



CHINESE: FIRST LANGUAGE

ATAR course

**Year 12 syllabus – What’s changing: Rationale and Aims
For teaching in 2027**

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.

Background

As part of the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) Refreshment for reviewing the nomenclature of courses, the Authority has updated the rationale and aims of each syllabus.

The revised rationale and aims are aligned with the mapping of the general capabilities to provide clear connections between the rationale, aims and syllabus content. The rationale outlines what the subject is about and why it is important. It describes what students can expect to study in the course, along with the knowledge, skills and understandings they will develop throughout the course. It also explains how these can be applied in everyday life and references potential future pathways, outlining how students might connect what they learn in the course to further education, training and employment opportunities.

Important information

WACE Refreshment: Reviewing the nomenclature of courses

This document contains information that will be included in the syllabus effective from 1 January 2027.

Users of the syllabus are responsible for checking its currency.

Syllabuses are formally reviewed by the Authority on a cyclical basis, typically every five years.

Copyright

© School Curriculum and Standards Authority, 2025

This document – apart from any third-party copyright material contained in it – may be freely copied, or communicated on an intranet, for non-commercial purposes in educational institutions, provided that the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) is acknowledged as the copyright owner, and that the Authority's moral rights are not infringed.

Copying or communication for any other purpose can be done only within the terms of the *Copyright Act 1968* or with prior written permission of the Authority. Copying or communication of any third-party copyright material can be done only within the terms of the *Copyright Act 1968* or with permission of the copyright owners.

Any content in this document that has been derived from the Australian Curriculum may be used under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence](#).

Rationale

The Chinese: First Language ATAR course connects students with a language spoken by nearly a quarter of the world's population. Communities of Chinese speakers exist not only across mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, but also in almost every country, including well-established communities in South-East Asia, North America, and Australia. It is an important language in international commerce, economics and trade, with particular influence in manufacturing, technology, global supply chains and financial services, making Chinese an important language for young Australians to learn during their schooling as Australia progresses towards a future of increased trade and engagement with Asia.

The course provides students with a strong cultural and linguistic background in Chinese. It further enhances students' bilingual and bicultural capabilities by encouraging them to use their language skills to analyse spoken, written and visual texts on topics related to adapting to different cultures and sustainability issues from personal, community and global perspectives. Students apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired through text analysis to produce spoken and written texts in Chinese.

Students further develop and extend their linguistic knowledge, intercultural literacy and communication skills, enabling them to strengthen their cross-cultural awareness, and refine their communication and critical thinking skills. They learn to examine ways of overcoming language barriers, reflect on language changes occurring across geographical locations and through time and analyse texts to determine how language use reflects a text producer's identity, biases and social status. The critical literacy skills acquired through studying this course allow students to evaluate communication strategies that text producers use to influence audiences and to shape attitudes, fostering deeper understanding and more effective communication across cultures.

Through the course, students engage with the linguistic and cultural diversity of our interconnected world, reflecting on their role in society and how they interact with others across various social contexts. Language learning is a powerful tool for personal growth and broadens students' worldviews. Students stay connected through daily interactions with their family, friends and Chinese-speaking communities, while deepening their mastery of the language by engaging with Chinese-language media, literature, and cultural events. This engagement with diverse texts not only makes students aware of the fast-changing cultural and social trends but also strengthens their ability to foster more meaningful cross-cultural communication.

Australia has strong personal, cultural, political and trade connections with Chinese-speaking countries and students who are highly proficient in Chinese have enhanced vocational opportunities in a wide range of sectors. Studying Chinese opens pathways for further academic study in fields like languages, international studies, and cross-cultural communication, and careers in areas such as education, business, trade, commerce, diplomacy, journalism, tourism, hospitality, government and law. Ultimately, the course offers students valuable linguistic and intercultural skills, fosters personal growth and empathy, and enhances future academic and career prospects.

Aims

The Chinese: First Language ATAR course builds on students' Chinese language proficiency and knowledge about the cultures of Chinese-speaking communities. It enables students to:

- exchange information, opinions and ideas on topics relevant to the course
- analyse a range of Chinese texts to explain and evaluate how ideas and language shape meaning and enhance communication
- apply the skills they have acquired through text analysis to produce texts in Chinese to convey information and ideas, and to mediate meaning and identity
- strengthen their intercultural communication skills in both the Chinese and English languages
- improve their understanding of the systems of the Chinese language, and of language variation, language change and the role of language and culture.