



VISUAL ARTS

ATAR course

Year 12 syllabus – What’s changing: General capabilities

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 to investigate the assessment and reporting of the general capabilities on the Western Australian Statement of Student Achievement (WASSA), the Authority has updated the statements about the general capabilities in each syllabus.

The Authority has mapped the general capabilities through the unit content and assessment types for each of the WACE courses. Students will have the opportunity to develop the general capabilities identified in the course through the teaching, learning and assessment programs. These general capabilities will be reflected on the WASSA.

Important information

WACE Refreshment: Investigating the assessment and reporting of the general capabilities on the Western Australian Statement of Student Achievement (WASSA)

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.

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Representation of the general capabilities

The general capabilities encompass the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that will support students to live and work successfully now and into the future. Teachers should find opportunities to incorporate the following capabilities into the teaching and learning program for the Visual Arts ATAR course. The general capabilities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

Critical and creative thinking

The development of creative and critical thinking is integral to the course. In creating art, students draw on their curiosity, imagination and thinking skills to generate, refine and express ideas. They consider possibilities and processes and make choices, developing creative thinking strategies transferable to any problem-solving context. Students analyse visual language and compositional choices, evaluate artistic effectiveness and interpret meaning and purpose when interpreting artwork.

Digital literacy

Students develop digital literacy by incorporating digital tools and software throughout the creative process, from idea generation, research and design to production and presentation of artwork. This facilitates innovative approaches to traditional art forms and enables new modes of artistic expression, allowing students to represent their ideas and artwork. Students consider ethical and legal issues in digital creation, and select relevant digital tools to expand creative possibilities and enhance communication with audiences.

Ethical understanding

Students develop and apply ethical understanding when they encounter or create artwork that requires ethical consideration. This includes issues such as cultural representation, environmental responsibility, artistic freedom and social impact. Students actively engage in ethical decision-making when reflecting on their own and others' artwork.

Intercultural understanding

Students develop intercultural understanding in the course as they explore new ideas, media and practices from diverse local, national, regional and global cultural contexts. Students are encouraged to demonstrate open-mindedness to perspectives and visual languages that differ from their own and to appreciate the diversity of cultures and contexts of both artists and audiences.

Literacy

Students develop literacy through the study of visual arts by working in multiple meaning-making modes. When students document their creative process, analyse artworks or write artist statements, they integrate visual and written literacy. They develop visual literacy by interpreting symbols and narratives in artworks, strengthening their ability to decode meaning across contexts.

Personal and social capability

The course promotes self-discipline, initiative, confidence, empathy and adaptability as students work individually and collaboratively. Students develop and apply personal capabilities such as self-discipline and goal-setting.

Addressing the other general capabilities

Although the following general capabilities have not been identified as a focus in the Visual Arts ATAR Year 12 syllabus, teachers may find opportunities to incorporate these capabilities into the teaching and learning program.

- Numeracy

Such opportunities may occur through the application of different contexts, pedagogical practices and/or assessment strategies that relate to the syllabus as part of the teaching and learning program.

Summary representation of the general capabilities in the Visual Arts ATAR course

A representation of the general capabilities for the two years is summarised in the table below.

Year	Course	Course type	General capabilities						
			CCT	DL	EU	IU	L	N	PSC
Year 11	Visual Arts (AEVAR)	ATAR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Year 12	Visual Arts (ATVAR)	ATAR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

Key

CCT: Critical and creative thinking, DL: Digital literacy, EU: Ethical understanding, IU: Intercultural understanding, L: Literacy, N: Numeracy, PSC: Personal and social capability