



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

ABORIGINAL AND INTERCULTURAL STUDIES

ATAR course

Year 12 syllabus

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.

Important information

This syllabus is effective from 1 January 2026.

Users of this syllabus are responsible for checking its currency.

Syllabuses are formally reviewed by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) on a cyclical basis, typically every five years.

Copyright

© School Curriculum and Standards Authority, 2024

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](#).

Content

Rationale	1
Aims	2
Organisation	2
Structure of the syllabus	2
Organisation of content.....	3
Representation of the general capabilities	3
Representation of the cross-curriculum priorities	4
Principles and protocols for teaching and learning	5
Cultural safety and responsiveness	5
Historic terminology.....	5
Teaching and learning program.....	6
Unit 3	7
Unit description.....	7
Unit content	7
Unit 4	11
Unit description.....	11
Unit content	11
Assessment	14
School-based assessment.....	14
Assessment table – Year 12.....	16
Reporting.....	17
ATAR course examination	18
Examination design brief – Year 12	18
Appendix 1 – Grade descriptions Year 12	19
Acknowledgements	21

Rationale

Australian First Nations Peoples' histories and cultures are fundamental to the development of Australian identity and the formation of Australian society. The recognition of Australia's First Nations Peoples as the oldest living continuous cultures in the world provides a logical starting point for this course. Students explore and investigate the concept of culture, the diversity of cultural expressions and how these cultural expressions continue, maintain, share and revitalise First Nations Peoples' cultural knowledge, and enrich the identity of all Australians.

Students learn about the diversity of First Nations Peoples. They explore a wide range of political, social, historical, legal, economic and environmental issues from an intercultural perspective. They analyse First Nations Peoples' experiences in Australian society, using a range of approaches. These include comparative studies, investigating the experiences of First Nations Peoples' communities within Australia and elsewhere in the world. The importance of ethical considerations in the investigation of cultural and social issues is emphasised.

The Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course provides opportunities for students from all cultures to explore and involve themselves in active reconciliation. This course affirms the cultural experience and identity of Australian First Nations students. All students have opportunities to learn from Australian First Nations Peoples and/or through sources of First Nations Peoples' voices and perspectives.

Understanding and valuing cultural diversity are key skills both for citizenship in contemporary multicultural Australia and for participation in an increasingly global community. The Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course is intended to equip students with the knowledge, skills and values to be active citizens at the local, national and global levels. These skills are also highly valued in today's workplaces. The ability to work effectively in a culturally diverse environment is important in a wide range of vocational contexts.

Aims

The Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course enables students to:

- develop and further build knowledge and understanding of Australian First Nations Peoples as being the oldest living continuous cultures in the world
- develop and further build an awareness of the ways First Nations Peoples' identities are expressed through unique ways of being, knowing and doing
- develop and further build knowledge and understanding that there are different and changing perspectives of history and that these inform and influence people's actions
- develop and further build knowledge and understanding that members of different cultures have different world views as a result of their beliefs, values, practices and experiences
- acknowledge and celebrate the diversity and richness of Australian First Nations Peoples' histories and cultures
- develop critical thinking skills, including ethical research skills
- develop empathy and respect for the ways people think, feel and act
- become active and informed advocates for a just and inclusive world
- engage in reconciliation, respect and recognition of the world's oldest continuous living cultures.

Organisation

This course is organised into a Year 11 syllabus and a Year 12 syllabus. The cognitive complexity of the syllabus content increases from Year 11 to Year 12.

Structure of the syllabus

The Year 12 syllabus is divided into two units which are delivered as a pair. The notional time for the pair of units is 110 class contact hours.

Unit 3

This unit enables students to explore the interconnection First Nations Peoples have with Country and the ongoing impact of government policies on First Nations Peoples' access to and ownership of Country. Students investigate the repatriation and care of the cultural heritage of First Nations Peoples and the place of truth-telling and repatriation in the reconciliation process.

Unit 4

This unit enables students to explore truth-telling and the journey of reconciliation both in Australia and globally. Students examine the policies, laws, history interpretations and actions aimed at recognising, acknowledging and empowering First Nations Peoples both in Australia and globally. Students investigate the ongoing impact of the *Aborigines Act 1905* (WA), and the differing views, perspectives, actions and challenges to the reconciliation process in Australia and at a global level.

Each unit includes:

- a unit description – a short description of the focus of the unit
- unit content – the content to be taught and learned.

Organisation of content

The content in each unit is divided into an overview and two depth studies. The content descriptions associated with the overview are designed to be taught at a broad level and in a short timeframe. The content descriptions associated with the depth study are designed to be taught in a more focused and detailed way and, therefore, take more time to teach.

The unit content that is listed after 'e.g.' is provided as suggested examples to guide teachers on relevant topics, which could be used to teach the content descriptions; teachers are not restricted to just the listed examples. Unit content that is referred to in a content description after 'including' is assessable content.

Representation of the general capabilities

The general capabilities encompass the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that will assist students to live and work successfully in the twenty-first century. Teachers may find opportunities to incorporate the capabilities into the teaching and learning program for the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course. The general capabilities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

Literacy

Literacy presents those aspects of the Language and Literacy strands of the English curriculum that should also be applied in all other learning areas. While much of the explicit teaching of literacy occurs in the English learning area, it is strengthened, made specific and extended in other learning areas, such as Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies, as students engage in a range of learning activities with significant literacy demands. These literacy-rich situations are a part of learning in all curriculum areas. Paying attention to the literacy demands of the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course ensures that students' literacy development is strengthened so that it supports subject-based learning.

Numeracy

Numeracy is useful in the inquiry process, which requires students to recognise patterns and relationships. Students have opportunities to support their views with data, some of which is numerical in nature. They develop numeracy capability when they analyse, interpret and draw conclusions from statistical information; for example, in relation to change over time.

Information and communication technology capability

Information and communication technology (ICT) capability is important in the inquiry process, particularly in relation to investigation, analysis and communication. Students use digital tools and strategies to locate, access, process and analyse information. They use ICT skills and understandings to investigate and identify different perspectives and sources of evidence and to communicate information. Students have opportunities to scrutinise websites and the perspectives they convey, including how and why such sites are constructed, the audiences they serve and their goals. They develop an understanding of the issues involved in the use of ICT when practising ethical scholarship as part of the inquiry process.

Critical and creative thinking

Critical and creative thinking is integral to the inquiry process. There are opportunities for students to delve deeply and broadly into the implications of any missing or questionable information in their investigation of issues. The demands of investigation include the ability to pose questions, interrogate, select and cross-reference sources, and develop interpretations based on an assessment of the evidence and reasoning. Students identify possible weaknesses in their own positions, and analyse, evaluate and synthesise alternative perspectives.

Personal and social capability

Personal and social capability skills are developed and practised in the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course by students enhancing their communication skills and participating in group work. Students have opportunities to work both collaboratively in teams and also independently as part of their learning and research in the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course. Through the study of individuals and groups, students develop their ability to appreciate the perspectives and experiences of others. Students develop increasing social awareness through the study of relationships between individuals and diverse social groups in the modern world.

Ethical understanding

Ethical understanding provides opportunities for students to explore and understand the diverse perspectives and circumstances that shaped the actions and possible motivations of people in the past compared with those of today. Students have opportunities both independently and collaboratively to explore the values, beliefs and principles that were the basis for the judgements and actions of people in the past, and of those of today.

Intercultural understanding

Intercultural understanding is a vital part of learning in the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course. Students explore the different beliefs and values of a range of cultural groups and develop an appreciation of the diversity in the modern world. They have opportunities to develop an understanding of the nature, causes and consequences of conflict, dispossession and interdependence. Students develop an understanding of different contemporary perspectives, the historical contexts for those perspectives, their influence on the relationships between different groups within society, and how they contribute to individual and group actions in the contemporary world.

Representation of the cross-curriculum priorities

The cross-curriculum priorities address contemporary issues which students face in a globalised world. Teachers may find opportunities to incorporate the priorities into the teaching and learning program for the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course. The cross-curriculum priorities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures priority is integral to the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course. The course celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories as part of the shared history belonging to all Australians.

This course provides the opportunity to examine historical perspectives from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander viewpoint through investigating key policies and political movements over the last two centuries. Students have the opportunity to develop an awareness of the significant roles of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Australian society.

Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia

Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia reinforces understanding of the diversity of cultures and peoples living in Australia, fosters social inclusion and cohesion, and allows consideration of a variety of perspectives.

Sustainability

Sustainability addresses the ongoing capacity of Earth to maintain all life. The Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course examines the beliefs, values and traditions that have influenced the complex interrelations between people and their environment (Country/Land/Water). These beliefs, values and traditions provide the basis for exploring long-term and short-term human impacts or consequences on the natural environment in a range of cultural contexts. This in turn forms the basis for developing and articulating values pertaining to ecological sustainability.

Principles and protocols for teaching and learning

The following principles and protocols should be used in the development and delivery of this course.

Cultural safety and responsiveness

- Recognise and engage with local community members, Elders and/or First Nations Peoples educators.
- Use credible resources produced by or developed in consultation with First Nations Peoples, which provide an active First Nations Peoples voice and a range of perspectives.
- Respect and acknowledge that ownership and teaching of First Nations Peoples histories and cultures (e.g. traditional practices, spiritual and sacred knowledge) remains with First Nations families and communities.
- Build on the knowledge, skills and prior experiences that Australian First Nations students bring with them to the classroom to ensure learning is relevant, connected and appropriate to achieve education success.
- Recognise and acknowledge that Australian First Nations Peoples form significant, diverse and resilient living communities within contemporary society.
- Create welcoming and supportive learning environments that respect the cultures, languages, experiences and world views of all students.
- Have the confidence and capability to pursue teaching and learning about, and with, Australian First Nations Peoples.

Historic terminology

- Acknowledge that the syllabus and support materials include reference to some historical documents, policies and texts, which may include language that is now considered outdated or inappropriate. These terms reflect the norms and attitudes of the time in which they were written and do not represent the values we uphold today – values that emphasise respect,

inclusion and understanding. For example, terms like 'Aborigines' or 'half-caste' are considered extremely offensive when referring to Australian First Nations Peoples.

- In the classroom, teachers should approach these materials with care and context, the aim being to help students critically engage with history, understand how language evolves and recognise the importance of creating inclusive communities. When encountering such terms, teachers should encourage open discussion, guided by empathy and a commitment to learning from the past.
- Using respectful and inclusive language and terminology is an essential part of reconciliation and strengthening relationships between First Nations Peoples and the wider community. Refer to <https://www.narragunnawali.org.au/about/terminology-guide> for guidance on respectful terminology.

Teaching and learning program

- The teaching and learning program of the course, where appropriate, should be contextualised for the community in which the course is being delivered.
- While the course uses the terms 'First Nations Australians' and 'Australian First Nations Peoples,' it is important to use the language and terms preferred in a particular area or location.
- In this course, the term Australian First Nations Peoples includes both Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. The term First Nations Peoples is inclusive of both Australian First Nations Peoples and First Nations Peoples from countries other than Australia. The term Indigenous is used only when in direct relation to a policy or in reference to a specific text which uses the term Indigenous in the title of the policy and/or document.
- Include where possible, and within the bounds of the syllabus, case studies, examples and issues that align with the locality of the school delivering the course.
- Ensure that learning is built on and includes local, regional and national cultural knowledge and experience of Australian First Nations Peoples in partnership with local communities.
- Use other courses students are undertaking (e.g. EALD, VET courses such as Coastal and Land Management, Indigenous Rangers programs etc.) for cross-curricular learning opportunities, encouraging and supporting students to connect cultural, societal and historical knowledge.

When selecting resources, teachers need to:

- consult with local community members and/or First Nations Peoples educators, if possible, about the terminology, resources and texts that can or cannot be used, and whether they may be accessed by some or all students
- use respectful and inclusive language and terminology, such as those included in *A guide to using respectful and inclusive language and terminology* <https://www.narragunnawali.org.au/about/terminology-guide>
- analyse the resources using a framework of questions, such as those listed in *Subject Guides* <https://www.narragunnawali.org.au/about/subject-guides>.

Unit 3

Unit description

The focus for this unit is the connection First Nations Peoples have with Country. Students will study the important role that Country and the environment play in the lives, cultures and identities of First Nations Peoples. This unit explores the ongoing impact of government policies on First Nations Peoples access to and ownership of Country. With this focus students examine the repatriation and care of the cultural heritage of First Nations Peoples and the place of repatriation in the reconciliation process.

Unit content

This unit includes the knowledge, understandings and skills described below. This is the examinable content.

Overview of connection to and caring for Country

- define the following key terms and concepts as they relate to, and by privileging, First Nations Peoples' voices and perspectives
 - Country
 - Traditional Owners
 - Custodianship of Country
 - Native Title
 - Indigenous Protected Area
 - repatriation
 - provenance
- Australian First Nations Peoples' reciprocal relationship with Country, including
 - healing and caring for Country
 - maintenance of cultural identity and cultural heritage
 - health and wellbeing
 - economic benefits
- differing historic and contemporary perspectives about the doctrine of *terra nullius*
- the possible influences of imperialistic worldviews of the people who claimed Australia as *terra nullius*
- the consequences of the doctrine of *terra nullius* for the legal status and land rights of Australian First Nations Peoples
- the *Native Title Act 1993*, including what Native Title may include and the two different forms of Native Title: non-exclusive possession and exclusive possession
- the influence of **one** of the following group of actions/events on the development and recognition of land rights for Australian First Nations Peoples
 - Vincent Lingiari (a member of the Gurindji people), the Wave Hill walk-off (1966), the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*, the handing back ceremony of Wave Hill station to the Gurindji people in the presence of Vincent Lingiari and Prime Minister Gough Whitlam (1975)

- the legal claim by Eddie Koiki Mabo and the Meriam people for ownership of their traditional lands on the island of Mer in the Torres Strait (initiated 1982) and the High Court decision in *Mabo v Queensland (No. 2)* that recognised Native Title in Australia (1992)

Depth Study One

Through community experiences and/or secondary sources, and by privileging First Nations Peoples' voices and perspectives, students investigate Australian First Nations Peoples' continuous practices in caring for Country.

Students investigate:

- Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA), including
 - the background to the development of IPAs, including the role of the Australian government and the Traditional Owners
 - the extent and location of IPAs in Australia
 - what happens on an IPA
 - the benefits of IPAs for the environment, the Traditional Owners and for all Australians
 - conflicting perspectives about **one** threat to Indigenous protected areas (e.g. mining, tourism in National Parks, pollution, climate change, introduced species, use of waterways, use of coastal environments)
- **two** Aboriginal Ranger programs, including
 - the location, background and services provided by the Aboriginal Ranger program
 - two caring for Country activities undertaken by the Aboriginal Ranger program
 - the outcomes of the Aboriginal Ranger program including the
 - social and economic benefits including, employment, education and training, health and mental wellbeing, contribution to gender equality
 - cultural benefits
 - environmental benefits
- **one** successful partnership between First Nations Peoples and non-First Nations Peoples in caring for Country.

Depth Study Two

Through community experiences and/or secondary sources, and by privileging First Nations Peoples' voices and perspectives, students investigate the repatriation of ancestral remains and sacred objects back to Country of First Nations Peoples both in Australia and globally.

Students investigate:

- the reasons why First Nations Peoples' ancestral remains and sacred objects were removed from their communities both in Australia and globally
- the Australian Government Policy on Indigenous Repatriation including the
 - objectives of the policy
 - implementation of the Indigenous Repatriation Policy
 - protocols
- types of research to confirm the heritage of the ancestral remains and sacred objects, including
 - non-invasive research methods, including provenance, archival, consultation, forensic anthropology/osteology, ultraviolet (UV) light
 - invasive testing, including DNA analysis, Isotopic analysis

- **two** recent repatriation activities, **one** in Western Australia and **one** in another country, including the process, the challenges and the outcome of returning ancestral remains and sacred objects to Country for the First Nations Peoples; for example
 - Waggajarli Burugun: We are coming home
 - return of the Yawuru material from the Manchester Museum
 - Karanga Aotearoa program in New Zealand
 - the *Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act* (NAGPRA)
- the place of cultural repatriation in the reconciliation process.

Intercultural Skills

Research

- develop and modify a range of focus questions to investigate a specific topic/issue
- plan an inquiry with clearly defined aims, using appropriate methodologies
- collect, record and compare information and/or data from relevant culturally responsive resources
- identify and practise ethical scholarship when conducting research, including respecting variation between cultural groups of processes and protocols for collecting information

Analysis and use of sources

- identify the origin, purpose and context of a variety of sources
- evaluate the reliability, bias and usefulness of different sources
- analyse and account for differences in perspectives and interpretations of the past, presented in a variety of sources
- identify and analyse relationships, and use evidence from different sources to support a point of view

Evaluating and communicating

- evaluate information and/or data to draw evidence-based conclusions and explanations taking into account ambiguities and different perspectives
- communicate findings using formats appropriate to purpose and audience
- use respectful and inclusive language and terminology
- identify and practise ethical scholarship when communicating research, including
 - respecting variation between cultural groups of processes and protocols for acknowledging and communicating information
 - adopting protocols and conventions to communicate in culturally appropriate ways
 - applying appropriate referencing techniques accurately and consistently

Reflection

- acknowledge differences in personal perspectives, interpretations and world views when developing a response
- reflect on own learning to review original understandings and why all findings are tentative

Resources

A Repatriation Handbook <https://www.nma.gov.au/about/publications/repatriation-handbook>

Australian Government Policy on Indigenous Repatriation

<https://www.arts.gov.au/publications/australian-government-policy-indigenous-repatriation>

Indigenous Repatriation

<https://www.arts.gov.au/what-we-do/cultural-heritage/indigenous-repatriation>

Truth-telling and how cultural repatriation is fundamental to the reconciliation process

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-05-27/indigenous-cultural-repatriation-fundamental-to-reconciliation/13358668>

Indigenous Protected Areas https://www.countryneedspeople.org.au/what_are_ipas

Unit 4

Unit description

The focus for this unit is truth-telling and the journey of reconciliation both in Australia and globally. Students examine the policies, laws, history interpretations and actions aimed at recognising, acknowledging and empowering First Nations Peoples both in Australia and globally. Within this broad area students investigate the Stolen Generations and the ongoing impact of the *Aborigines Act 1905 (WA)*, and the differing views, perspectives, actions and challenges to the reconciliation process in Australia and at a global level.

Unit content

This unit includes the knowledge, understandings and skills described below. This is the examinable content.

Overview of truth-telling and reconciliation

- define the following key terms and concepts as they relate to, and by privileging, First Nations Peoples' voice and perspectives
 - truth-telling
 - Stolen Generations
 - genocide
 - reconciliation
- the concept of truth-telling as it relates to Australian First Nations Peoples, including
 - why truth-telling is important
 - the impact of truth-telling for all Australians
- processes of truth-telling and listening, including yarning
- the background, actions and outcome in relation to **one** of the following examples of truth-telling in Western Australia:
 - Western Australian stolen wages class actions
 - The Wadjemup Project
- **one** example of truth-telling occurring with First Nations Peoples in another country (e.g. Canada)
- the role of truth-telling in relation to the Uluru Statement from the Heart and reconciliation in Australia
- the role of National Indigenous Television (NITV) in representing Australian First Nations Peoples' perspectives and truth-telling

Depth Study One

Through community experiences and/or secondary sources, and by privileging First Nations Peoples' voices and perspectives, students investigate the Stolen Generations and the ongoing impact of the *Aborigines Act 1905 (WA)*.

Students investigate:

- the *Aborigines Act 1905 (WA)*, including
 - the background
 - the purpose

- the powers of the Chief Protector
- the consequences of the *Aborigines Act 1905 (WA)* for Western Australian First Nations Peoples
- the benefit of the *Aborigines Act 1905 (WA)* for the settler colonisers
- the concept of intergenerational trauma as it relates to the Stolen Generations
- the *Bringing Them Home Report (1997)*, including
 - background of the report
 - overview of the findings, including genocide
 - key recommendations of the report
 - outcomes of the report, including the National Apology to the Stolen Generations (2008)
- the continuing effects of the forced removal of children for the members and families of the Stolen Generations, including the demographics (age, socioeconomic, health, education, location) of the Stolen Generations and their descendants in Australia
- Closing the Gap 2019–2029, including
 - the involvement and benefit of Australian First Nations Peoples in the design of the Closing the Gap Refresh
 - the outcome and target of the four priority reform areas for joint national action.

Depth Study Two

Through community experiences and/or secondary sources, and by privileging First Nations Peoples' voices and perspectives, students investigate the differing views, perspectives, actions and challenges to the reconciliation process in Australia and at a global level, including:

- the intent and development of reconciliation in Australia
- differing views and perspectives on reconciliation in Australia
- the five dimensions of reconciliation in Australia – race relations, equality and equity, institutional integrity, historical acceptance, and unity
- evaluate the contemporary state of reconciliation in Australia (e.g. State of Reconciliation in Australia annual report, the *Australian Reconciliation Barometer*)
- the challenges to reconciliation in both Australia and **one** other country
- **one** example of an action taken by groups and/or organisations to progress reconciliation in **one** other country (e.g. Canada).

Intercultural Skills

Research

- develop and modify a range of focus questions to investigate a specific topic/issue
- plan an inquiry with clearly defined aims, using appropriate methodologies
- collect, record and compare information and/or data from relevant culturally responsive resources
- identify and practise ethical scholarship when conducting research, including respecting variation between cultural groups of processes and protocols for collecting information

Analysis and use of sources

- identify the origin, purpose and context of a variety of sources
- evaluate the reliability, bias and usefulness of different sources
- analyse and account for differences in perspectives and interpretations of the past, presented in a variety of sources
- identify and analyse relationships, and use evidence from different sources to support a point of view

Evaluating and communicating

- evaluate information and/or data to draw evidence-based conclusions and explanations, taking into account ambiguities and different perspectives
- communicating findings using formats appropriate to purpose and audience
- use respectful and inclusive language and terminology
- identify and practise ethical scholarship when communicating research, including
 - respecting variation between cultural groups of processes and protocols for acknowledging and communicating information
 - adopting protocols and conventions to communicate in culturally appropriate ways
 - applying appropriate referencing techniques accurately and consistently

Reflection

- acknowledge differences in personal perspectives, interpretations and world views when developing a response
- reflect on own learning to review original understandings and why all findings are tentative

Resources

Voice, Treaty, Truth? The role of truth-telling in Australian, state and territory governments' reconciliation processes: a chronology from 2015

https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp2223/Chronologies/VoiceTreatyTruth#_Toc111561050

Aboriginal Engagement Directorate – Department of the Premier and Cabinet

<https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/department-of-the-premier-and-cabinet/aboriginal-engagement-directorate-department-of-the-premier-and-cabinet>

Reconciliation and its Key Issues

http://www.multiculturalaustralia.edu.au/doc/reconcil_1.pdf

The benefits associated with caring for country <https://aiatsis.gov.au/publication/35297>

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning that at the senior secondary years:

- provides evidence of student achievement
- identifies opportunities for further learning
- connects to the standards described for the course
- contributes to the recognition of student achievement.

Assessment for learning (formative) and assessment of learning (summative) enable teachers to gather evidence to support students and make judgements about student achievement. These are not necessarily discrete approaches and may be used individually or together, and formally or informally.

Formative assessment involves a range of informal and formal assessment procedures used by teachers during the learning process in order to improve student achievement and to guide teaching and learning activities. It often involves qualitative feedback (rather than scores) for both students and teachers, which focuses on the details of specific knowledge and skills that are being learnt.

Summative assessment involves assessment procedures that aim to determine students' learning at a particular time, for example when reporting against the standards, after completion of a unit(s). These assessments should be limited in number and made clear to students through the assessment outline.

Appropriate assessment of student work in this course is underpinned by reference to the set of pre-determined course standards. These standards describe the level of achievement required to achieve each grade, from A to E. Teachers use these standards to determine how well a student has demonstrated their learning.

Where relevant, higher order cognitive skills (e.g. application, analysis, evaluation and synthesis) and the general capabilities should be included in the assessment of student achievement in this course. All assessment should be consistent with the requirements identified in the course assessment table.

Assessment should not generate workload and/or stress that, under fair and reasonable circumstances, would unduly diminish the performance of students.

School-based assessment

The *Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) Manual* contains essential information on the principles, policies and procedures for school-based assessment that must be read in conjunction with this syllabus.

School-based assessment involves teachers gathering, describing and quantifying information about student achievement.

Teachers design school-based assessment tasks to meet the needs of students. As outlined in the *WACE Manual*, school-based assessment of student achievement in this course must be based on the Principles of Assessment:

- Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning
- Assessment should be educative
- Assessment must be fair

- Assessment should be designed to meet its specific purpose(s)
- Assessment should lead to informative reporting
- Assessment should lead to school-wide evaluation processes
- Assessment should provide significant data for improvement of teaching practices.

Summative assessments in this course must:

- be limited in number to no more than eight tasks
- allow for the assessment of each assessment type at least once over the year/pair of units
- have a minimum value of five per cent of the total school assessment mark
- provide a representative sampling of the syllabus content.

Assessment tasks not administered under test or controlled conditions require appropriate authentication processes.

Assessment table – Year 12

Type of assessment	Weighting
<p>Inquiry Students conduct investigations using ethical procedures, appropriate methodology and sources, and show cultural sensitivity and awareness to plan, conduct and communicate findings. Students actively engage in collecting and using primary and/or secondary information sources, which privilege learning from First Nations Peoples, communities and/or other sources of First Nations Peoples' voices. Inquiry formats can include research notes, graphic organisers, written reports, short answers, an analysis of the sources used in the inquiry, in-class self-evaluation and reflection of learning, and/or a combination of these. The inquiry must include a validation component, which is administered under test conditions.</p>	20%
<p>Short answer Students can be required to respond to a series of open questions that require them to refer to source material and/or syllabus content. Source materials can include written texts (an extract from a government paper, a newspaper or journal article, or an extract from a narrative, a poem, a song lyric, a play script, or a letter), graphic materials (a photograph, a map, a graph, a diagram, a cartoon, or a drawing), a film, a television show and/or a combination of materials. Formats can include short answer responses, which typically require students to identify, define, describe, outline, explain, compare, analyse and/or discuss. Short answer tasks are administered under test conditions. For a full list of verbs, see the Glossary of keywords used in the formulation of questions on the course page.</p>	20%
<p>Extended answer Students can be required to respond to one or more questions that can require a discussion, analysis, explanation and/or evaluation of the knowledge and understandings from the depth studies. Formats can include a sectionalised or a non-sectionalised answer. Typically, questions require the students to explain, discuss, compare, analyse, evaluate and/or consider different perspectives. Extended answer tasks are administered under test conditions. For a full list of verbs, see the Glossary of keywords used in the formulation of questions on the course page.</p>	20%
<p>Examination Typically conducted at the end of each semester and/or unit and reflecting the examination design brief for this syllabus.</p>	40%

Teachers must use the assessment table to develop an assessment outline for the pair of units (or for a single unit where only one is being studied).

The assessment outline must:

- include a set of assessment tasks
- include a general description of each task
- indicate the unit content to be assessed
- indicate a weighting for each task and each assessment type
- include the approximate timing of each task (for example, the week the task is conducted, or the issue and submission dates for an extended task).

Reporting

Schools report student achievement, underpinned by a set of pre-determined standards, using the following grades:

Grade	Interpretation
A	Excellent achievement
B	High achievement
C	Satisfactory achievement
D	Limited achievement
E	Very low achievement

The grade descriptions for the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR Year 12 syllabus are provided in Appendix 1. They are used to support the allocation of a grade. They can also be accessed on the course page of the Authority website at www.scsa.wa.edu.au.

To be assigned a grade, a student must have had the opportunity to complete the education program, including the assessment program (unless the school accepts that there are exceptional and justifiable circumstances).

Refer to the *WACE Manual* for further information about the use of a ranked list in the process of assigning grades.

The grade is determined by reference to the standard, not allocated on the basis of a pre-determined range of marks (cut-offs).

ATAR course examination

All students enrolled in the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR Year 12 course are required to sit the ATAR course examination. The examination is based on a representative sampling of the content for Unit 3 and Unit 4. Details of the ATAR course examination is prescribed in the examination design brief below.

Refer to the *WACE Manual* for further information.

Examination design brief – Year 12

Time allowed

Reading time before commencing work: ten minutes

Working time for paper: three hours

Permissible items

Standard items: pens (blue/black preferred), pencils (including coloured), sharpener, correction fluid/tape, eraser, ruler, highlighters

Special items: Nil

Additional information: The key words listed in the supporting information of the examination design brief are not an exhaustive list.

Section	Supporting information
<p>Section One Short response 60% of the total examination 8–10 questions Suggested working time: 100 minutes</p>	<p>Questions can consist of parts.</p> <p>Questions can require the candidate to respond to a series of questions that require them to refer to source material and/or syllabus content. Questions typically require candidates to identify, define, describe, outline, explain, compare, analyse and/or discuss.</p> <p>Source material can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> written texts (an extract from a government paper, a newspaper and/or journal article; and/or an extract from a narrative, a poem, a song lyric, a play script, and/or a letter) graphic materials (a photograph, a map, a graph, a diagram, a cartoon, and/or a drawing).
<p>Section Two Extended response 40% of the total examination Unit 3 Depth studies: 20% One question from a choice of two Suggested working time: 40 minutes Unit 4 Depth studies: 20% One question from a choice of two Suggested working time: 40 minutes</p>	<p>Questions can require the candidate to outline, describe, explain, discuss, assess, compare, analyse and/or evaluate.</p> <p>Each question can consist of parts. Typically, the parts within a question are of increasing difficulty.</p> <p>The candidate is required to use extended answer formats to develop cohesive, logical and accurate responses.</p>

Appendix 1 – Grade descriptions Year 12

A	<p>Knowledge and understanding Presents comprehensive responses providing accurate and detailed evaluations, discussions and explanations of evidence, ideas, perspectives and concepts about Australian First Nations Peoples, connections to Country, cultural heritage, the role of truth telling, reconciliation and the ongoing consequences of colonisation.</p>
	<p>Intercultural terminology Selects and applies culturally responsive terminology and concepts to develop cohesive, logical and accurate responses.</p>
	<p>Intercultural skills Draws detailed and relevant conclusions using a wide range of supporting evidence, which account for a variety of First Nations Peoples’ and non-First Nations Peoples’ perspectives and interpretations of the past, including analysing and evaluating for bias. Selects, analyses and evaluates a diverse wide range of culturally responsive sources and applies appropriate referencing techniques accurately and consistently when conducting inquiries.</p>
B	<p>Knowledge and understanding Presents detailed responses providing accurate evaluations, discussions and explanations of evidence, ideas, perspectives and concepts about Australian First Nations Peoples, connections to Country, cultural heritage, the role of truth telling, reconciliation and the ongoing consequences of colonisation.</p>
	<p>Intercultural terminology Selects and applies culturally responsive terminology and concepts to develop relevant responses.</p>
	<p>Intercultural skills Draws relevant conclusions using a range of supporting evidence, which explains different perspectives and bias. Selects and analyses a diverse range of culturally responsive sources and applies appropriate referencing techniques accurately when conducting inquiries.</p>
C	<p>Knowledge and understanding Presents brief responses providing general discussions and/or explanations of evidence, ideas, perspectives and concepts about Australian First Nations Peoples, connections to Country, cultural heritage, the role of truth telling, reconciliation and the ongoing consequences of colonisation.</p>
	<p>Intercultural terminology Uses some relevant culturally responsive terminology and concepts to develop mostly relevant responses.</p>
	<p>Intercultural skills Draws simple conclusions using some relevant supporting evidence, which may identify some different perspectives and bias. Selects a range of culturally responsive sources and applies some appropriate referencing techniques when conducting inquiries.</p>

D	Knowledge and understanding Presents broad generalised responses providing simplistic information on evidence, ideas, perspectives and concepts about Australian First Nations Peoples, connections to Country, cultural heritage, the role of truth telling, reconciliation and the ongoing consequences of colonisation.
	Intercultural terminology Uses some relevant culturally responsive terminology and concepts to develop mostly relevant responses.
	Intercultural skills Makes generalised statements expressing a personal point of view using limited supporting evidence and makes limited mention of perspectives and bias. Selects limited culturally responsive sources and may acknowledge some sources using an unstructured format when conducting inquiries.
E	Does not meet the requirements of a D grade and/or has completed insufficient assessment tasks to be assigned a higher grade.

Acknowledgements

Principles and protocols for teaching and learning

Dot points 4 and 6 adapted from: Department of Education. (2015). *Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework*. Retrieved July, 2025, from <https://www.education.wa.edu.au/dl/jjpzned>

Used under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence](#).

Dot point 13 adapted from: Education Services Australia, as the legal entity for the Council of Australian Governments Education Council. (2019). *Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration*. Retrieved July, 2025, from <https://www.education.gov.au/indigenous-education/resources/alice-springs-mparntwe-education-declaration>

Used under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence](#).

Unit 4

Depth Study Two dot point 3 adapted from: Reconciliation Australia. (n.d.). *What is Reconciliation?* Retrieved July, 2025, from <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/reconciliation/what-is-reconciliation/>

