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

ABORIGINAL AND INTERCULTURAL STUDIES

General course

Year 11 syllabus for teaching from 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.

Important information

As part of the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) Refreshment, the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) has revised the course rationale and aims, and updated the General Capabilities to create clearer connections with the syllabus content.

This syllabus is effective from 1 January 2026.

Users of this 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 Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies General course provides students with a deeper understanding of the world's oldest living continuous cultures and their ongoing significance in contemporary Australia. Students explore factors that contribute to group and individual identity over time and further develop their understanding of the diversity of First Nations Peoples' experiences and perspectives.

Students examine the way that First Nations Peoples' cultural expressions continue, maintain, share and revitalise cultural knowledge and values. They develop respect and understanding of the cultural protocols, including intellectual and cultural property rights, that protect and revitalise First Nations cultures. Students analyse topics from an intercultural perspective by comparing First Nations experiences within Australia and globally. Ethical considerations are emphasised to ensure respectful engagement with First Nations cultures and knowledge.

Through this course, students learn to engage with First Nations perspectives, respecting cultural protocols and the importance of self-determination. By exploring diverse experiences and cultural expressions, the course enhances students' ability to analyse issues through multiple viewpoints, fostering empathy, social responsibility and a commitment to reconciliation.

Students apply their learning through social action projects that promote awareness and respect for First Nations histories, cultures and contributions. By developing intercultural understanding, students gain essential skills for contributing to society as responsible global citizens. These skills can be applied in personal and professional settings, including advocating for social justice and celebrating First Nations Peoples' contributions. Students translate their knowledge into action through projects involving community engagement, advocacy or education. These initiatives enhance cultural understanding, support reconciliation and contribute to the protection of First Nations cultures. Students develop skills in reflection and evaluation, ensuring ongoing learning and impact.

The course helps students build skills and knowledge that open up exciting pathways for further education and careers in fields such as teaching and education support, social work, psychology, community and youth services, public health, environmental and land management, cultural liaison and advisory roles, media and storytelling, and the arts and humanities. Students gain transferable skills in critical thinking, ethical engagement, respectful communication and cultural responsiveness, supporting active citizenship and lifelong learning.

Aims

The Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies General course aims to develop and further build students':

- knowledge and understanding of Australian First Nations Peoples as the oldest living continuous cultures in the world
- awareness of the ways First Nations Peoples' identities are expressed through unique ways of being, knowing and doing
- understanding that there are different and changing perspectives of history and that these inform and influence people's actions
- understanding that members of different cultures have different world views as a result of their beliefs, values, practices and experiences
- appreciation of the diversity and richness of Australian First Nations Peoples' histories and cultures
- critical thinking skills, including ethical research skills
- empathy and respect for the ways people think, feel and act
- growth as active and informed advocates for anti-racism and a just and inclusive world
- engagement in reconciliation, respect and recognition of the world's oldest living continuous 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 11 syllabus is divided into two units, each of one semester duration, which are typically delivered as a pair. The notional time for each unit is 55 class contact hours.

Unit 1

This unit enables students to develop their understanding of the concept of culture and of Australia's First Nations Peoples as being the oldest living continuous cultures in the world. Students will explore factors that contribute to a group, or individual identity over time, and in further developing their understanding of the diversity of First Nations Peoples' experiences and perspectives, will build an awareness of the ways First Nations Peoples' cultural identities are uniquely expressed within Australia and around the world.

Unit 2

This unit enables students to explore the distinctiveness and diversity of Australian First Nations Peoples' cultural expressions. They explore the use of First Nations Peoples' cultural expressions to continue, maintain, share and revitalise their cultural knowledge and values and, in doing so, develop respect and understanding of the cultural protocols, including intellectual and cultural property rights, which exist to protect and revitalise First Nation Peoples' cultures.

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 depth studies are designed to be contextualised for the community in which the course is being delivered.

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.

Progression from the Years 7–10 curriculum

This syllabus continues to develop student learning in Australian First Nations Peoples' histories and cultures that occurs in the Years 7–10 Humanities and Social Sciences curriculum. Students will continue to build on and develop the Humanities and Social Sciences skills. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures cross-curriculum priority continues across all year levels.

Representation of the General Capabilities

The General Capabilities encompass the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that will assist students to live and work successfully now and into the future. They are not assessed unless identified within the specified unit content. Teachers should find opportunities to incorporate the following General Capabilities into the teaching and learning program for the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies General course.

Critical and creative thinking

Critical and creative thinking skills are essential to the inquiry process in the course, as students deeply investigate historical and contemporary issues related to First Nations Peoples. Students develop the ability to question, analyse and interpret information by identifying gaps or bias in sources. They interrogate, cross-reference and assess evidence to form reasoned conclusions, identifying multiple perspectives and potential weaknesses in their own arguments.

Creative thinking is encouraged through social action projects, where students apply their knowledge to advocate for First Nations Peoples' rights and cultural expressions. Working individually or collaboratively, they design and implement meaningful initiatives that promote awareness, respect, and education within their school and broader community.

By integrating critical and creative thinking with ethical research, students develop a deep appreciation of First Nations Peoples' histories, cultures, and contributions while actively participating in reconciliation and social justice efforts.

Ethical understanding

Students develop ethical understanding in the course by examining the motivations behind historical and contemporary actions, comparing past and present values, beliefs and principles. They investigate ethical issues related to First Nations Peoples, including cultural protocols and intellectual property rights, and apply ethical scholarship when conducting research and communicating findings. Students analyse the impact of colonisation on First Nations Peoples' cultural expressions, language, and social structures. They recognise influences on ethical behaviour and perspectives, acknowledging diverse worldviews and respecting cultural protocols through inclusive language and appropriate referencing techniques.

Through inquiry, students make and reflect on ethical decisions, justify actions, predict outcomes and develop evidence-based conclusions. They communicate findings using culturally appropriate methods, fostering critical thinking, ethical responsibility and respectful engagement with First Nations histories and cultures.

Intercultural understanding

Intercultural understanding in Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies fosters an appreciation of diverse perspectives and worldviews. Students examine the influence of cultures on interactions, develop empathy and explore responses to intercultural experiences. They recognise bias, stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination, critically analysing different perspectives in primary and secondary sources. Students examine the influence of cultures on interactions, developing multiple perspectives and empathy through engagement with First Nations voices, histories, and cultural expressions. They explore the diversity of First Nations Peoples through language, population distribution and cultural geography, including Songlines and place names. Cultural identity is analysed through language, spiritual beliefs, kinship structures and the leadership of Elders. Students investigate oral traditions, literature, visual arts and performance, recognising how these expressions maintain identity, knowledge and connection to Country. Students consider responses to intercultural experiences, reflecting on the impact of colonisation, dispossession and assimilation policies on cultural continuity. They communicate responsively, applying ethical and culturally appropriate approaches to deepen their understanding of historical and contemporary perspectives and their influence on society.

Literacy

Literacy developed by students as they read, interpret and analyse diverse texts, including First Nations Peoples' oral histories, cultural expressions and other sources. Students develop skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing by engaging with culturally responsive resources and applying respectful and inclusive language. Through inquiry, they collect, record and organise information ethically, evaluating primary and secondary sources to recognise different perspectives and support their viewpoints with evidence. The communicate their findings through written, oral or multimodal formats, such as reports, speeches, interviews and presentations.

Students investigate First Nations cultural expressions, including music, theatre and oral traditions, and analyse their role in identity and resilience. They explore creation stories, such as Dreaming narratives and Songlines, to understand First Nations beliefs and histories.

Through social action projects, students apply their learning by designing and implementing meaningful initiatives that promote reconciliation and cultural awareness. These projects involve planning, evaluation and reflection and are presented through various creative formats, including videos, debates, role-play and educational resources.

Personal and social capability

Students develop personal and social capability in the course through research and social action projects, fostering empathy, respect and cultural awareness. By engaging with First Nations communities and perspectives, they examine the effects of colonisation and other historical and contemporary issues. They evaluate diverse viewpoints, using ethical research methods to analyse sources that privilege First Nations voices.

Through social action, students apply their learning to design and implement culturally appropriate initiatives that respect and promote First Nations histories and cultures while educating the broader community. They demonstrate effective collaboration, communication and goal-setting, incorporating planning, evaluation and reflection to assess the impact of their actions. They share their findings through written, oral or multimodal formats, refining their communication and problem-solving skills.

Addressing the other General Capabilities

Although the following General Capabilities have not been identified as a focus in the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies General Year 11 syllabus, teachers may find opportunities to incorporate them into the teaching and learning program.

- Digital literacy
- 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 Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies General course

The unit content and assessment types for this course provide students with the opportunity to develop the General Capabilities summarised in the table below.

Year	Course	Course type	General Capabilities						
			CCT	DL	EU	IU	L	N	PSC
Year 11	Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies (GEAIS)	General	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Year 12	Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies (GTAIS)	General	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓

Key

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

Representation of the Cross-curriculum Priorities

The Cross-curriculum Priorities address contemporary issues that students face in a globalised world. Teachers may find opportunities to incorporate them into the teaching and learning program for the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies General 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 General course. It celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories as part of the shared history belonging to all Australians. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority provides opportunities for all students to deepen their knowledge of Australia by learning about the world's oldest continuous living cultures. Through the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies General course, students learn that contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are strong, resilient, rich and diverse.

This course provides the opportunity to examine historical perspectives from an Australian First Nations Peoples' 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 Australian First Nations 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 General 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 People 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 Nation students bring with them to the classroom to ensure learning is relevant, connected and appropriate to achieve education success. (Adapted from: Department of Education WA, 2015)
- Recognise and acknowledge that Australia's 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. (Adapted from: Department of Education WA, 2015)
- Have the confidence and capability to pursue teaching and learning about, and with, Australian First Nations Peoples.

Teaching and learning program

- The teaching and learning program of the course needs to 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. Where the focus is on First Nations peoples from countries other than Australia the term international First Nations Peoples is used.
- 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. (Council of Australian Governments Education Council, 2019)
- 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 *Evaluating Resources Guide* https://www.narragunnawali.org.au/about/subject-guides.

Unit 1

Unit description

The focus for this unit is to develop knowledge and understanding of Australia's First Nations Peoples as being the oldest living continuous cultures in the world. Students explore factors that contribute to a group, or individual, identity. Students further develop their understanding of the diversity of First Nations Peoples' experiences and perspectives, locally, nationally, and globally and develop an awareness of the ways First Nations Peoples' identities are expressed through unique ways of being, knowing and doing.

Unit content

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

Overview of the diversity of Australian First Nations Peoples' cultural identities

- define the following key terms and concepts as they relate to, and by privileging, First Nations Peoples' voices and perspectives
  - Culture
  - Identity
  - Deep Time
  - Spirituality
  - Songlines
  - Kinship
  - Country
  - Elders
  - Perspectives
  - Colonisation
- the significance of and differences between an Acknowledgment of Country and a Welcome to Country
- **two** major types of scientific and archaeological evidence of Australian First Nations Peoples being the oldest, continuous living cultures in the world, (e.g. the concept of Deep Time, Mungo woman, Mungo man, Kakadu National Park Rock Art/artefacts, Murujuga National Park Indigenous heritage and rock art, Barrow Island artefacts, genomic testing)
- **two** examples of Australian First Nations Peoples' beliefs as shown in creation stories about their origins and location in Australia, (e.g. dreaming stories and Songlines, such as the Rainbow Serpent, the Seven Sisters, Malo Bamai, the Mimis, the Min Min Lights, Mulka)
- the diversity of Australians First Nations Peoples including:
  - languages
  - population distribution
  - graphic representations of Australian First Nations Peoples' geographic locations, place names and landscape features, such as maps, artwork, and Songlines
- Australian First Nations Peoples' expressions of individual and group cultural identity, including:
  - language
  - spiritual beliefs
  - kinship structures
  - the leadership roles of Elders in the community
  - connection to Country and knowledge of Country

- the Aboriginal Flag and the Torres Strait Islander flag, including:
  - the background to the design of the Aboriginal flag by Harold Thomas
  - the background to the design of the Torres Strait Islands flag by Bernard Namok
  - the significance of the colour, shapes and/or symbols on the flags
  - examples of the flags as a symbol of identity and unity
  - changing recognition and use of the flags over time and the inclusion of these flags in the 'Flags of Australia' under the *Flags Act 1953*
  - copyright and ownership issues relating to the Aboriginal flag

Depth Study One

Through community experiences and/or secondary sources, and by privileging First Nations Peoples' voices and perspectives, students investigate the cultural identity of one Western Australian First Nations Peoples and one International First Nations Peoples, such as the Maori, the Dayak people of Borneo, the Inuit, the First Nations Peoples of North America, the Karen people of Burma, the Tibetan people, and/or the Khoikhoi peoples of South Africa.

For the **two** selected First Nations Peoples, students will study where applicable:

- the range of languages and geographical locations
- examples of factors that contribute to the cultural identity of the selected First Nations Peoples, including:
  - spirituality, Dreaming stories
  - knowledge of Country
  - kinship and family structures
- perspectives and experiences of 'colonisation'
- places of significance and importance, including why they are significant
- **one** significant First Nations individual, group or organisation and their contribution to **two** of the following:
  - the continuation of their culture
  - promoting First Nations Peoples' issues in the wider community
  - being a role model to the younger generation

Depth Study Two

Through community experiences and/or secondary sources, and by privileging First Nations Peoples' voices and perspectives, students investigate the effects of **one** event, experience, issue, or proposal on the identities and cultures of Australian First Nations Peoples.

Examples of events/experiences include (this list is not exhaustive or prescriptive):

- constitutional recognition
- Australia Day, 26 January
- the Uluru Statement from the Heart
- Pilbara Aboriginal Strike
- Makarrata
- Black Lives Matter movement
- Stolen Generations.

For the selected event, experience, issue, or proposal, investigate:

- the background, including significant individuals and organisations
- the perspectives of Australian First Nations Peoples and non-Australian First Nations Peoples
- the way in which information and telecommunications, such as film, television and/or social media has influenced people's perceptions
- the effects on the identities and cultures of Australian First Nations Peoples

Intercultural Skills

Research

- construct a set of focus questions to investigate a specific topic/issue (who, what, when, where, how, why)
- plan an inquiry and/or social action with clearly defined aims, using appropriate methodologies
- collect, record and organise information and/or data from relevant culturally responsive resources

Analysis and use of sources

- identify the origin, purpose and context of primary sources and/or secondary sources
- evaluate the usefulness of different sources
- recognise different perspectives presented in a variety of different primary and/or secondary sources
- identify and use evidence from different sources to support a point of view
- propose individual and collective action in response to contemporary events, challenges, developments, issues, problems

Evaluating and communicating

- draw conclusions and develop explanations using evidence taking into account different perspectives
- communicating findings using formats appropriate to purpose, including, written, oral or multimodal presentations
- use respectful and inclusive language and terminology
- justify a course of action, and predict the potential outcome of the proposed action
- identify and practise ethical scholarship when conducting research, including:
  - respecting variation between cultural groups of processes and protocols for collecting, acknowledging and communicating information
  - adopt protocols and conventions to communicate in culturally appropriate ways
  - apply 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

Unit 2

Unit description

The focus of this unit is for students to learn about the distinctiveness and diversity of Australian First Nations Peoples' cultural expressions. They learn how First Nations Peoples, both within Australia and internationally, continue to use materials and technologies in innovative ways to create cultural expressions that celebrate, challenge and communicate ideas and perspectives. Students explore the use of First Nations Peoples' cultural expressions to continue, maintain, share and revitalise their cultural knowledge and values and, in doing so, develop respect and understanding of the cultural protocols, including intellectual and cultural property rights, which exist to protect and revitalise First Nation Peoples' cultures.

Unit content

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

Overview of the diversity of Australian First Nations Peoples' cultural expressions and protocols

- define the following key terms and concepts as they relate to, and by privileging First Nations Peoples' voices and perspective
  - Cultural Expression
  - Cultural Values
  - Perspectives
  - Colonisation
  - Dispossession
  - Resistance
  - Protocols
  - Resilience
- examples of Australian First Nations Peoples' cultural expressions over time and location, including:
  - oral and performance traditions, e.g. yarning, stories, songs, musical instruments, dance, film, live theatre)
  - written literature, e.g. plays, film scripts, documentaries, children's books
  - visual art, e.g. materials, symbols, paintings, fibre craft, rock art, fashion, textiles
- the ways cultural expressions contribute to maintaining and retaining the identity and cultural values of the Australian First Nations Peoples, including
  - sharing and maintaining cultural knowledge, e.g. customary law, histories, language, ceremonies, creation stories
  - maintenance of family and kinship systems
  - connection to Country, e.g. trade routes, survival, sustainability, Songlines, sacred sites, caring for Country
- the impact of invasion and colonisation on Australian First Nations Peoples' cultural expressions, including dispossession of Country, and Government Assimilation policies, contributing to the interruption of culture, language and social organisation over several generations
- Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property and the Protocols for using First Nations Peoples' Intellectual and Cultural Property https://australiacouncil.gov.au/investment-and-development/protocols-and-resources/protocols-for-using-first-nations-cultural-and-intellectual-property-in-the-arts/

- Cultural rights of Australian First Nations Peoples', including:
  - Section 28 of the *Human Rights Act 2019*
  - Article 31 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Depth Study One

Through community experiences and/or secondary sources, and by privileging First Nations Peoples' voices and perspectives, students investigate **one** form of cultural expression and its significance for **one** Australian First Nations People.

From the list below, select **one** of the forms of cultural expression:

- visual arts – through painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, photography, crafts and design, such as ceramics, textiles and homewares
- music – in songs and performances. This includes activities such as composing, recording, publishing music, performing and touring
- theatre – this includes plays, scripted works, music theatre, puppetry
- dance – such as ballet, contemporary dance, traditional dance, intercultural dance
- literature – written works such as fiction and non-fiction works, poetry, biographies, and playwriting
- events-based projects – including art and cultural festivals.

For the selected form of cultural expression, investigate (where applicable and culturally appropriate):

- **two** examples of Australian First Nations Peoples' perspectives, stories and/or information represented through the form of cultural expression
- how the form of cultural expression/practice has changed and evolved over time, e.g. types of materials, symbols used
- the role of information and telecommunications technologies in showcasing and celebrating the selected form of cultural expressions locally, nationally and globally
- the importance and contribution of the form of cultural expression to Australian culture and identity.

Depth Study Two

Through community experiences and/or secondary sources, and by privileging First Nations Peoples' voices and perspectives, students investigate the contribution of cultural expressions to the empowerment and resiliency of First Nations Peoples' cultures and identities both in Australia and internationally.

Students investigate (where applicable and culturally appropriate):

- the importance of revitalising First Nation Peoples' languages
- the connection between cultural expressions and the health and wellbeing of First Nations Peoples
- the economic benefits of cultural expressions for First Nations Peoples
- the use of cultural expressions to advocate for the rights of First Nations Peoples and make social and political statements

- **two** examples of programs or initiatives, which provide opportunities for individual and community cultural practice and expression, including the benefit of these to First Nations Peoples
- the impact of cultural expressions in educating people and changing perceptions about First Nations Peoples' histories and cultures

Intercultural Skills

Research

- construct a set of focus questions to investigate a specific topic/issue (who, what, when, where, how, why)
- plan an inquiry and/or social action with clearly defined aims, using appropriate methodologies
- collect, record and organise information and/or data from relevant culturally responsive resources

Analysis and use of sources

- identify the origin, purpose and context of primary sources and/or secondary sources
- evaluate the usefulness of different sources
- recognise different perspectives presented in a variety of different primary and/or secondary sources
- identify and use evidence from different sources to support a point of view
- propose individual and collective action in response to contemporary events, challenges, developments, issues, problems

Evaluating and communicating

- draw conclusions and develop explanations using evidence taking into account different perspectives
- communicating findings using formats appropriate to purpose, including, written, oral or multimodal presentations
- use respectful and inclusive language and terminology
- justify a course of action, and predict the potential outcome of the proposed action
- identify and practise ethical scholarship when conducting research, including:
  - respecting variation between cultural groups of processes and protocols for collecting, acknowledging and communicating information
  - adopt protocols and conventions to communicate in culturally appropriate ways
  - apply 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

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 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 should 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 5 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 11

Type of assessment	Weighting
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 secondary information sources, which privilege learning from First Nations Peoples, communities and/or other sources of First Nations Peoples' voices. Formats can include: written or oral formats, such as an assignment, a research booklet, report, speech, interview, multimodal presentation, in-class self-evaluation and reflection of learning, in-class validation and/or a combination of these.	30%
Response This can include students' applying knowledge and skills to interpret, analyse, evaluate and respond to a variety of primary and/or secondary sources. 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); and/or a film or a television show. Formats can include: written or oral formats, such as short answers, extended answers written tests, multimodal presentation and/or a combination of these. At least two response tasks should be administered under test conditions.	40%
Social action Students apply knowledge and understanding gained from First Nations Peoples, communities and/or other sources of First Nations Peoples' voices, to individually or collaboratively plan, design and implement a culturally appropriate and meaningful social action. The social action must demonstrate their learning and respect for First Nations Peoples' histories and cultures and educate other students, teachers and/or community members. Students include evidence of planning, evaluation and reflection on what they have learnt and, on the outcome of the social action. Formats can include: multimodal presentation, video clips, educational resources, children's book, TED talk, lyrics for a song, display boards, pamphlets, interviews, role-plays, panel discussions, museum display, debates, raps, poem, Reconciliation Action Plan.	30%

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 General Year 11 syllabus are provided in Appendix 1. They are used to support the allocation of a grade. They can also be accessed, together with annotated work samples, 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).

Appendix 1 – Grade descriptions Year 11*

A	**Knowledge and understandings** Presents discussions providing accurate information about Australia's First Nations Peoples as being the oldest living continuous cultures in the world and how First Nations Peoples continue, maintain, share and revitalise their cultures. Explains, with reference to a range of specific examples, the distinctiveness and diversity of First Nations Peoples' identities, cultures, experiences, perspectives and cultural expressions. Explains the cultural protocols, including intellectual and cultural property rights, which exist to protect and revitalise First Nation Peoples' cultures.
	Intercultural terminology Selects and applies culturally responsive terminology and concepts to develop accurate and relevant responses.
	Intercultural skills Draws accurate and relevant conclusions using a range of supporting evidence, which takes into account different perspectives. Uses a wide range of appropriate formats to communicate findings, based on their effectiveness to suit audience and purpose. Provides detailed evidence on the planning and implementation of culturally appropriate and meaningful inquiries and/or social actions, including appropriate information evaluating and reflecting on the outcomes of the inquiry and/or social action. Selects a diverse range of culturally responsive sources and applies appropriate referencing techniques accurately and consistently when conducting inquiries and/or social action.

B	**Knowledge and understandings** Presents generalised brief discussions providing general information about Australia's First Nations Peoples as being the oldest living continuous cultures in the world and how First Nations Peoples continue, maintain, share and revitalise their cultures. Explains briefly, with reference to relevant examples, the distinctiveness and diversity of First Nations Peoples' identities, cultures, experiences, perspectives and cultural expressions. Describes the cultural protocols, including intellectual and cultural property rights, which exist to protect and revitalise First Nation Peoples' cultures.
	Intercultural terminology Uses culturally responsive terminology and concepts to develop relevant responses.
	Intercultural skills Draws relevant conclusions using some evidence, which recognises different perspectives. Uses a range of appropriate formats to communicate findings, based on their effectiveness to suit audience and purpose. Provides brief evidence on the planning and implementation of culturally appropriate and meaningful inquiries and/or social actions, including brief information explaining and reflecting on the outcomes of the inquiry and/or social action. Selects culturally responsive sources and applies appropriate referencing techniques when conducting inquiries and/or social action.

C	**Knowledge and understandings** Presents broad discussions providing basic information about Australia's First Nations Peoples as being the oldest living continuous cultures in the world and how First Nations Peoples continue, maintain, share and revitalise their cultures. Describes with reference to some relevant examples the distinctiveness and diversity of First Nations Peoples' identities, cultures, experiences, perspectives and cultural expressions. Outlines some of the cultural protocols, including intellectual and/or cultural property rights, which exist to protect and revitalise First Nation Peoples' cultures.
	Intercultural terminology Uses some culturally responsive terminology to develop responses.
	Intercultural skills Draws simple conclusions using some evidence, which may identify a different perspective. Uses some appropriate formats to communicate findings, based on their effectiveness to suit audience and purpose. Provides brief statements on the planning and implementation of culturally appropriate and meaningful inquiries and/or social actions, including brief information describing and reflecting on the outcomes of the inquiry and/or social action. Uses some culturally responsive sources and applies some appropriate referencing techniques, when conducting inquiries and/or social action.

D	**Knowledge and understandings** Presents basic statements, with limited detail about Australia's First Nations Peoples as being the oldest living continuous cultures in the world and how First Nations Peoples continue, maintain, share and revitalise their cultures. States limited examples of the distinctiveness and diversity of First Nations Peoples' identities, cultures, experiences, perspectives and cultural expressions. Makes generalised statements about cultural protocols.
	Intercultural terminology Makes limited use of culturally responsive terminology to develop responses.
	Intercultural skills States personal opinions using limited or inaccurate evidence, with little or no acknowledgement of different perspectives. Uses simple formats to communicate findings and presents mostly unstructured responses. Provides limited or no evidence of planning, implementing and/or reflecting on the inquiry and/or social action. Uses limited culturally responsive sources and applies limited and/or inaccurate referencing techniques, when conducting inquiries and/or social action.

E	Does not meet the requirements of a D grade and/or has completed insufficient assessment tasks to be assigned a higher grade.

* These grade descriptions will be reviewed at the end of the second year of implementation of this syllabus.

Glossary

Aboriginal enterprise

An enterprise is an economically self-sustaining entity, such as a business or service. Aboriginal enterprises can be owned by individuals, communities, or as an extension of an Aboriginal organisation, and are usually staffed by Aboriginal people. Aboriginal enterprises can be social enterprises, or based on certain protocols such as benefit sharing.

Assimilation

When members of one cultural group acquire the language, practices and beliefs of another group, often losing aspects of their traditional culture in the process.

Autonomy

Acting independently, self-government.

Community

Community is about interrelatedness and belonging, and is central to Aboriginality. An Aboriginal person may belong to more than one language group and community. Important elements of a community are Country, family ties and shared experience. The use of 'community/ies' in the syllabus indicates that any one location may in fact consist of several communities.

Country

Used to describe a specific area of a nation or clan including physical, linguistic and spiritual features. Aboriginal communities' cultural associations with their Country may include or relate to languages, cultural practices, knowledge, songs, stories, art, paths, landforms, flora, fauna and minerals. These cultural associations may include custodial relationships with particular landscapes such as land, sea, sky, rivers as well as the intangible places associated with the Dreaming/s. Custodial relationships are extremely important in determining who may have the capacity to authentically speak for their Country.

Colonisation

Establishment of a colony or colonies in a country or area. Colonisation dispossessed Indigenous people of their traditional lands. In Australia, colonisation began with the First Fleet's arrival from Britain in 1788, and progressed over time with settlements in different states.

Culture

The accepted and traditionally patterned ways of behaving and a set of common understandings shared by members of a group or community. Includes land, language, ways of living and working and artistic expression, relationship and identity.

Cultural Expression

Refers to different ways in which culture, history and society are conveyed.

Custodians of the land

People responsible for maintaining and passing on elements of cultural significance, e.g. knowledge, language, story, dance, imagery, song and ritual.

Diversity
Differences that exist within a group, e.g. age, sex, gender, gender expression, sexuality, culture, ethnicity, ability/disability, body shape and composition, spirituality, religion, learning differences, socioeconomic background, values and experience.

Dreaming
The Dreaming has different meanings for different Aboriginal groups. The Dreaming can be seen as the embodiment of Aboriginal creation which gives meaning to everything; the essence of Aboriginal beliefs about creation and spiritual and physical existence. It establishes the rules governing relationships between the people, the land and all things for Aboriginal Peoples. Certain cultural aspects are also associated with specific Dreamings. The Dreaming is linked to the past, the present and the future. Where appropriate, refer to Aboriginal language names for the Dreaming.

Dispossession
Dispossession refers to Aboriginal Peoples being denied ownership and/or access to their land. The term is used in both the legal sense, e.g. terra nullius, and the practical sense, e.g. dislocation (see terra nullius, dislocation).

Elders
Elders are custodians of knowledge. They are chosen and accepted by their own communities and are highly respected.

Identity
A person's understanding and expression of their own individuality and of belonging to a group; often connected to culture and language.

Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP)
Includes, but is not limited to, objects, sites, cultural knowledge, cultural expression and the arts, that have been transmitted or continue to be transmitted through generations as belonging to a particular Indigenous group or Indigenous people as a whole or their territory (see intellectual property).

Intellectual property
Non-material assets such as forms of cultural expression that belong to a particular individual or community. Intellectual property rights are the bundle of rights that the law grants to individuals for the protection of creative intellectual, scientific and industrial activity, such as inventions. Such rights are for the protection of economic interest in novel, inventive and/or creative effort (see Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property, cultural ownership, copyright).

Kinship
A key aspect of Aboriginal cultures and values. It includes the importance of all relationships, and of being related to and belonging to Country (land).

Land
The term 'land' is used by Aboriginal Peoples to describe their spirituality, ecosystems, Dreaming(s), all living things, including totems, all physical factors such as sacred sites, water, air and geographical factors (see Country).

Land management
A process of developing land and monitoring its use in a sustainable way, usually for purposes of producing food and providing fibre for clothing and housing. Includes providing protection for flora and fauna, and preventing and controlling weeds (may also include water management).

Land rights
The evolving struggle of Aboriginal Peoples, Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and international Indigenous Peoples for the absolute legal and moral acknowledgement of prior ownership of their land and recognition of all accompanying rights and obligations which flow from this association. Land Rights (capitalised) refers to the legislation (see land).

Local Aboriginal community
The local Aboriginal community is constituted by those people who acknowledge themselves as Aboriginal and who reside in the near locality. Aboriginal communities will have a rich and diverse history that has been seriously affected by dispossession and relations, which sees families with spiritual connection to Country residing beside those who have been forced to move from other locations. The notion of locality is complex and multilayered: schools should seek advice from a range of people and/or organisations representing local interests.

For the purpose of this course, the local Aboriginal community case study is to be the Aboriginal community/ies in which the school is located. The use of 'community/ies' in the syllabus indicates that any one location may in fact consist of several communities.

Lore
The learning and transmission of cultural heritage by observing customs, ceremonies and song cycles. Lore is connected to the Dreaming and provides protocols and practices for how people interact with Country, kinship and community.

The term 'Lore' must be used with care. Some individuals and groups could find this term offensive, and may prefer to use Aboriginal language terms or 'law'.

Native title
Native title is the recognition in Australian law that Indigenous people had a system of law and ownership of their lands before European settlement. It was first recognised in common law in the Mabo case (1992) by the High Court, which overturned the idea of terra nullius (that the continent belonged to no-one at the time of European arrival).The native title of a particular group depends on the law and customs of those people.

Peoples
The term 'Peoples' acknowledges the plurality and diversity of Aboriginal cultures, Torres Strait Islander cultures, and international Indigenous cultures.

Perspectives
A person's perspective is their point of view; the position from which they see and understand the world and events going on around them. People in the past may have had different points of view about a particular event, depending on their age, gender, social position and their beliefs and values. Historians also have perspectives and this can influence their interpretation of the past.

Protocols

'Protocols' refers to appropriate ways of behaving, communicating and showing respect for diversity of history and culture. They involve appreciation of the knowledge, standing and status of people within both the local Aboriginal community and the school community. Protocols inevitably vary between communities, and between people within communities. In establishing a partnership between schools and Aboriginal communities it is especially important that protocols are acknowledged and respected.

Reconciliation

A Commonwealth initiative to promote positive relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and the wider community, and to address the disadvantage faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. A capitalised 'Reconciliation' is used to refer specifically to the process as it applies to government policy.

Revitalisation

The range of strategies for increasing knowledge and use of a language that is no longer spoken fluently across all generations. Also referred to as language revival.

Self-determination

Self-determination involves the effective participation of Aboriginal Peoples in all decision making that affects them.

Social justice

A principle that favours measures aimed at addressing inequities. It includes the rights of people to economic and social independence, and empowerment to determine the direction of their own futures. The processes and systems which shape the interaction between people, communities and governments and determine the degree of social justice achieved.

Spirituality

In general, the term 'spirituality' refers to personal beliefs and associated practices, while the term 'religion' relates to a belief system and practices shared by a group. An individual may identify with both spirituality and religious affiliation.

For the purpose of this course, the terms 'spirituality' and 'spiritualities' refer to both the individual and collective aspects of Aboriginal Peoples' interconnectedness with the world. Spirituality is deeply linked to Country, Dreaming/s, kinship and identity, and often incorporates concepts associated with 'law' and/or 'lore', such as responsibilities and obligations. Spirituality is also related to a person's intrinsic journey, including learning and reflection.

Songlines

'Songlines' is an English word for Dreaming tracks that trace the journeys of Ancestral spirits as they created the land, animals and laws. Songlines are recorded in songs, stories, dance and art. They carry significant spiritual, ecological, economic and cultural connection to the knowledge, customs, ceremony and Law of many language groups, including travel and trade routes, the location of waterholes and the presence of food. In many cases, songlines on the earth are mirrored by sky songlines which, together, allowed people to navigate the land and seas.
https://www.narragunnawali.org.au/storage/media/page/1c05630d10759b8377827af43ec61639.pdf

Sovereignty
The legal recognition of ownership of land and territory. Implicit in the concept is the right of self-government. Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have never ceded their sovereignty.

Sustainability
The concept of sustainability is about the capacity of the environment to continue to support our lives and the lives of other living creatures into the future. Sustainability is both a goal and a way of thinking about how to progress towards that goal. Progress towards environmental sustainability depends on the maintenance or restoration of the environmental functions that sustain all life and human wellbeing (economic and social).

Terra nullius
A Latin term meaning 'land belonging to no one' The term terra nullius means 'nobody's land,' 'land belonging to no one,' or 'land without owners' and was problematically used to 'justify' colonial expansion and deny Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' relationship with, and rights to, their land.
https://www.narragunnawali.org.au/storage/media/page/c5ac1146c1cb95688bd9654e67a38186.pdf

Torres Strait Islander Peoples
People from the Torres Strait Islands are the traditional owners of the islands that lie between Cape York in northern Queensland and Papua New Guinea. Torres Strait Islander Peoples are the Indigenous people from these islands. Some Torres Strait Islander People live on the mainland. Torres Strait Islander Peoples' histories and cultures are distinct from Aboriginal Peoples' histories and cultures, and are generally referred to separately.

Totems
Natural objects inherited by clan or family members as their spiritual emblem, e.g. animals, plants.

Traditional Owners of land
Term associated with original custodians of the land; an Aboriginal person who is recognised by their community as having ownership and knowledge of a particular area or 'country' often used in association with Australian Law.

Wellbeing
An overall measure of quality of life for individuals and society.

Worldviews
The concept of the world held by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in which each aspect of culture, identity and society is connected with all other aspects in the context of particular times, places and relationships.

Zogo Time
A worldview used among Torres Strait Islander language groups that affects beliefs, values and relationships with land, sea, sky, waterways, language and culture; also referred to as Augadth Time.

Acknowledgments for Glossary

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies General Senior Syllabus 2019: Syllabus

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https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/education/bth/download/glossary.pdf

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Acknowledgements

Principles and protocols for teaching and learning

Dot point 4 & 6: Adapted from: Department of Education Western Australia. (2015). Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework. Retrieved February, 2024, from https://www.education.wa.edu.au/dl/jjpzned
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