



ENGLISH

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 may find opportunities to incorporate the following capabilities into the teaching and learning program for the English ATAR course. The general capabilities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

Critical and creative thinking

Critical and creative thinking are integral to the study and creation of texts in the English ATAR course. In the course, students analyse and evaluate issues and ideas represented in texts. When creating their own texts, students recognise and develop arguments, use evidence and draw reasoned conclusions. Students experiment with text structures and language features as they transform and adapt texts for different purposes, audiences and contexts. They use critical thinking to analyse a range of texts in relation to their purpose, audience, context, structural and language features, and underlying or unstated assumptions. Students investigate the ways language is used to position individuals as well as social and cultural groups. Creative thinking enables students to apply imaginative and inventive capacities in the creation of their own original works.

Ethical understanding

Students develop ethical understanding through the selection of texts for study, such as when students engage with ethical dilemmas presented in texts, considering the reasons for actions and implications of decisions. They explore and question values, attitudes, perspectives and assumptions in texts, examining how they are represented, their impact on audiences and how they are reflected in their own responses. Through the study of the English ATAR course, students come to appreciate and develop greater empathy for the rights and opinions of others. They develop increasingly advanced communication, research and presentation skills to express viewpoints.

Intercultural understanding

In the English ATAR course, intercultural understanding encourages students to make connections between their own experiences and the experiences of others. Through the study of contemporary texts, texts from the past and texts from diverse cultures, students explore and analyse these connections. Students understand and can express the interdependence of language, culture, identity and values, particularly in the Australian context, and are able to appreciate and empathise with the cultural beliefs, attitudes and values of others. They study how cultural concepts, beliefs, practices and perspectives are represented in a range of textual forms and for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Literacy

Literacy is important in the development of the skills and strategies needed to express, interpret, and communicate complex information and ideas. In the English ATAR course, students apply, extend and refine their repertoire of literacy skills and practices as they examine how meaning is communicated and engage in creative response and argument. Students compare texts, considering how they are created for specific purposes, contexts and audiences. In the course, the concept of literacy extends to the use of appropriate terminology or metalanguage within the discourse of English as a subject.

Personal and social capability

Students develop personal and social capability by enhancing their communication skills, teamwork and capacity to empathise with and appreciate the perspectives of others. Close study of texts assists students to understand different personal and social experiences, values, attitudes, perspectives and challenges. Students identify and express their own opinions, beliefs and responses by interacting with a range of texts. The English ATAR course actively assists students in developing communication skills needed for analysis, research and the expression of viewpoints and arguments. Students work both independently and collaboratively as part of their learning and research endeavours.

Addressing the other general capabilities

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

- Digital literacies
- 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 English 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	English (AEENG)	ATAR	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Year 12	English (ATENG)	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