



CHINESE: SECOND LANGUAGE

ATAR course

**Year 11 syllabus – What’s changing: Rationale and Aims
For teaching in 2026**

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 2026.

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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Rationale

The Chinese: Second 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 rich and challenging experience of the linguistic and cultural diversity of Chinese-speaking communities. Through Chinese, students explore their personal world and the perspectives of others, and the effect of change and current issues in the global community. Within these contexts, students explore the lives of teenagers and aspects of travelling.

Students build on their skills, knowledge and linguistic resources in Chinese to communicate in a range of situations. They gain a broader insight into the language and culture, fostering a stronger sense of intercultural awareness and empathy. The course also enhances students' literacy skills and awareness of their own language. By comparing information and ideas from a range of Chinese texts and cultural practices, students strengthen their critical thinking skills and learn to approach issues from diverse perspectives.

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. Australia's cultural and linguistic diversity provides many opportunities to hear and use Chinese in real-life situations as well as through Chinese media, and to make actual and virtual connections with Chinese-speaking communities throughout the world.

Australia has strong personal, cultural, political and trade connections with Chinese-speaking countries and a proficiency in Chinese provides students with 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, 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: Second Language ATAR course builds on students' skills and understanding of Chinese and knowledge about the cultures of Chinese-speaking communities. It enables students to:

- interact with others to exchange information, ideas, opinions and experiences in Chinese
- analyse a range of texts in Chinese to comprehend and interpret meaning
- apply the skills they have acquired to produce texts in Chinese to convey information and express ideas and opinions and experiences for specific audiences, purposes and contexts
- strengthen their intercultural communication skills in both the Chinese and English languages
- demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of language as a system
- reflect on the relationship between language and culture.