



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

AUSLAN (WACE VERSION)

ATAR COURSE

Year 11 and Year 12 syllabus

INFORMATION

This syllabus is effective from 1 January 2021.

Users of this syllabus are responsible for checking its currency.

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

Acknowledgement

This syllabus document has been adapted by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority of Western Australia from the Auslan syllabus produced by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, Victoria, on behalf of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Certification Authorities, in collaboration with:

NSW Education Standards Authority
SACE Board of South Australia
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Introduction

Course

The School Curriculum and Standards Authority accesses the Auslan ATAR syllabus and external examination from Victoria as part of the Collaborative Curriculum and Assessment Framework for Languages (CCAFL). The syllabus content is the equivalent of two years of study, one typically at Year 11 and the other typically at Year 12. Each year of this course is the equivalent of two units for the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) requirements. The notional time for the pair of units is 110 class contact hours.

Delivery requirements

There are two models of delivery for this course. These two models are:

- delivery by a community organisation/school
 - Mode 1: community organisation prepares students to sit the external examination for the course as non-school candidates
 - Mode 2: community organisation delivers the course and students are enrolled in the course through one or more main schools or a single mentor school
- delivery by a registered school.

The *Guidelines for course delivery and assessment of student achievement 2021* provides information about these models. This information can be accessed on the Interstate Languages page at <https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/syllabus-and-support-materials/languages/interstate-languages>.

Target group

This syllabus is designed for both deaf and hearing students who, typically, will have studied Auslan formally for 400 to 500 hours by the time they have completed Year 12. Students with less formal experience may also be able to meet the requirements of the syllabus successfully.

The Auslan language

Auslan (Australian Sign Language) is the language of the Deaf¹ community of Australia and is descended from British Sign Language. Auslan and other signed languages around the world are fully-fledged languages that are visual-gestural in nature. They have a complete set of linguistic structures and are complex and highly nuanced.

Signed languages evolve naturally in Deaf communities, where signers use mutually agreed signs and ways of ordering them to communicate with each other. Signed languages have their own grammar and lexicon, which are not based on the spoken language of the country or region, although they are influenced by them.

Signed languages fulfil the same functions as spoken languages in meeting the communicative, cognitive and social needs of a group of human beings. However, the modalities of a visual-gestural language like Auslan and those of an aural-oral language like English are markedly different.

¹ In referring to deaf people who belong to a linguistic and cultural minority known as the Deaf community, the 'D' may be capitalised in reference to the individual, the culture or the group to accord respect and deference, for example, Deaf teacher. When referring simply to audiological status of a group, that is, deaf children, the lower case as in 'deaf' is the more common usage.

Although signed and spoken languages share many linguistic principles, the visual-gestural modality results in some unique features of signed languages not found in spoken languages. Auslan has no written form and is a highly contextualised language.

The language to be studied and assessed is Auslan. While the value and place of sociolinguistic variation in Auslan from state to state is recognised, competence in the typical syntactic, morphological and discourse structures of Auslan is expected.

Rationale

The study of Auslan contributes to the overall education of students, particularly in the areas of communication, cross-cultural understanding, literacy and general knowledge. It provides access to the culture of the Deaf community. The study promotes understanding of different attitudes and values within the wider Australian community and beyond.

Increased learning of Auslan by deaf and hearing students facilitates communication between deaf and hearing communities, and helps maintain and share the cultural and linguistic heritage of deaf and hearing Australians.

The study of Auslan develops students' ability to understand and use a significant Australian community language and provides an insight into, and an appreciation of, the Australian Deaf community's rich culture and history, as well as an understanding of contemporary life for Deaf Australians. In addition to providing opportunities for engagement with the Deaf community and insight into its rich cultural heritage, learning Auslan develops intercultural capability, understanding and respect for others, appreciation of diversity, and openness to different perspectives and experiences.

Learners of Auslan gain access to additional knowledge and understanding of the nature and purpose of human languages and of the use of a different language modality. In addition, from a vocational perspective, greater participation of deaf people in society in a diverse range of occupations and breadth of community spheres creates possibilities for future career options and personal fulfilment for students of Auslan. Such intercultural learning is essential in the increasingly diverse and changing contexts in which they live and will work.

The ability to communicate in Auslan may, in conjunction with other skills, provide students with enhanced vocational opportunities in fields such as language teaching, teaching deaf children, social work, counselling, healthcare, education, media, legal and social and community service domains.

Course outcomes

The Auslan ATAR course is designed to facilitate achievement of the outcomes listed below, which represent the knowledge, skills and understanding that students will achieve by the end of this course.

Outcome 1 – Exchange information, opinions and experiences

In achieving this outcome the student should demonstrate the knowledge and skills to:

- use grammatical conventions related to exchanging opinions and ideas
- use examples and reasons to justify points of view
- use techniques for extracting information and for clarifying and commenting on topics
- use fillers, affirming phrases and non-manual expressions related to exchanging information
- use cultural conventions related to formal and informal contexts
- compare and contrast aspects of formal and informal exchanges
- maintain, direct and close an exchange.

Outcome 2 – Analyse and use information from a range of signed texts to create original signed texts

In achieving this outcome the student should demonstrate the knowledge and skills to:

- identify and apply the conventions of formal and informal discourse
- infer point of view, opinions and ideas, attitudes and emotions from linguistic and contextual features
- summarise, explain and contrast ideas and information from different signed texts
- extract, classify and reorganise information from a variety of informal signed texts on a given topic
- apply knowledge of grammatical conventions
- apply knowledge of cultural conventions
- infer and convey meaning from linguistic and contextual features.

Outcome 3 – Express and convey ideas through signed texts

In achieving this outcome the student should demonstrate the knowledge and skills to:

- create and participate in personal, informative, narrative, evaluative or persuasive signed discourse
- create and participate in signed texts
- use structures related to explaining, comparing and connecting past, present and future, ideas, events and experiences
- simplify, paraphrase or reorganise more complex ideas
- use cultural conventions related to conveying and expressing ideas
- vary language for context, purpose and audience
- use a range of grammatical techniques such as spatial mapping to comment on events or ideas.

Organisation of content

Unless specified, the following content is relevant to both Year 11 and Year 12. While it is expected that over Year 11 and Year 12 students will cover all of the required content, the exact sequencing and timing of delivery is a school decision. It is also expected that the treatment of the content and the outcomes expected of students will increase in cognitive complexity from Year 11 to Year 12.

Course outline

The teacher determines the sequence in which the syllabus content will be taught and the timing of delivery. The school must provide this information to the students, before teaching begins, in the form of a course outline.

The format for a course outline is a school decision, but each outline must indicate:

- the **timing** of delivery
- the **sequence** in which all the syllabus content will be delivered.

Information about the assessment tasks can be included, but is not essential because it is included in the assessment outline. It is the expectation of the Authority that teachers will develop documents customised to reflect their school's context and the needs of the student cohort. It is also expected that the treatment of the content and the outcomes expected of students will increase in cognitive complexity from Year 11 to Year 12.

Themes, topics and sub-topics

The course content is organised into three prescribed themes:

- The individual
- The Deaf and hearing communities
- The changing world.

The themes have a number of prescribed topics and suggested sub-topics as shown in the table below. The placement of topics under one or more of the three themes is intended to provide a particular perspective or perspectives for each of the topics. The suggested sub-topics expand on the topics and provide guidance to students and teachers on how the topics may be treated. Not all topics will require the same amount of study time. The length of time and depth of treatment for each topic will vary according to the learning requirements being covered and the linguistic needs and interests of students.

Themes	Prescribed topics	Suggested sub-topics
The individual This theme enables students to explore aspects of their personal world; for example, sense of self, aspirations, personal values, opinions, ideas, and relationships with others. The theme also enables students to study topics from the perspective of other people.	Personal identity	For example, deaf/hearing, individuals and groups within the community, multicultural identity, name signs, self-identification, hobbies and personal interests, personal opinions and values, hopes and aspirations.
	Relationships	For example, family, education and aspirations, deaf role models.

The Deaf and hearing communities This theme explores topics from the perspective of groups within those communities or the communities as a whole, and encourages students to reflect on their own culture and other cultures.	Lifestyles	For example, family, teenage life, sport and the Deaf community, rural and metropolitan Deaf communities.
	Arts and entertainment	For example, Theatre of the Deaf, captioning, the Deaf Club.
	Development of the Deaf community	For example, history and traditions, deaf v. Deaf, how Deaf and hearing communities are developed, the role of deaf people in establishing services, Deaf organisations.
	Values, attitudes, beliefs	For example, language policy, Deaf history, participation and membership, World Federation of the Deaf.
The changing world This theme enables students to explore change as it affects aspects of work, social issues and world issues.	Technology	For example, communication techniques, amplification.
	The world of work	For example, people at work including different types of work, work experience and careers, tertiary options, search for work, job applications and interests.
	Travel	For example, making holiday plans, World Federation of the Deaf, other sign language(s), transport.
	Social issues	For example, dealing with conflict, discrimination, debate on cochlear implants, gene technologies.

Signed text types

In their teaching, learning, and assessment programs, teachers should introduce students to a wide range of text types. Students should be familiar with the following signed text types. Signed text types indicated with an asterisk (*) are those that students may be expected to produce in the external examination. Signed text types are broadly categorised as ‘informal’ when referring to spontaneous communication, and ‘formal’ when describing a prepared communication act.

- account
- advice*
- analogy
- anecdote
- announcement
- argument*
- commentary
- comparison
- conversation*
- criticism
- debate
- description*
- folk-tale
- gossip
- greeting or leave-taking*
- instruction
- interview
- introduction (ritual of)*
- invitation
- itinerary
- joke or riddle
- list
- message*
- myth or legend
- personal profile
- play
- poem (visual)
- presentation*
- private talk
- procedure
- recipe*
- report*
- review*
- speech*
- story
- summary

- discussion*
- explanation*
- narrative*
- negotiation*
- survey
- video

Vocabulary

Although there is no prescribed vocabulary list, students should be familiar with a range of vocabulary relevant to the prescribed topics. The teaching of vocabulary, including fingerspelled lexical items, should occur within the appropriate cultural contexts, as signs articulated in isolation may differ when articulated in a signed sequence. Examples of signs, compounds, borrowed signs, blends, loan translations, and the use of initialisation are given in the *Auslan Grammar Video*, which accompanies this syllabus. The *Auslan Grammar Video* contains illustrated examples of the vocabulary and grammar that students are expected to learn.

Dictionaries

Students should be encouraged to use dictionaries. It is expected that teachers will help students to develop the necessary skills and confidence to use dictionaries effectively. Students are allowed to use a dictionary in the external written examination. Students are not permitted to use a dictionary for the external practical (oral) examination. The recommended dictionary for Auslan is: Johnston, T. (1998) *Signs of Australia: A new dictionary of Auslan*. (Sydney: North Rocks Press). An earlier version of this dictionary (1989) would also be acceptable.

Grammar

Grammar can be described as the organisation, and relationship, of all the elements that constitute a language as it functions. There are many different theories of grammar, and a number of different approaches to its teaching and learning. The categories used in this section are neither intended to promote or favour any particular theory of grammar, nor to favour one methodology over another.

Students will already have a reasonable understanding of the function of grammar in Auslan through prior knowledge or study. Developing students' ability to convey meaning effectively in a range of contexts will, however, necessarily involve extending their awareness of the system of structures that underlie the language, as well as their ability to apply and adapt this knowledge.

Students studying Auslan are expected to recognise and use the grammatical items listed on the following pages. These grammatical items are described in the *Auslan Grammar Video* and apply to both Year 11 and Year 12. While it is expected that students will cover all of these items, the exact sequencing and timing of delivery is a teacher decision.

Sub-lexical structures of signs

Parameters and formational properties of signs

- Handshape
- Location
- Movement
- Orientation
- Non-manual features, that is, facial expression, head movement, and their important role in Auslan communication

Morphological and Lexical Structures (types) of signs

Free and fixed signs

- Free morphemes capable of standing alone or occurring on their own in a signed sequence, for example, HOUSE, BOY, JUMP
- Bound morphemes not capable of occurring on their own in a signed sequence but needing to be accompanied by another morpheme, for example, classifiers, temporal aspect
- Inflection, meaning addition or change to one or more of the formational properties of signs, that is, movement, location, to incorporate change in grammatical function

Note: a morpheme is the smallest unit of grammatical meaning.

Adjectives/Adverbs

- One-to-one word–sign correlation
- Signs incorporated into other signs
- Signs occurring in isolation
- Realisation of a great deal of the lexical content of the signs through facial expression
- Use of facial expression for expanding meaning rather than always relying on the use of discrete signs

Classifier signs

Understanding that they do not occur in isolation but are used with the noun referent to which they belong:

Descriptive Classifiers

- Size
- Shape
- Texture
- Arrangement

Note: size and shape classifiers can refer to tracing, handling, or the articulators assuming some of the physical properties of the referent.

Proform Classifiers

- People
- Animals
- Vehicle

Pluralisation of Classifiers

Classifiers are one of the types of signs that can show a pluralisation through an inflectional process, for example, reduplication.

Pronominalised signs (pointing signs)

- When referring to people who are present in the signing space (deictic)
- When referring to people who are not present in the signing space but conceived of as if they were present (anaphoric)

The following pronouns realised as pointing signs, Flat B handshape, A fist, or pointing:

- personal
- possessive
- reflective
- demonstrative (this, that, those, these, here, there)

Verbs

Note: the presence of verbs that inflect for case may impact on the syntactical organisation of the sentence.

Inflection*Aspect*

- Temporal aspect (internal time, emphasising that a particular action is completed, ongoing, habitual, repeated, has commenced but has not finished)
- Distributional aspect (demonstrating quantification, manner, degree, for example, EACH, ALL, SOME)

Case

- Demonstrating the notions of subject–object through inflection realised as a change in either the beginning or the end of the location of the sign; subsequently changing the movement of the sign to reflect the new direction, subject–verb; object–verb, for example, GIVE, BLAME, HELP, SHOW*, TELL*, CRITICISE, TEACH, KISS, SEE*, ASK*.

Note: signs marked with an asterisk (*) are signs that are anchored to the respective body part for the initial location.

Spatial Verbs

Agreement with spatial loci found in neutral space or on the body proper rather than with grammatical locations, for example, FLY, WASH, OPERATE, INJECT, PUNCH, STAB.

Compounds or Blended Signs

For example, in composed signs such as LOOK AFTER, TEST/EVALUATE.

Syntax and Discourse

Contextualisation

- Signs with different meanings used in different contexts – use of these signs as separate lexical items
- Face-to-face interaction between interlocutors leading to the need for less explicitness by providing ample opportunities for clarification/redundancy

Word Order Flexibility

- Potential flexibility of word order in determining meaning normally dependent on the verb
- Relationship between the formation of signs and the way grammatical information is incorporated into signs
- Signing in context, as ideas expressed may be signed in a number of different ways depending on the context in which they arise

Space

The building of visual pictures through:

- real space, that is, shared by signer and interlocutor
- other space, that is, other than the real environment of the signer, such as topographical, surrogate
- use of different structures depending on which signing space the signer is using
- signing of visual pictures from diagram to reflect the different orientation, that is, transposition.

Topicalisation

Note: Research in this area is in its infancy. However, it is clear that Auslan demonstrates a tendency towards a topic–comment structure in some constructions.

- Use of topic–comment structure in some constructions
- Topic used in sentence–initial position
- Non-manual markers of a topic, for example, head nod, pause, raised eyes followed by comment, that is, TOPIC, NON-MANUAL MARKER, AND COMMENT
- Subject–verb order with certain verbs

Note: an alternative structure is subject–verb–object. This may be used only with some verbs. Teachers should be careful with signing everything in subject–verb–object order.

Numerals

The following signs function as numerals:

- cardinal numbers
- ordinal numbers, for example, first, second
- clock time
- denoting ages of people
- numbers incorporated in personal pronouns, for example, TWO OF US
- numbers incorporated in temporal adverbs.

Time Marking

Use of time markers rather than tense markers:

- appropriate placement of time markers, non-manual and manual
- use of time markers to locate events in time; to distinguish between present time, the distant and recent past, near and distant future
- adverbs of time, for example, yesterday, recently, past, will, next week
- timelines
- incorporating dates and events linked to a calendar.

Sign for FINISH

Use of the verb in three different ways:

- indicating a past action
- indicating a completed action, for example, in perfective verb aspect it is often articulated by a spread handshape making it a compound-like sign
- as a connective or sequence, that is, may have English approximation of ‘then’ sequencer.

Pluralisation

In Auslan, a common way of pluralising nouns is by:

- numerical plurals, for example, 3 DOG
- reduplication of signs
- numerical adverbs, for example, MANY, SOME, FEW.

Note: it is not necessary to add fingerspelt ‘s’ to indicate plurality.

Negation

Auslan has a range of possible negation markers:

- non-manual negation characterised by a head-shake that accompanies the signing sequence

- negative adverbs, for example, NO, NOT YET, NEVER, NOTHING, HAVE NONE
- negative inflection, for example, DISAGREE, NOT-BELIEVE, and DON'T WANT.

Note: non-manual negation can be used in combination with negative adverbs and negative inflections. In Auslan, negative adverbs do not always occur next to the verb. They are frequently placed at the end of the signed sequence.

Signing Sequences

Combining signs to form longer sign sequences and the rules that govern their formation.

Questions

- Use of appropriate non-manual markers such as facial expression and body shift
- Yes/no questions
- WH/open information questions

Statements

- Declarative
- Imperative
- Conditional, for example, may use signs such as fingerspelling as IF or PRETEND (equivalent to 'if' or 'suppose' in English) while using non-manual marker, that is, eyebrow raise and slight backward movement of head

Complex Sentences

Formulating complex sentences by using WH signs to link the two separate clauses including the following WH signs: WHO, WHEN, WHERE, WHAT, WHY, WHICH, HOW

Fingerspelling

- Use of two-handed fingerspelling system for names of people, countries, cities, place names
- When there is no sign and the message cannot be conveyed by any other means
- Traditional fingerspelled words that, over time, have become a single sign (lexicalisation), for example, CREAM, SHOES, WEAK
- Importance of fluid patterns of movement rather than speed in relation to fingerspelling (this fluidity is another example of assimilation)

School-based assessment

The *WACE Manual* contains essential information on principles, policies and procedures for school-based assessment that needs to be read in conjunction with this syllabus. The *WACE Manual 2021* is available from the Authority website at <https://www.scsa.wa.edu.au/publications/wace-manual>.

Teachers design school-based assessment tasks to meet the needs of students. The tables below provide details of the assessment types for the Auslan ATAR syllabus and the weightings for each assessment type in Year 11 and Year 12.

Assessment table – Year 11

Type of assessment	Weighting for types
<p>Sign interaction (formal and informal)</p> <p>Students interact with others to exchange information, ideas, opinions, and experiences in Auslan, through formal and informal signed texts. Informal signed texts refer to spontaneous communication, which is not usually recorded. Students may participate in, for example, conversations, narratives, and discussions. The assessments specify the context, purpose, and audience.</p> <p>Text types include interviews (formal and informal), conversations, signed presentations and discussions.</p>	20%
<p>Sign comprehension</p> <p>Students analyse and interpret signed texts and give a response in Auslan and/or English. They interpret meaning and reflect on language use by responding to texts in signed Auslan, for example, stories, jokes, personal accounts, announcements, presentations, signed blogs, interviews, conversations, and signed magazines. Students analyse linguistic and cultural features in signed texts and reflect on how cultures, values, beliefs, practices, and ideas are represented or expressed in signed texts.</p>	20%
<p>Sign production (formal and informal)</p> <p>Students create formal signed texts in which they express ideas and/or information and/or opinions and/or feelings in Auslan. Formal signed texts refer to a communicative act prepared before presentation. Formal signed texts may include signing advice, announcements, descriptions, instructions, interviews, explanations, narratives, personal accounts, presentations, reports, reviews, or responding to signed texts. The assessments specify the context, purpose, and audience, the text type for production and the kind of signing required (e.g. informative, imaginative, narrative, personal, persuasive, or descriptive).</p>	20%
<p>Interactive sign examination (approximately 15 minutes)</p> <p>A representative sample of the syllabus content, based on the external examination specifications.</p>	15%
<p>Sign comprehension and sign production examination (2 hours)</p> <p>A representative sample of the syllabus content, based on the external examination specifications.</p>	25%

Assessment table – Year 12

Type of assessment	Weighting
<p>Sign interaction (formal and informal)</p> <p>Students interact with others to exchange information, ideas, opinions, and experiences in Auslan, through formal and informal signed texts. Informal signed texts refer to spontaneous communication, which is not usually recorded. Students may participate in, for example, conversations, narratives, and discussions. The assessments specify the context, purpose, and audience.</p> <p>Text types include interviews (formal and informal), conversations, signed presentations and discussions.</p>	20%
<p>Sign comprehension</p> <p>Students analyse and interpret signed texts and give a response in Auslan and/or English. They interpret meaning and reflect on language use by responding to texts in signed Auslan, for example, stories, jokes, personal accounts, announcements, presentations, signed blogs, interviews, conversations, and signed magazines. Students analyse linguistic and cultural features in signed texts and reflect on how cultures, values, beliefs, practices, and ideas are represented or expressed in signed texts.</p>	15%
<p>Sign production (formal and informal)</p> <p>Students create formal signed texts in which they express ideas and/or information and/or opinions and/or feelings in Auslan. Formal signed texts refer to a communicative act prepared before presentation. Formal signed texts may include signing advice, announcements, descriptions, instructions, interviews, explanations, narratives, personal accounts, presentations, reports, reviews, or responding to signed texts. The assessments specify the context, purpose, and audience, the text type for production and the kind of signing required (e.g. informative, imaginative, narrative, personal, persuasive, or descriptive).</p>	15%
<p>Interactive sign examination (approximately 15 minutes)</p> <p>A representative sample of the syllabus content, based on the external examination specifications.</p>	20%
<p>Sign comprehension and sign production examination (2 hours)</p> <p>A representative sample of the syllabus content, based on the external examination specifications.</p>	30%

Teachers are required to use the assessment tables to develop an assessment outline for Year 11 and an assessment outline for Year 12.

The format for an assessment outline is a school decision, but each outline for a pair of units must include the following information:

- the number of tasks to be assessed
- a general description of each task
- the assessment type, as prescribed in the syllabus
- an indication of the syllabus content on which each task is based
- the approximate timing of each task (i.e. the week the task will be conducted or the start and submission dates for an extended task)
- the weighting of each assessment task
- the weighting of each assessment type, as prescribed in the assessment table of the syllabus.

In the assessment outline for each year, each assessment type must be included at least twice. The number of assessment tasks is determined by the teacher. The set of assessment tasks must provide a representative sampling of the syllabus content. Assessment tasks not administered under test/controlled conditions require appropriate validation/authentication processes. Appendix 1 contains a sample assessment outline for Year 11 (Unit 1 and Unit 2) and Year 12 (Unit 3 and Unit 4) of this course. Teachers can use this as the basis of the assessment outline for their class.

The detailed study

Students are required to undertake a detailed study in Year 12. Students will be expected to discuss their detailed study in Section 2, Presentation and response, of the external interactive sign examination.

Approximately 15 hours of scheduled class time should be devoted to the detailed study.

Students undertake a detailed study demonstrating research, analysis, and personal reflection on an aspect or aspects of a topic associated with 'The Deaf Community' or 'The Changing World' themes. The detailed study should be based on a sub-topic related to either *The Deaf and hearing communities* or *The changing world*. The sub-topic may be drawn from the table on page 5, or a different sub-topic may be selected.

One sub-topic may be selected for a whole class. It will be important to select a sub-topic that is sufficiently broad to accommodate a range of interests and perspectives, so that each student can provide an individual response to the school-based assessment task(s) set, as well as in Section 2 of the interactive sign examination.

At least one of the school-based assessment tasks in Year 12 should focus on the detailed study. This could be, for example:

- an informal signed discussion in Auslan (4 to 5 minutes)
- a formal signed presentation in Auslan (3 to 5 minutes)
- a reflective response in Auslan or English (3 to 5 minutes in Auslan or 600 words in English).

The assessments should differ in context, audience, and purpose, and be supported by evidence of research, text analysis, and preparation.

The detailed study assessment task(s) should be designed to assess students' understanding of the language and culture of the Deaf community. It should enable students to explore and compare aspects of the language and culture of the Deaf community through a range of signed texts in Auslan related to the selected sub-topic. This will develop students' knowledge and understanding of, for example, historical issues, aspects of contemporary society or the literary or artistic heritage of the community.

The texts which form the basis of this study might include films, short stories, news articles, electronic texts, documentaries, paintings and signed narratives and histories. The length of texts selected will vary depending on the type of text, its density and level of complexity. In order for students to be able to explore their sub-topic in sufficient depth to meet the relevant outcomes, it is suggested that a range of at least three different kinds of texts are selected. These might include signed and visual, as well as written texts.

Students should collate evidence of their preparation for the detailed study. Evidence may be presented in visual (e.g. video, DVD) or written form. Such evidence may include:

- a plan for the formal signed presentation
- a draft of the response in Auslan
- a draft of the response in English
- personal notes, paragraphs, or short summaries relating to the text
- charts, maps, diagrams, pictures, as appropriate
- a bibliography or references.

Suggested areas for the detailed study

The table below shows possible sub-topics that might form the focus of a detailed study. Teachers may choose to focus on one of these areas, or where they can be linked, focus on more than one area.

Themes	Topic	Possible sub-topics for the detailed study
The individual	Personal identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deaf/hearing • Individuals and groups within the community • Multicultural identity • Name signs • Self-identification • Hobbies and personal interests • Personal opinions and values • Hopes and aspirations
	Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family • Education and aspirations • Deaf role models
The Deaf and hearing communities	Deaf and hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family, teenage life • Sport and the deaf community • Rural and metropolitan deaf Communities
	Arts and entertainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theatre of the Deaf • Captioning • The Deaf Club
	Development of the Deaf community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History and traditions • Deaf v. deaf • How deaf and hearing communities are developed • The role of deaf people in establishing services • Deaf organisations
	Values, attitudes, beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language policy • Deaf history • Participation and membership • World federation of the deaf

Themes	Topic	Possible sub-topics for the detailed study
The changing world	The world of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People at work • Including different • Types of work • Work experience and careers, tertiary options, search for work, job applications and interests
	Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making holiday plans • World federation of the deaf • Other sign language(s) • Transport
	Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Techniques • Amplification
	Social issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with conflict • Discrimination • Debate on cochlear implants • Gene technologies

Grading

Schools report student achievement in completed ATAR units in grades. The grade assigned describes the overall achievement of a student for the completed pair of units (or unit, where a single Year 11 unit is studied). The following grades are used:

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

The grade is based on the student's overall performance as judged by reference to a set of pre-determined standards. These standards are defined by grade descriptions. The grade descriptions for the Auslan ATAR course are provided in Appendix 2.

Grade descriptions:

- relate directly to the syllabus content
- describe the general characteristics of student achievement at each grade
- express, in positive terms, what a student knows, understands and is able to do
- clearly define the level of proficiency for each grade on a continuum of performance
- provide a guide for teachers when developing teaching and assessment programs
- provide improvement targets for students
- provide a guide to parents, employers and post-school education and training providers of the relative achievement of students against defined achievement standards

To be assigned a grade, a student must have had the opportunity to complete the teaching and learning program, including the assessment program.

Assigning grades

To assign a grade at the completion of the pair of units (or unit, where a single Year 11 unit is studied), the teacher:

- generates a **ranked list** of all students based on the weighted mark out of 100 using the school's assessment outline
- identifies from the ranked list the points where a **change of standard** is evident
- examines the work of the students either side of this point
- assigns a grade with reference to the grade descriptions.

For further information about the process of generating a ranked list and assigning grades see Section 2.4.3 in the *WACE Manual*.

Students who enrol to sit the external examination as a non-school candidate are not assigned a grade.

External examination

The external examination consists of:

- an interactive sign examination
- a sign comprehension and sign production examination.

Examination specifications

Interactive sign examination

Time allocation – approximately 15 minutes

Section I Conversation and discussion (informal conversation) – approximately 7 minutes

Section II Presentation and response (presentation and formal) – approximately 8 minutes

Sign comprehension and sign production examination

Time allocation – 2 hours (reading of instructions and/or viewing 10 minutes; viewing and recording time 2 hours)

Section I Watching and responding to informal signed texts

Section II Watching and responding to formal signed texts

Note: all responses will be recorded.

Interactive sign examination (approximately 15 minutes)

Purpose

The interactive sign examination is designed primarily to assess the candidate's knowledge and skill in using Auslan for conversation, reporting and discussion purposes. It relates to all objectives and outcomes.

Specifications

The interactive sign examination has two sections.

Section 1: Conversation and discussion (approximately 7 minutes)

The examination will begin with introductions and a conversation between the candidate and the examiner(s). It will consist of an informal conversation about the candidate's personal world, e.g. life, family and friends, interests, aspirations and current events. It will be followed by an informal discussion expanding on one or more of these areas.

Section 2: Presentation and response (approximately 8 minutes)

Following the informal conversation and informal discussion the candidate will indicate to the examiner(s) the topic chosen for response from the candidate's area of interest. The candidate may support the Presentation (3 minutes) and Response (5 minutes) with objects such as photographs, diagrams, and maps. Notes and cue cards are not permitted. Upon completion of the presentation, the candidate will respond to questions raised on the presentation by the examiners.

Sign comprehension and sign production examination (2 hours)

The instructions will be available to the candidate on videotape in Auslan and written in English. The student may use a bilingual print dictionary in the examination.

Section 1: Watching and responding to informal signed texts

(The use of the term informal signed texts here refers to spontaneous communication, namely, that which is not normally recorded.)

Purpose

Section I of the Sign comprehension and sign production examination is designed primarily to assess the candidate's knowledge and skill in analysing and responding to information from informal signed texts.

Specifications

Section 1 of the Sign comprehension and sign production examination, will be related to one or more of the prescribed themes. The candidate will observe an informal signed discourse. This signed discourse will be a video recorded performance. The duration of this signed discourse will be 5–7 minutes. The candidate will have an opportunity to observe this performance three times. There will be a two-minute pause between each performance during which the candidate may take notes. The questions will be available to the candidate in Auslan and written in English. The candidate will be expected to respond in Auslan to a set task, for example, responding to a message or an announcement. The length of the response will be 2–3 minutes.

Section 2: Watching and responding to formal signed texts

(The use of the term formal signed texts here refers to a communicative act prepared prior to presentation.)

Purpose

Section 2 of the sign comprehension and sign production examination is designed primarily to assess the candidate's knowledge and skill in analysing and responding to information from formally signed texts.

Specifications

The candidate will watch a pre-recorded formal signed discourse. The duration of the signed discourse will be 3–5 minutes. The candidate will be required to produce a response in Auslan to the signed text. The task will specify a purpose, context and audience. The length of the response will be approximately 3–4 minutes.

Appendix 1 – Sample assessment outline Year 11

Assessment type and type weighting	Assessment task weighting	When	Assessment task	Content*
Sign interaction 20%	6.6%	Semester 1 Week 7	Task 2 Respond to an account or message and participate in greeting and leave-taking routines.	Suggested topic: The individual – relationships Text types: account, message, description, conversation, greeting/leave-taking and introduction rituals Grammar: depicting signs (classifiers), questions, statements, sequencing
	6.6%	Semester 2 Week 8	Task 8 Participate in an informal and a formal conversation, in a social situation, real or simulated.	Suggested topic: The Deaf and hearing communities – sport Text types: conversation, discussion, interview Grammar: questions; use of space; verbs; depicting signs (classifiers); pronominalised signs
	6.8%	Semester 2 Week 12	Task 10 View signed text and re-tell or rephrase, suggesting a possible course of action, and discuss options leading to an agreement.	Suggested topic: The changing world – travel Text types: conversation, discussion, argument, negotiation, debate, itinerary Grammar: questions; use of space; topicalisation; numerals; fingerspelling; signs for FINISH; pronominalised signs
Sign comprehension 20%	6.6%	Semester 1 Week 4	Task 1 View signed texts such as conversations and interviews to obtain specific information.	Suggested topic: The individual – personal identity Text types: conversation; interview Grammar: depicting signs (classifiers); adjectives, adverbs, time markers
	6.6%	Semester 2 Week 10	Task 9 View signed texts such as directions and advice, and decide on an appropriate course of action.	Suggested topic: The changing world – technology Text types: conversation, explanation, advice, list, review Grammar: questions; pluralisation; prepositions
	6.8%	Semester 2 Week 4	Task 6 View at least two different signed text types and identify similarities and differences.	Suggested topic: The Deaf and hearing communities – values, attitudes and beliefs Text types: review, presentation, summary Grammar: wide range of grammar from the syllabus

Assessment type and type weighting	Assessment task weighting	When	Assessment task	Content*
Sign production 20%	6.6%	Semester 1 Week 13	Task 4 Sign an announcement, news story or explanation.	Suggested topic: The changing world – social issues Text types: anecdote, announcement, news item, presentation, report Grammar: conjunctions, conditional sentences, time markers
	6.6%	Semester 1 Week 10	Task 3 Participate in a personal or imaginative signed presentation.	Suggested topic: The individual – family Text types: conversation, discussion, presentation Grammar: questions; negation; complex sentences; conjunctions; superlatives
	6.8%	Semester 2 Week 6	Task 7 Create a personal account or sign a narrative.	Suggested topic: Arts and entertainment Text types: folk tale, narrative, joke or riddle Grammar: wide range of grammar from the syllabus
Interactive sign examination 15%	7.5%	Semester 1 Week 15	Task 5A: Semester 1 Examination Sign interaction	A signed conversation/presentation/response based on the external examination specifications.
	7.5%	Semester 2 Week 15	Task 11A: Semester 2 Examination Sign interaction	A signed conversation/presentation/response based on the external examination specifications.
Sign comprehension and sign production examination 25%	6.25%	Semester 1 Week 15	Task 5B: Semester 1 Examination Sign comprehension	View and respond to formal and informal signed texts, based on a representative sample of the syllabus content and the external examination specifications.
	6.25%		Sign production	
	6.25%	Semester 2 Week 15	Task 11B: Semester 2 Examination Sign comprehension	
	6.25%		Sign production	

* The course content is organised into three prescribed themes: 1) the individual; 2) the Deaf and hearing communities; 3) the changing world

NB: All task responses for Units 1 and 2 should be 2–4 minutes in length.

Appendix 2 – Sample assessment outline Year 12

Assessment type and type weighting	Assessment task weighting	When	Assessment task	Content*
Sign interaction 20%	10%	Semester 1 Week 4	Task 1 Interact informally with an unfamiliar Deaf guest on the topic of natural disasters/emergencies, and participate in introduction, greeting and leave-taking routines.	Topic: The changing world – natural disasters/emergencies Text types: account, message, description, conversation, greeting/leave-taking and introduction rituals Grammar: depicting signs (classifiers), questions, use of space, constructed action, statements, sequencing.
	10%	Semester 2 Week 3	Task 5 Participate in a formal interview situation regarding employment aspirations and work opportunities. Engage in introduction, greeting and leave-taking routines.	Topic: The individual; The changing world – aspirations, employment, personal interests Text types: conversation, discussion, interview Grammar: questions; use of space; verbs; depicting signs (classifiers); pronominalised signs
Sign comprehension 15%	7.5%	Semester 1 Week 7	Task 2 View two different pieces of footage re: informal discussions of pros and cons of options re: car purchasing to obtain specific information, infer opinion, contrast, evaluate and analyse options, and provide a response.	Topic: The individual – personal values, purchasing goods Text types: account, advice, description, explanation, review, anecdote, summary, comparison, negotiation Grammar: depicting signs (classifiers); adjectives, adverbs, time markers, spatial verbs, numerals.
	7.5%	Semester 2 Week 5	Task 6 View two formal signed texts on the law and technology re: cyber-safety, which offer various experiences, and directions and advice, and decide on an appropriate course of action, justifying your perspective.	Topic: The changing world – law/technology Text types: anecdote, explanation, advice, list, review Grammar: questions; pluralisation; prepositions, spatial verbs, numerals, time markers.

Assessment type and type weighting	Assessment task weighting	When	Assessment task	Content*
Sign production 15%	7.5%	Semester 1 Week 10	Task 3 Sign an informal but informative text that presents various views, supported by research evidence, re: Baby signing movement and L1 / L2 acquisition.	Topic: The Deaf and hearing communities Text types: announcement, news item, presentation, report, comparison, report Grammar: topicalisation, conjunctions, conditional sentences, pronominalised signs, inflection, contextualisation, statements, complex sentences.
	7.5%	Semester 2 Week 7	Task 7 Present a formal signed presentation on a culture topic selected from a range of options provided. Submissions must be based on evidence.	Topic: The Deaf and hearing communities Text types: presentation Grammar: topicalisation, compare and contrast, complex sentences; conjunctions; superlatives, spatial placement, inflection.
Interactive sign examination 20%	10%	Semester 1 Week 15	Task 4A: Semester 1 Examination Sign interaction	A signed conversation/presentation/response based on the external examination specifications.
	10%	Semester 2 Week 10	Task 8A: Semester 2 Examination Sign interaction	A signed conversation/presentation/response based on the external examination specifications.
Sign comprehension and sign production examination 30%	7.5%	Semester 1 Week 16	Task 4B: Semester 1 Examination Sign comprehension	View and respond to formal and informal signed texts, based on a representative sample of the syllabus content and the external examination specifications.
	7.5%		Sign production	
	7.5%	Semester 2 Week 10	Task 8B: Semester 2 Examination Sign comprehension	
	7.5%		Sign production	

* The course content is organised into three prescribed themes: 1) the individual; 2) the Deaf and hearing communities; 3) the changing world.

NB: All task responses for Units 3 and 4 should be 3–5 minutes in length

Appendix 3 – Grade descriptions Year 11 and 12

A	<p>Sign interaction</p> <p>Expresses a wide range of relevant ideas in a logical and cohesive manner and supports these with reasons, examples, evidence or new ideas.</p> <p>Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge and application of Auslan grammar, cultural conventions and vocabulary.</p> <p>Conveys information spontaneously and uses a broad range of stylistic and non-manual features, greetings and leave-taking routines and signing space.</p> <p>Engages effectively with the partner and effectively uses a broad range of appropriate communication strategies to develop and maintain the exchange.</p>
	<p>Sign comprehension</p> <p>Employs a wide range of techniques to extract, classify and reorganise information and to summarise, explain and contrast ideas from signed texts within familiar and unfamiliar contexts.</p> <p>Comprehensively infers points of view, opinions and ideas, attitudes and emotions from linguistic and contextual features.</p> <p>Effectively structures and sequences ideas and information in the response to convey meaning.</p> <p>Uses an extensive range of signs accurately and appropriately to adapt information from signed texts to suit the purpose of the response/s.</p>
	<p>Sign production</p> <p>Demonstrates comprehensive understanding of the features of informal signed discourse, including grammatical and cultural conventions for expressing ideas.</p> <p>Shows a highly developed ability to create an effective signed text.</p> <p>Structures and sequences ideas effectively to provide a highly relevant and comprehensive commentary.</p> <p>Accurately uses a broad range of language, including vocabulary and grammar, appropriate for the audience, context, purpose and signed text type.</p> <p>Uses a wide range of communication techniques accurately and appropriately to explain, compare and connect ideas, events and experiences and to maintain the presentation.</p>
B	<p>Sign interaction</p> <p>Expresses and combines a range of relevant ideas in a cohesive manner, and generally supports these with reasons, examples, and evidence or new ideas. Clearly conveys meaning in a spontaneous exchange.</p> <p>Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary and grammar, non-manual features, greetings and leave-taking routines and signing space.</p> <p>Engages well with the partner and uses a range of appropriate communication strategies to develop and maintain the exchange.</p>
	<p>Sign comprehension</p> <p>Employs a range of techniques to extract, classify and reorganise information and to summarise, explain and contrast ideas from signed texts within familiar and unfamiliar contexts.</p> <p>Infers points of view, opinions and ideas, attitudes and emotions from linguistic and contextual features.</p> <p>Structures and sequences ideas and information in the response to convey meaning.</p> <p>Uses a range of signs accurately and appropriately to adapt information from signed texts to suit the purpose of the response/s.</p>
	<p>Sign production</p> <p>Demonstrates a sound understanding of the features of formal signed discourse, including grammatical and cultural conventions for expressing ideas and creating an effective signed text.</p> <p>Structures and sequences ideas to provide a relevant and comprehensive commentary.</p> <p>Accurately uses a range of language, appropriate for the audience, context, purpose and signed text type.</p> <p>Uses a range of communication techniques accurately and appropriately to explain, compare or connect ideas, events and experiences and to maintain the presentation.</p>

C	<p>Sign interaction</p> <p>Expresses and combines some relevant ideas in the exchange, and supports some with reasons, examples, evidence or new ideas.</p> <p>Conveys meaning in the exchange through the use of appropriate vocabulary and grammar, non-manual features, greetings and leave-taking routines and signing space, although some inaccuracies may occur.</p> <p>Generally engages with the partner and uses some appropriate communication strategies to develop and maintain the exchange, although some assistance in advancing the exchange may be needed.</p>
	<p>Sign comprehension</p> <p>Identifies, extracts, classifies, summarises and/or contrasts some general and specific items of information from familiar and unfamiliar contexts.</p> <p>Demonstrates some ability to infer meaning from linguistic and contextual features.</p> <p>Uses signs, grammar and vocabulary generally appropriately, although some inaccuracies may occur.</p> <p>Organises and logically sequences ideas and information in the response, but may lack coherence in conveying overall meaning.</p>
	<p>Sign production</p> <p>Uses some features of personal, informative, narrative, evaluative or persuasive informal signed discourse, including grammatical and cultural conventions to express ideas.</p> <p>Organises ideas to provide a commentary that is generally relevant and covers a range of aspects of the topic.</p> <p>Uses language, including vocabulary and grammar that is generally appropriate for the audience, context, purpose and signed text type, although some inaccuracies are evident.</p> <p>Uses some communication techniques to maintain the presentation.</p>
D	<p>Sign interaction</p> <p>Expresses a limited range of ideas in the exchange, with little support of opinions evident.</p> <p>Conveys limited meaning in the exchange, which may be unclear through the use of a narrow range of vocabulary and grammar.</p> <p>Shows evidence of inaccuracies.</p> <p>Needs support to engage with the partner and to maintain and participate in the exchange.</p>
	<p>Sign comprehension</p> <p>Identifies, extracts, classifies, summarises and/or contrasts limited information from familiar and unfamiliar contexts.</p> <p>Infers limited meaning from linguistic and contextual features.</p> <p>Uses signs, grammar and vocabulary, although inaccuracies and omissions limit their effectiveness.</p> <p>Presents ideas and information that show little organisation or sequencing to convey consistent overall meaning.</p>
	<p>Sign production</p> <p>Shows limited ability to create and present a signed text with appropriate content related to the topic.</p> <p>Uses a narrow range of signs, grammar and vocabulary; meaning may be unclear due to limited organisation and sequencing of ideas.</p> <p>Uses some language features and communication strategies that are generally appropriate for the audience, context, purpose and signed text type, but inaccuracies may interfere with meaning.</p> <p>Uses limited communication techniques to maintain the presentation.</p>
E	<p>Does not meet the requirements of a D grade.</p>