



ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank)

An Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) is calculated using the school assessment and ATAR course examination results combined.

Student results from ATAR course examinations are used by the Tertiary Institutions Service Centre (TISC) to calculate a student's ATAR. The ATAR reports a student's rank position relative to all other students for a particular year. It ranges from 99.95 to zero and is derived from a student's Tertiary Entrance Aggregate (TEA). The TEA is calculated by adding the student's best four scaled scores, plus bonuses where applicable.

The ATAR is used to determine eligibility for university entrance. Students seeking to achieve an ATAR will need to complete a minimum of four Year 12 ATAR courses, excluding unacceptable combinations (see TISC website at www.tisc.edu.au for information about Undergraduate Admission Requirements for School Leavers).

ATAR course

An Authority-developed ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank) course is offered at two year levels, each of which has a specified syllabus. The Year 11 syllabus comprises Units 1 and 2, and the Year 12 syllabus comprises Units 3 and 4. Year 12 ATAR courses are examined by the Authority. These examinations are referred to as ATAR course examinations, and are conducted at the end of Year 12. ATAR courses are designed for students who are typically aiming to go to university. Students who do not sit the ATAR course examination will not have a course mark or grade recorded on their WASSA, nor will they receive an ATAR course report.

Note: for ATAR courses with practical components, students must complete both the written and practical examinations.

Australian Core Skills Framework

The Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) describes an individual's performance in the five core skills of learning, reading, writing, oral communication and numeracy. It provides a consistent national approach to identifying and developing the core skills in three contexts: personal and community; workplace and employment; and, education and training. For further information, see <https://www.education.gov.au/australian-core-skills-framework>.

Australian Qualifications Framework

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) is a single comprehensive national qualifications framework that provides nationally consistent recognition of outcomes of qualifications ranging from the VET Certificate I to doctoral degrees. It specifies the knowledge and skills necessary for Senior Secondary Certificates of Education, such as the WACE. For further information, see <http://www.aqf.edu.au>.



Certification

Certification is formal recognition of the meeting of a set of requirements, for example:

- formal recognition by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority that a student has met the requirements for the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE).
- formal recognition by a registered training organisation (RTO) that a student has achieved a qualification or units of competency in vocational education and training (VET).

Course

A course is a program of study in a particular subject offered at two year levels. It consists of a Year 11 syllabus, comprising Units 1 and 2, and a Year 12 syllabus, comprising Units 3 and 4.

Endorsed programs

Endorsed programs provide access to areas of learning not covered by WACE courses or vocational education and training (VET) programs. They are delivered in a variety of settings by schools, workplaces, universities and community organisations. These programs contribute to the WACE as unit equivalents.

Externally set task

An externally set task (EST) is conducted for each General and Foundation course in Year 12. The EST is compulsory for all students enrolled in Units 3 and 4. All ESTs are set by the Authority and the protocols are provided to schools. ESTs are administered under standard test conditions.

Foundation course

Foundation courses provide a focus on functional literacy and numeracy skills, practical work-related experience and the opportunity to build personal skills that are important for life and work. They are designed for students who have not been able to demonstrate the minimum standard for literacy and/or numeracy before Year 11 and are unlikely to do so before the end of Year 12 without significant levels of support. A Foundation course is offered at two year levels, each of which has its own syllabus. The Year 11 syllabus comprises Units 1 and 2, and the Year 12 syllabus comprises Units 3 and 4. Foundation courses are not examined by the Authority; however, they each have an externally set task (EST) in Year 12 which is set by the Authority.

General course

A General course is offered at two year levels, each with its own syllabus. The Year 11 syllabus comprises Units 1 and 2, and the Year 12 syllabus comprises Units 3 and 4. General courses are not examined by the Authority; however, they each have an externally set task (EST) in Year 12 which is set by the Authority. General courses are designed for students who are typically aiming to enter further vocationally based training or the workforce directly from school.



Grades

Grades are broad subdivisions of the continuum of student performance/achievement in a pair of units, or unit, of a course. In decreasing order of quality, these are: A, B, C, D and E.

List A and List B Course Requirements

To ensure an appropriate breadth of study in your senior secondary studies, you are required to select at least one Year 12 course unit from each of List A and List B subjects.

List A subjects are categorised as arts, languages and social sciences. List B subjects are categorised as mathematics, science and technology.

Moderation

Moderation is the adjustment of a scale of course marks or grades so that it conforms with another, different scale. Typically,

1. marks from locally set school assessments are moderated to conform with the state-wide set of marks derived from common, externally set ATAR course examinations sat by all students of the course from all schools in the state
2. grades set by local school interpretations of grade descriptions are moderated to conform with the state-wide set of grades through external review by course 'moderators' and/or consensus 'moderation' meetings of teachers from a number of schools.

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an assessment of literacy and numeracy undertaken annually by all Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 students throughout Australia. In Western Australia, students who achieve Band 8 or higher in the associated components of the Year 9 NAPLAN are deemed to have demonstrated the literacy and numeracy standard for the WACE.

Nationally Accredited Qualification

A recognised qualification is a course that is recognised and taught to the same standard all over Australia. Nationally recognised courses are VET Accredited by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). This means a nationally recognised qualification is the same, no matter where you earn it. This provides employers with the guarantee that the qualification listed on your resume is quality assured. A recognised qualification will be valuable (and recognised) anywhere within Australia.



Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment

The Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (OLNA) assesses skills described in Levels 1–4 of the Australian Core Skills Framework. The skills described are those regarded as essential for individuals to meet the demands of everyday life and work. Demonstrating the literacy and numeracy standard is one of the requirements for achieving a WACE.

The OLNA is sat by students in the first semester of Year 10. Students who do not demonstrate the standard at their first attempt of the OLNA have the opportunity to sit it again in September of Year 10, and thereafter on two occasions in Year 11, and two occasions in Year 12. They may also sit the OLNA subsequently in any year after compulsory schooling, if they have not yet met the standard.

Note: students who achieve Band 8 or higher in Year 9 NAPLAN Reading, Writing or Numeracy assessments will be pre-qualified for that component, and will not be required to sit the corresponding OLNA component. For example, if a student achieves Band 8 for Reading and Numeracy, but not for Writing, only sitting the OLNA Writing component will be required.

Recommended Course Pre-Requisite

A recommended prerequisite is a course that students are advised to take before progressing to another course.

Registered training organisation (RTO)

A registered training organisation (RTO) is an organisation that delivers, assesses, certifies and quality assures a nationally recognised VET qualification. An RTO may be a school, a private training provider, or a TAFE. All RTOs operate under the various elements of the national training system.

Scaled score

Scaling is a process designed and implemented by the Tertiary Institutions Service Centre (TISC). Scaling takes account of the relative difficulty of the ATAR course examinations and places all combined scores on the same scale. TISC calculates a scaled score for each student of a particular course. Scaled scores can then be aggregated to produce a Tertiary Entrance Aggregate (TEA), from which the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) of a student is calculated.

School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA)

The School Curriculum and Standards Authority is responsible for Kindergarten to Year 12 curriculum, assessment, standards and reporting for all Western Australian schools.



Standards

Summary description of the minimum expected achievement/performance for classification at particular subdivisions of the continuum of student performance, for example:

- a grade of C indicates a Satisfactory standard of achievement in a WACE course
- a grade of A indicates an Excellent standard of achievement in a WACE course
- the (general) achievement standard required for a WACE is at least 14 C grades (or equivalents) in Year 11 and Year 12 units, with a minimum of six C grades (or equivalents) in Year 12 units.

The Literacy and Numeracy standard required for a WACE is indicative of Level 3 of the Australian Core Skills Framework.

Subject

A subject is a discrete area of study within a particular learning area. A subject is delivered in the form of ATAR and General courses and, in some cases, Foundation and Preliminary courses. The different courses fulfil different purposes and emphasise different aspects of the subject.

Syllabus

A syllabus is the mandated content, including assessment types, achievement requirements and various associated materials for a course at a particular year level. The Year 11 syllabus comprises Units 1 and 2 of a course; the Year 12 syllabus comprises Units 3 and 4 of a course.

Tertiary Education

Education for people above school age, including college, university and vocational courses.

Unit

A unit is a component of content that can be feasibly taught in about half a 'school year' (approximately 50–60 hours duration including assessment and examinations) of senior secondary studies. Units in ATAR, General, Foundation and VET industry specific courses are designed to be studied and reported in pairs (that is, as a year-long program of study), although in Year 11 ATAR, General and Foundation courses, units may be studied and reported as single units. Units in Preliminary courses are studied and reported as single units.

Unit equivalents

VET qualifications and completed endorsed programs can be counted as a certain number of unit equivalents for WACE course units, thus reducing the number of WACE course units required for the WACE.



VET (vocational education and training)

Vocational education and training (VET) enables students to acquire workplace skills through nationally recognised training described within an industry developed training package or accredited course. A Certificate II (or higher) VET qualification in combination with ATAR, General or Foundation courses will be an option to satisfy the completion requirement in 2022.

VET industry specific course

A VET industry specific course contributes to the WACE as a course. It includes a fully, nationally recognised AQF qualification and mandatory industry related workplace learning. VET industry specific courses enable students to count their VET achievement as a WACE course. A Certificate II (or higher) VET qualification in combination with ATAR, General or Foundation courses will be an option to satisfy the completion requirement in 2022. Course units are paired in both Year 11 (Units 1 and 2) and Year 12 (Units 3 and 4). A student who withdraws from a VET industry specific course after only one semester will not receive any credit for VET industry specific course units.

VET qualifications

Formal certification that is awarded by an RTO in recognition of the successful completion of an educational program. In the vocational education and training (VET) sector, qualifications are awarded when a person has satisfied all requirements of the units of competency or modules that comprise an AQF qualification, as specified by a nationally endorsed training package or an accredited course.

Western Australian Certificate of Education

The Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) is awarded by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority to students in Western Australia on successful completion of their senior secondary education.

WACE requirements may change over time and students studying towards the achievement of the WACE after they leave school will be required to meet the WACE requirements current at the time of the completion of their studies.

Western Australian Statement of Student Achievement

A Western Australian Statement of Student Achievement (WASSA) is provided to all Year 12 students at the completion of their secondary schooling. The WASSA lists all courses and programs that a student has completed.

Workplace Learning

Workplace Learning (ADWPL) is an Authority-developed endorsed program that is managed by individual schools and is open to students in Years 10, 11 and 12. To complete this program, a student works in one or more paid or unpaid workplaces to develop a set of transferable workplace skills. The workplace element of VET qualifications may be recognised through the Authority-developed Workplace Learning program. See <http://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/vet/endorsed-programs>.