting schools know in Term 3 this year about the Unit 3 syllabus content that will be the basis of the tasks. This will enable schools to ensure the identified content is taught prior to the administration of the EST.

## Vocational Education and Training

There is quite a bit happening with VET in 2015. I encourage you to look at our website for the details.

### Unique Student Identifier

The Australian Government commenced a scheme on the first of January under the *Student Identifiers Bill 2014*. The Unique Student Identifier, or USI, will apply to new and continuing students participating in nationally recognised VET. A student’s USI will stay with them for life.

A student’s USI is not the same as their School Curriculum and Standards Authority number. It is used for different purposes.

Western Australian students participating in nationally recognised VET will need both numbers.

# Pre-Year 11 Students

There have been some changes to arrangements for students accessing WACE courses and programs before Year 11. More detail about these changes is available in the WACE Manual.

Students in Years 8 and 9 will no longer be able to access WACE units. Students in Year 10 may seek permission from the Authority to access WACE units if they are completing accelerated programs.

Preliminary courses are available to Year 10 students who have been identified as having a learning difficulty, intellectual disability or a severely disrupted learning pathway.

VET units of competency through VET credit transfer are not available to students in Years 8 and 9 except with permission from the Authority. Students in Year 10 can enrol in VET units of competency through VET credit transfer and do not require the Authority’s permission.

Endorsed programs are no longer available to students in Years 8 and 9. Students in Year 10 can enrol in endorsed programs and do not require the Authority’s permission.

I’ll make a final point about this. Schools will begin reporting on Phase 1 for students in Pre-primary to Year 10 in Semester 1, 2015. Students in Years 8, 9 and 10 should be accessing the curriculum within the *Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline*. They should be assessed against the achievement standard at their year level.

## Syllabus Review and Course Advisory Committees

A cycle of syllabus review will be established that will run on a five-year cycle. Any changes to courses suggested through the Federal Government’s Australian Curriculum Review process will be considered as part of the Authority’s normal syllabus review process.

The first batch of courses will be reviewed in 2018-19. A review may result in revision of the course and revised courses will have a phased two-year implementation timeline.

Where possible, the current membership of the course advisory committees has been retained for 2015 as current members are best placed to provide advice in the first year of implementing the new courses.

# Stay in touch

That’s it for now, folks. I’d like to thank you, once again, for all of your support. As I’ve said before, the Authority could not do its work without the support and time teachers have given us.

2015 is going to be an exciting year. We look forward to the year ahead and working with you to implement these changes for our students.