



Government of **Western Australia**
School Curriculum and Standards Authority

TAMIL: BACKGROUND LANGUAGE

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.

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](#).

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 Tamil: Background Language ATAR course. The general capabilities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

Critical and creative thinking

Students enhance their critical and creative thinking skills through their study of the Tamil language and culture. Content in the course is presented through three perspectives – Personal, Community and Global – encouraging students to compare and evaluate information and ideas from diverse perspectives. By analysing and interpreting spoken and written texts, students strengthen their ability to identify and process, select and evaluate information and engage in logical and reflective thinking. By extending and refining their skills, knowledge and understanding of the Tamil language, they learn to assess how language conveys meaning and how context, purpose, and audience influence communication.

Through the course, students learn and practise language learning and communication strategies. These strategies support and enhance the development of literacy skills and enable further development of cognitive skills through thinking critically and making connections. The process of transferring linguistic and cultural knowledge and applying it to new contexts, fosters students' metacognition, problem-solving abilities and analytical skills.

Intercultural understanding

Intercultural understanding is central to the course as students learn to value their own cultures, languages and beliefs, and those of others. In learning Tamil, development of intercultural understanding is a central aim, as it is integral to communicating in the context of diversity, the development of global citizenship and lifelong learning. Students bring to their learning various preconceptions, assumptions and orientations shaped by their existing language/s and culture/s that can be challenged by the new language experience. Learning to move between two languages and cultures is integral to language learning and is the key to the development of students' intercultural capability.

Learning Tamil is an enriching and cumulative process that broadens students' communicative repertoire, providing additional resources for interpreting and making meaning. Through the perspectives of Personal, Community, and Global, they explore topics such as making a contribution to society, investigate culture and the arts and examine how current global issues impact the individual and society. Students learn that interactions between different people in different languages also involve interactions between the different kinds of knowledge, understanding and values that are articulated through language and culture. Successful intercultural communication is not only determined by what they do or say, but also by what members of the other language and culture understand from what they do or say.

Intercultural understanding is one of the five content areas of this course.

Literacy

Students enhance literacy capacity as they use Tamil to listen to, read, view and respond to a range of texts, participate in spoken interaction, and write texts for different purposes and contexts in Tamil. They further expand their skills, knowledge and understanding of the Tamil language and apply their knowledge of linguistic resources to exchange information, ideas and opinions in Tamil.

For language learners, literacy involves skills and knowledge that need guidance, time and support to develop. These skills include developing an ability to decode and encode from sound to written systems; mastering grammatical, orthographic and textual conventions; analysing a range of texts in Tamil to comprehend and interpret meaning; and producing texts in Tamil to convey information and express ideas, opinions and experiences. For learners of Tamil, literacy development enhances and extends their knowledge and understanding of English literacy, which in turn supports their learning in Tamil.

Addressing the other general capabilities

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

- Digital literacy
- Ethical understanding
- Numeracy
- Personal and social capability

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 Tamil: Background Language 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	Tamil: Background Language (AETBL)	ATAR	✓			✓	✓		
Year 12	Tamil: Background Language (ATTBL)	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