



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

# **MARINE AND MARITIME STUDIES**

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ATAR course

**Year 12 syllabus – What’s changing: Rationale and Aims  
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 for reviewing the nomenclature of courses, the Authority has updated the rationale and aims of each syllabus.

The revised rationale and aims are aligned with the mapping of the general capabilities to provide clear connections between the rationale, aims and syllabus content. The rationale outlines what the subject is about and why it is important. It describes what students can expect to study in the course, along with the knowledge, skills and understandings they will develop throughout the course. It also explains how these can be applied in everyday life and references potential future pathways, outlining how students might connect what they learn in the course to further education, training and employment opportunities.

## **Important information**

### **WACE Refreshment: Reviewing the nomenclature of courses**

This document contains information that will be included in the syllabus effective from 1 January 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.

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## Rationale

The Marine and Maritime Studies ATAR course gives students the opportunity to explore and understand the relationship between humans and the sea and the importance of developing and maintaining a sustainable future for our coastal and marine environments. Australia is an island nation and our state's mainland and islands contain approximately twenty-one thousand kilometres of coastline, making the study of the sea and how people interact with it is deeply relevant for Western Australian students.

The course draws from a diverse range of disciplines, including science, technology and the humanities. Students investigate oceanography concepts to develop a strong understanding of the interdependence between elements of the marine environment, conduct research into the safe and sustainable management of the oceans' resources for conservation and commerce, and are also introduced to the world of maritime archaeology.

Students engage in unique theoretical and practical learning experiences and develop a broad range of skills and knowledge. They apply theoretical knowledge through practical activities, with a focus on active learning experiences both within and outside of the classroom. They are provided with the opportunity to develop personal water-based skills (swimming/snorkelling/scuba) to allow them to engage directly with the marine environment.

The skills, knowledge and understandings students develop in the course can be applied in real-world contexts, such as the ability to safely plan water-based activities like boating or snorkelling/scuba. The course emphasises safety, risk awareness and the knowledge of the required regulations for various activities. These valuable risk management and planning skills are transferable both to their personal and professional lives. Students will also gain an appreciation of the aquatic environment and the impact that humans can have on it.

The course further develops and reinforces students' foundation of skills and knowledge to prepare them for a wide range of vocational or recreational pathways in boating (commercial and recreational), scuba, vessel design and construction (maritime engineering), resource management, and maritime archaeology or marine science.

## Aims

The Marine and Maritime Studies ATAR course aims to develop students’:

- knowledge of oceanographic concepts to understand aspects of marine life and the interdependence between components of the marine environment
- knowledge and application of nautical concepts and skills, including seamanship skills
- understanding and application of maritime engineering concepts
- knowledge of aspects of maritime archaeology and Western Australian maritime history
- ability to develop and demonstrate water-based skills (swimming/snorkelling/scuba)
- application of knowledge and skills to interact with and investigate elements of the marine and maritime environment
- expertise in conducting a range of scientific investigations, including the collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data and the interpretation of evidence
- ability to critically evaluate and debate scientific arguments and claims to solve problems and generate informed, responsible and ethical conclusions
- understanding and application of the processes used in the management of marine resources to ensure a sustainable future for our coastal and marine environments.