



RELIGION AND LIFE

Foundation 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

This syllabus is effective from 1 January 2027.

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.

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Introduction to the Foundation courses

Foundation courses are designed for students who have not demonstrated the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) literacy and numeracy standard. These standards are based on Level 3 of the *Australian Core Skills Framework* (ACSF), which outlines the skills required for individuals to meet the demands of everyday life and work in Australia's knowledge-based economy. Standard Australian English (SAE) skills are a focus.

Foundation courses provide support for the development of functional literacy and numeracy skills essential for students to meet the WACE standard of literacy and numeracy through engagement with the ACSF Level 3 reading, writing, oral communication and numeracy core skills.

The Foundation courses are:

- Applied Information Technology (List B)
- Career and Enterprise (List A)
- English (List A)
- English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) (List A)
- Health, Physical and Outdoor Education (List B)
- Mathematics (List B)
- Religion and Life (List A).

Eligibility

Eligibility to enrol in Foundation courses is restricted to students who meet the eligibility criteria. For further information regarding eligibility, see the *WACE Manual* at www.scsa.wa.edu.au/publications/wace-manual.

Literacy and numeracy focus

While much of the explicit teaching of literacy and numeracy occurs in the English, English as an Additional Language or Dialect and Mathematics Foundation courses, all Foundation courses provide opportunities for the development of the literacy and numeracy capabilities identified in the Pre-primary to Year 10 Western Australian curriculum. The following set of literacy and numeracy skills drawn from both the ACSF Level 3 core skills of reading, writing, oral communication and numeracy, and the Pre-primary to Year 10 English and Mathematics Western Australian curriculum have been identified and are common to all Foundation courses. Where appropriate, opportunities for students to engage in activities with significant literacy and numeracy demands should be the focus of teaching, learning and assessment programs in this course.

Literacy

Literacy involves students:

- developing the knowledge, skills and dispositions to interpret and use language confidently for learning and communicating in and out of school and for effective participation in society
- reading, writing, viewing, speaking and listening that includes creating oral, print, visual and digital texts
- using and modifying language for different purposes and for different audiences
- understanding how the English language works in different social contexts.

Foundation courses provide meaningful contexts for learning and practising specific literacy (L) skills, as outlined below:

- L1 acquiring words leading to an appropriately expanding vocabulary; for example, using discipline-related words, such as 'religious beliefs' and 'pilgrimage' in the Religion and Life Foundation course
- L2 developing pronunciation and spelling of key words; for example, discipline-related words such as 'ecumenical', 'nirvana', 'sabbath', 'Qur'an' in the Religion and Life Foundation course
- L3 using Standard Australian English (SAE) grammar and punctuation to communicate effectively
- L4 expressing increasingly complex ideas using a range of simple and complex sentence structures
- L5 using a range of language features, including the use of tone (e.g. formal, rather than personal), symbols (e.g. in the workplace and/or in web page design), simple description (e.g. the use of similes and/or contrast), and factual, as opposed to emotive, language
- L6 organising ideas and information in different forms and for different purposes and audiences; for example, providing information in dot point form and/or providing information in an explosion chart
- L7 achieving cohesion of ideas at sentence, paragraph and text level
- L8 editing work for accuracy, coherence, clarity and appropriateness; for example, ensuring subject-verb agreement, the correct use of apostrophes and the appropriate use of vocabulary and verb forms
- L9 using a range of speaking and listening skills; for example, using the etiquette of taking turns in conversation and discussion, asking clarifying questions when listening, matching tone of voice to audience, and using a pause for emphasis
- L10 comprehending and interpreting a range of texts; for example, comics, newspapers, posters, and online articles
- L11 developing visual literacy skills, including creating images, designing graphs, reading tables and interpreting diagrams and symbols.

Numeracy

Numeracy involves students:

- recognising and understanding the role of mathematics in the world
- developing the dispositions and capacities to use mathematical knowledge and skills purposefully
- increasing their autonomy in managing everyday situations.

Foundation courses provide meaningful contexts for learning and practising specific numeracy (N) skills and mathematical thinking processes, as outlined below:

- N1 identifying and organising mathematical information; for example, referring to statistics about religious affiliation in Australia
- N2 choosing the appropriate mathematics to complete a task; for example, counting numbers in a survey
- N3 applying mathematical knowledge, tools and strategies to complete the task; for example, changing raw data from a survey into percentages
- N4 representing and communicating mathematical conclusions; for example, using tables and charts
- N5 reflecting on mathematical results to judge the reasonableness of the conclusions reached.

The level of complexity of mathematical information to which the above numeracy skills are applied includes:

- whole numbers and familiar or routine fractions, decimals and percentages
- dates and time, including 24-hour times
- familiar and routine 2D and 3D shapes, including pyramids and cylinders
- familiar and routine length, mass, volume/capacity, temperature and simple area measures
- familiar and routine maps and plans
- familiar and routine data, tables, graphs and charts, and common chance events.

Rationale for the Religion and Life Foundation course

The Religion and Life Foundation course provides students with opportunities to learn about one or more religions and to recognise the role of religion in the lives of individuals and society. In Australia, religion has a major role in society, both in the past and in the present and, for many people, religion contributes to how they understand the world around them. Students investigate the influence of religion in communities, local or global, and identify how religious understandings find expression in individual and communal decision making and action.

Through a variety of practical and explicit teaching and learning activities, this course focuses on the development of literacy and numeracy skills within a religion and life context. There is an emphasis on developing student capacity, disposition and confidence to use functional literacy and numeracy in their personal life and the community in which they live. Using a range of approaches, students are given opportunities to develop the skills, knowledge, attributes and behaviours necessary to make decisions about their learning as a means to effectively comprehend, develop and express their understanding using various technologies. This course enables students to engage with information, ideas and issues associated with religion in the lives of individuals and society, and to communicate their understanding.

Students should work individually and collaboratively to develop strategies for engaging in productive and harmonious relationships with peers and the wider community. The development of students' communication skills within the context of religion and life will enable students to make informed decisions beyond school and assist them in becoming contributing members of society. The diverse nature of the student cohort calls for flexibility in how the course is delivered, both contextually and pedagogically. Teachers adapt the context of the content to deliver it appropriately to their student cohort and prioritise student agency and choice. For all students, support through teacher modelling and scaffolding, as well as visual and contextual support, is essential.

Course aims

The Religion and Life Foundation course aims to develop students' ability to:

- understand how religion guides and shapes the world in which people live
- understand the place of religion in the lives of people and in society
- use and apply religious inquiry and learning skills to question and research, analyse, evaluate, and communicate and reflect on matters related to a study of religion
- use and apply literacy and numeracy concepts and techniques in practical situations that relate to a study of religion.

Representation of the other General Capabilities

In addition to the literacy and numeracy capabilities, teachers may find opportunities to incorporate the remaining capabilities into the teaching and learning program for the Religion and Life Foundation course. The unit information, specifically the unit content, identifies the expected student learning within each syllabus.

The General Capabilities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

Information and communication technology capability

The nature and scope of information and communication technology (ICT) is utilised in various ways within the Religion and Life Foundation course. Students develop skills in using ICT for tasks that may require information to be accessed, managed, created, or communicated. Skills in using ICT can also be useful when solving problems, making decisions and expressing ideas in creative ways.

Critical and creative thinking

Through the study of the Religion and Life Foundation course, students develop their critical and creative thinking skills. Using an inquiry approach, students learn to use information to solve problems and to generate, connect and apply new ideas. Students learn to justify their own position and consider alternate ways of thinking about matters associated with the study of religion and life.

Personal and social capability

Students develop personal and social capability in the Religion and Life Foundation course through collaborative work, cooperative learning, small group work, class discussion and independent learning. Students develop self-awareness and self-management skills to demonstrate initiative, resilience and adaptability. Students develop their ability to appreciate the viewpoints and experiences of others through safe and respectful relationships. Students develop communication skills needed in learning, work, community and everyday personal contexts. They develop critical research and presentation skills to effectively express how they understand and view religious ideas and matters in different social situations. They also develop an increasing awareness of society through the study of relationships between individuals and social groups that interact on matters related to and important to a study of religion.

Ethical understanding

Through independent and collaborative learning, students in the Religion and Life Foundation course develop an understanding of how people make and act on ethical choices. Students have opportunities to explore the different perspectives and circumstances that shape the actions and possible motivations of people. Students engage with ethical problems and make sense of religious views about ethical matters. They use ethical research practices, such as acknowledging sources and avoiding plagiarism and collusion.

Intercultural understanding

Intercultural understanding in the Religion and Life Foundation course involves students learning about people and their cultures, including the role religion plays in how people live. They develop an understanding that different ways of life provide a frame of reference for recognising and appreciating intercultural diversity. Students learn to make connections with their own culture, language, and beliefs, along with those of others.

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 their priorities into the teaching and learning program for the Religion and Life Foundation course. The unit information, specifically the unit content, identifies the expected student learning within each syllabus. The cross-curriculum priorities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

A religion, as understood within this course, can include Aboriginal spiritualities. Drawing on aspects of the past or present context, the interaction of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with particular religions can be examined. This priority also provides an opportunity to explore the interconnection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with place, environment, and spirituality. Opportunities also exist to explore the engagement over time, between a particular introduced religion and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, beliefs and rituals.

Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia

There are strong social, cultural, and economic reasons for Australian students to engage with Asia and with the contribution of the history and culture of Asia, including religion, in all its diversity. Students have the opportunity to explore the history and cultures of Asia and the religious contributions these make to Australian society. They have opportunities to explore religious traditions that exist within the Asian region, how religion has engaged with this region over time and the nature of past and ongoing religious links between Australia and Asia.

Sustainability

Religions offer insights that influence how people interact and respond to issues of sustainability. The Religion and Life Foundation course helps build the capacity of students to understand religious views on sustainability and ways to create a more ecological future.

Progression from the Pre-primary to Year 10 Western Australian curriculum

The Religion and Life Foundation course draws on, develops, and emphasises knowledge, understandings, skills, and processes related to the Humanities and Social Sciences. This learning area involves a study of human behaviour and interaction in social, cultural, environmental, economic and political contexts. It has a historical and contemporary focus, from personal to global contexts, and considers opportunities and challenges for the future. By studying Humanities and Social Sciences, students develop the ability to question, think critically, make decisions based on evidence, devise proposals for actions and communicate effectively. The Humanities and Social Sciences subjects provide students with the knowledge and skills they need to develop a broad understanding of the world in which we live and how people can participate as active and informed citizens in the 21st century. While the primary focus of the Religion and Life Foundation course is on the development of literacy and numeracy skills in work, learning, community and everyday personal contexts, it also provides an opportunity to re-visit and reinforce the Humanities and Social Sciences P–10 curriculum and, in particular, learning area skills.

Organisation

This course is organised into a Year 11 syllabus and a Year 12 syllabus.

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

The focus of this unit is the experience of religion. It explores a foundational understanding of religion and the experiences people have of religion.

Unit 2

The focus of this unit is the place of religion in the lives of people. It explores the place of religion within the lives of people and within society.

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 course content is divided into three content areas:

- Religious inquiry and learning skills
- People and religion
- Religion and society.

Religious inquiry and learning skills

Learning in each unit is guided by a range of literacy, numeracy and interpersonal skills relevant to a study of religion and life and that focus on:

- the development of language
- comprehending and communicating various forms of information
- applying relevant numeracy skills
- developing an awareness of self and others and an ability to manage oneself socially in the learning process.

A study of religion involves the use of skills that promote:

- subject-specific language
- use of literacy and numeracy strategies
- ways of processing information
- thinking about religion in an informed manner
- interpersonal skills.

Understanding the interaction between religion, society and individuals involves a capacity to conduct meaningful inquiries. Inquiry uses a range of HASS skills, including:

- Terms and concepts
- Questioning and researching
- Analysing
- Communicating and reflecting.

People and religion

Search for meaning

Finding meaning and purpose in life is important for all people. Individuals search for and respond to what they find in a variety of ways. They may find answers in religion and choose to engage with a particular religious community and its way of life. How an individual interacts with religion shapes who they are and how they relate to others in society. In the lives of ordinary and well-known people, there are many examples of those who have searched for and found meaning in religion and who illustrate how that meaning finds expression in the way they live.

Religion

Religions of the world promote and support particular views of the world and ways of living. Religions can be complex in nature; however, each has a system of beliefs, teachings and practices. These offer insights and guidance about how to live. Followers of religion gather as communities where, in a variety of ways, they support each other and give expression to their shared beliefs.

Religion and society

Religion in society

Religions have a place in society and interact in different ways within communities around the world. This interaction influences how religion is seen and understood by people, both now and in the past. Within Australia, which is diverse in its cultures and beliefs, there is a richness of religious traditions. This richness and diversity influence how individuals and groups interact with religion in local and global communities.

Issues for religion

Religions need to constantly reflect on how to best respond to issues occurring within society, while remaining authentic to their religious traditions and beliefs. These issues can be found both in the past and in the present. There are many issues in society that have the potential to create, or have created, matters of concern or interest for religions. For example, rapid changes in technology and the media have the potential to create issues within society.

Unit 1

Unit description

The focus of this unit is the experience of religion. It explores a foundational understanding of religion, and the experiences people have of religion.

Unit content

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

Religious inquiry and learning skills

Terms and concepts

- recognise and use subject-specific terminology

Questioning and researching

- develop a range of questions to support an inquiry
- select appropriate and trustworthy sources to collect relevant information and/or data
- select and use a suitable method for recording information and/or data
- observe appropriate ethical protocols when conducting research

Analysing

- identify important information found in source material, such as the origin, purpose, context or point of view of a source
- select and use relevant information and/or data from source material
- consider how information and/or data found in source material relates to course understandings

Communicating and reflecting

- reflect on learning and identify new understandings
- support conclusions based on the use of evidence
- use suitable formats to communicate ideas or understandings for a set purpose and audience

People and religion

Search for meaning

- why people follow a religion

Religion

- the meaning of the term religion
- key features commonly found in religions

Religion and society

Religion in society

- examples of the type of activities undertaken by one or more religions in a familiar community

Issues for religion

- an overview of an important issue for a religion from the past or present

Unit 2

Unit description

The focus of this unit is the place of religion in the lives of people. It explores the place of religion within the lives of people and within society.

Unit content

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

Religious inquiry and learning skills

Terms and concepts

- recognise and use subject-specific terminology

Questioning and researching

- develop a range of questions to support an inquiry
- select appropriate and trustworthy sources to collect relevant information and/or data
- select and use a suitable method for recording information and/or data
- observe appropriate ethical protocols when conducting research

Analysing

- identify important information found in source material, such as the origin, purpose, context or point of view of a source
- select and use relevant information and/or data from source material
- consider how information and/or data found in source material relates to course understandings

Communicating and reflecting

- reflect on learning and identify new understandings
- support conclusions based on the use of evidence
- use suitable formats to communicate ideas or understandings for a set purpose and audience

People and religion

Search for meaning

- the experience of people who belong to a religion

Religion

- how people express a religious way of life

Religion and society

Religion in society

- an overview of religion in Australian society

Issues for religion

- how a religion responds to an issue from the past or present

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.

The table below provides details of the assessment types and their weighting for the Religion and Life Foundation Year 11 syllabus.

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
Research/Investigation Students use religious inquiry and learning skills to plan, conduct and/or communicate the results of an inquiry relevant to a study of religion and life. Research could involve students questioning, selecting, analysing and interpreting information and data that relate to, for example, experiences, ideas, issues associated with religious matters. Students can work individually and/or in groups to demonstrate the research process and/or communicate research findings through written, oral or multimedia responses; for example, a written report, extended answer, oral presentation, PowerPoint/Keynote presentation, a recording, construction of a website or infographics.	30–40%
Explanation Explanations are designed to assess knowledge and/or the application of concepts related to the study of religion and life. Responses may, for example, require reflecting on learning, demonstrating comprehension, justifying choices, solving problems, responding to multiple-choice questions, completing tables, constructing graphs and diagrams, demonstrating calculations, or addressing the requirements of scaffolded questions or tasks in a verbal, multimedia and/or written format.	30–40%
Source analysis Students are typically provided with source material to analyse and then communicate their understanding of that material and how it relates to course content. Source material may include religious texts (stories, writings, speeches, symbols, artwork), news articles, cartoons, podcasts, radio, television, film, online clips and/or websites. The format for a source analysis requires students to demonstrate their understanding of source material by responding to, for example, scaffolded written and/or oral questions and/or tasks, preparing multimedia presentations, creating objects or other forms of self-expression.	30–40%

Teachers must use the assessment table to develop an assessment outline for the pair of units.

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 Religion and Life Foundation 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	Develops coherent responses that connect and engage with issues and ideas relevant to a study of religion and life.
	Consistently applies course skills to address issues and ideas relevant to a study of religion and life.
	Consistently meets all task requirements, provides relevant supporting detail and uses course specific terms and concepts appropriately.
B	Develops mostly coherent responses that connect issues and ideas relevant to a study of religion and life.
	Often applies course skills to address issues and ideas relevant to a study of religion and life.
	Often meets task requirements, provides supporting detail and mostly uses course-specific terms and concepts appropriately.
C	Develops some coherent responses and often relies upon scaffolds to connect ideas and issues relevant to a study of religion and life.
	Applies course skills, with support, to address issues and ideas relevant to a study of religion and life.
	Meets some task requirements, provides some relevant detail, and generally uses course-specific terms and concepts appropriately.
D	Provides responses that tend to be unclear or have limited relevance to a study of religion and life.
	Demonstrates limited application of course skills, with support, to address issues and ideas relevant to a study of religion and life.
	Occasionally meets some task requirements, provides limited supporting detail, and uses course-specific terms and concepts in simple or limited ways.
E	Does not meet the requirements of a D Grade and/or has completed insufficient assessment tasks to be assigned a higher grade

