



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

ANIMAL PRODUCTION SYSTEMS

ATAR COURSE

Year 11 syllabus

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This syllabus is effective from 1 January 2017.

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.

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Content

Rationale	1
Course outcomes	2
Organisation	3
Structure of the syllabus	3
Organisation of content	3
Representation of the general capabilities	4
Representation of the cross-curriculum priorities	5
Unit 1	7
Unit description	7
Unit content	7
Unit 2	9
Unit description	9
Unit content	9
School-based assessment	12
Grading	13
Appendix 1 – Grade descriptions Year 11	14
Appendix 2 – Glossary	16

Rationale

The Animal Production Systems ATAR course enables students to develop knowledge and skills related to the sustainable use of resources, and the production and marketing of a range of animals and their products. Students explore the ways that people manage natural resources, such as plants, animals, soil and water, to meet personal and community needs. They evaluate food and fibre production systems, sustainable practices, new technologies, consumer-driven economics, animal welfare and product marketing.

Animal production systems are a fundamental component of agriculture, which has never been more important than in the twenty-first century. Agricultural output and productivity are expected to continue to increase as the world's population reaches an estimated nine billion by 2050. International demand for high quality and safe food and fibre products, particularly from Asia, predicts a positive outlook for the State's agriculture and food sector, while managing biosecurity and minimising the impact of climate variability have become more important in order to remain sustainable and globally competitive. Other challenges include the ever-increasing competition for natural resources, environmental degradation, and animal welfare and food safety issues.

Australia is well positioned to maintain its reputation for 'clean and green' products, and to be a world leader in agricultural production. There will continue to be a demand for people skilled in combining scarce resources and for innovative methods of production.

Course outcomes

The Animal Production Systems ATAR course is designed to facilitate achievement of the following outcomes.

Outcome 1 – Investigating animal production

Students use investigative processes to address animal production challenges.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- investigate issues, needs and opportunities related to animal production challenges
- generate proposals to address animal production challenges
- collect evidence from own or others' investigations, evaluate solutions and processes, and communicate findings.

Outcome 2 – Animal production principles

Students understand the principles and practices underpinning efficient and sustainable animal production systems.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- understand the structure and function of a range of animals or production systems
- understand the interdependence of the elements of natural systems and animal production systems
- understand management strategies underpinning animal production systems.

Outcome 3 – Animal production practices

Students apply skills and technologies to achieve efficient and sustainable animal production and marketing.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- select and use safely technologies and skills for animal production
- apply skills to manage production in a sustainable manner
- apply economic and management practices to optimise viable animal production.

Outcome 4 – Agriculture, society and environment

Students understand the relationships between agriculture, society and the environment.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- understand the role of agriculture in shaping the environment and its involvement in developing Australian societies
- understand that economic and technological trends, and cultural beliefs and values, affect animal production systems.

Organisation

This course is organised into a Year 11 syllabus and a Year 12 syllabus. The cognitive complexity of the syllabus content increases from Year 11 to Year 12.

Structure of the syllabus

The Year 11 syllabus is divided into two units, each of one semester duration, which are typically delivered as a pair. The notional time for each unit is 55 class contact hours.

Unit 1

In this unit, students learn about different digestive processes in livestock and the impacts of animal production on the natural environment.

Unit 2

In this unit, students learn about reproductive processes and breeding cycles in selected livestock.

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

This course has nine content areas:

- Systems ecology
- Animal structure and function
- Animal nutrition
- Animal health
- Breeding and improvement
- Economics, finance and markets
- Sustainable production
- Investigating animal production
- Produce for purpose

The content should be based around one or more animal production enterprises.

Safety

Learning experiences may involve the use of potentially hazardous substances and/or hazardous equipment. It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that duty of care is exercised in relation to the health and safety of all students and that school practices meet the requirements of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*, in addition to relevant state or territory health and safety guidelines.

Animal ethics

Any teaching activities that involve the care and use of, or interaction with, animals must comply with the *Australian code of practice for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th edition 2013* (www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/ea28), in addition to relevant state or territory guidelines.

Representation of the general capabilities

The general capabilities encompass the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that will assist students to live and work successfully in the twenty-first century. Teachers may find opportunities to incorporate the capabilities into the teaching and learning program for the Animal Production Systems ATAR course. The general capabilities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

Literacy

Literacy is important in students' development of investigative skills and their understanding of content. Students gather, interpret, synthesise and critically analyse information presented in a wide range of forms. They evaluate information sources and compare and contrast ideas, information and opinions presented within and between texts. They communicate processes and ideas logically and fluently and structure evidence-based arguments, and employ appropriate methods to communicate for specific purposes and audiences.

Numeracy

Numeracy is key to students' ability to apply a wide range of skills, including making and recording observations; ordering, representing and analysing data; and interpreting trends and relationships. They employ numeracy skills to interpret spatial and graphic representations, and to appreciate the ways in which agricultural systems are structured, interact and change. They engage in analysis of data, including issues relating to reliability and probability, and they interpret and manipulate mathematical relationships to calculate and predict values. In the Animal Production Systems course, students also use numeracy skills in the form of budgets and marketing decision making.

Information and communication technology capability

Students apply information and communication technology skills in a contemporary agricultural context. Students use a range of strategies to locate, access and evaluate information from multiple digital sources; to collect, analyse and represent data; to model and interpret concepts and relationships; and to communicate and share ideas, processes and information. Students assess the impact of ICT on the productivity, efficiency and sustainability of agricultural systems.

Critical and creative thinking

Critical and creative thinking is particularly important in the investigative process. This requires the ability to construct, review and revise questions and hypotheses about increasingly complex and abstract scenarios and to design-related investigation methods. Students interpret and evaluate data; interrogate, select and cross-reference evidence; and analyse processes, interpretations, conclusions and claims for validity and reliability, including reflecting on their own processes and conclusions. Students devise innovative solutions to problems, predict possibilities, envisage consequences and speculate on possible outcomes. They also appreciate the role of critical and creative individuals and the central importance of critique and review.

Personal and social capability

Students develop and practise skills of communication, teamwork, decision making, and self-discipline with increasing confidence and sophistication. Students develop skills in both independent and collaborative investigation; they employ self-management skills to plan effectively, follow procedures efficiently, work safely, share research and discuss ideas. Students also recognise the role of their own beliefs and attitudes in their response to issues and applications, consider the perspectives of others, and gauge how these can affect people's lives.

Ethical understanding

Students evaluate the ethics of experimental science, codes of practice, and the use of scientific information and science applications. They explore what integrity means in science, and they understand, critically analyse and apply ethical guidelines in their investigations. They use scientific information to evaluate the claims and actions of others and to inform ethical decisions about a range of social, environmental and personal issues and applications of science.

Intercultural understanding

Students appreciate the contributions of diverse cultures to developing science understanding and the challenges of working in culturally diverse collaborations. They develop awareness that raising some debates within culturally diverse groups requires cultural sensitivity, and they demonstrate open-mindedness to the positions of others. Students also develop an understanding that cultural factors affect the ways in which science influences, and is influenced by, society.

Representation of the cross-curriculum priorities

The cross-curriculum priorities address the contemporary issues which students face in a globalised world. Teachers may find opportunities to incorporate the priorities into the teaching and learning program for the Animal Production Systems ATAR course. The cross-curriculum priorities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

Through an investigation of contexts that draw on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, students can investigate the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' knowledge in developing a richer understanding of the Australian environment. Students develop an appreciation of the unique Australian biota and its interactions, the impacts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples on their environments, and the ways in which the Australian landscape has changed over tens of thousands of years. They can examine the ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge of ecosystems has developed over time, and the spiritual significance of Country/Place.

Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia

Contexts that draw on Asian scientific research and development, and collaborative endeavours in the Asia Pacific region, provide an opportunity for students to investigate Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia. Students explore the diverse environments of the Asia region and develop an appreciation that interaction between human activity and these environments continues to influence the region, including Australia, and has significance for the rest of the world.

By examining developments in agriculture, students appreciate that the Asia region plays an important role in such areas as natural resource management, biosecurity and food security.

Sustainability

The Sustainability cross-curriculum priority is explicitly addressed in the Animal Production Systems ATAR course. Agriculture provides authentic contexts for exploring, investigating and understanding the function and interactions of agricultural systems across a range of spatial and temporal scales. By investigating the relationships between agricultural systems and system components, and how systems respond to change, students develop an appreciation for the interconnectedness of the biosphere. Students appreciate that agriculture provides the basis for decision making in many areas of society and that these decisions can impact the Earth system. They understand the importance of using agricultural science to predict possible effects of human and other activity, and to develop management plans or alternative technologies that minimise these effects and provide for a more sustainable future.

Unit 1

Unit description

In this unit students learn about different digestive processes in livestock. They consider how feed rations change depending on physiological state. Students learn about the impacts of animal production on the natural environment, and stewardship of natural and farming resources. They learn about the value of domestic animal production, and marketing options. Students will be involved in an investigation and will learn to identify the elements of valid experimental design. Students apply breed selection criteria to produce to market requirements profitably.

The content should be based around one or more animal production enterprises.

Unit content

An understanding of the Year 11 content is assumed knowledge for students in Year 12. It is recommended that students studying Unit 3 and Unit 4 have completed Unit 1 and Unit 2.

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

Knowledge and management of animal production systems

Systems ecology

- impact of animal production systems on natural ecosystems, including
 - the effects on soils
 - water quality
 - atmospheric and soil pollution
 - loss of biodiversity
- effects of pesticides on the environment

Animal structure and function

- processes of gastric digestion
- microbial digestion in herbivores

Animal nutrition

- feed rations for maintenance, growth and reproduction

Animal health

- impact of pests and diseases on production systems
- life cycles of selected external and internal pests and diseases
- assess pest and disease risk
- biosecurity measures to reduce risk from pests and diseases
- factors influencing pest and disease control programs

Breeding and improvement

- aims of breeding and selection, including profitability and meeting market requirements
- sources of genetic variation
- selection criteria, including subjective and objective characteristics

Economics, finance and markets

- quantity and value of domestic animal production
- marketing options for animal products
- assess resources used in enterprises

Sustainable production

- maintaining and improving the quality of soil and water
- stewardship of natural and farming resources, including technologies
- complying with industry codes of practice

Investigating animal production

- develop hypotheses to test, based on prior information
- design and conduct an investigation considering aspects of experimental design, including variables and controls
- analyse and interpret data, including calculating means
- present data using appropriate methods
- draw conclusions, based on experimental data and validate from other sources

Produce for purpose

- implement a calendar of operations for a selected animal enterprise
- identify legal requirements of owning livestock

Unit 2

Unit description

In this unit students learn about reproductive processes, and breeding cycles in selected livestock. They learn to apply this knowledge to manage natural breeding programs. Students learn about the principles of genetics and the effect of interactions between genotype and environment and how this can influence animal breeding. They learn about monitoring and managing pest populations and identify risks to sustainable production. They learn how immunity develops from a scheduled vaccination program. They will learn about the relationship between feed on offer and stocking rates. Students learn about the factors affecting supply and demand for an animal product, and how to prepare budgets for an enterprise.

The content should be based around one or more animal production enterprises.

Unit content

This unit builds on the content covered in Unit 1.

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

Knowledge and management of animal production systems

Systems ecology

- benefits to animal production systems of ecosystem components, including
 - clean water
 - plant pollination
 - nutrient cycling
 - pest and disease management

Animal structure and function

- reproductive processes, including conception, pregnancy, birth, lactation
- breeding cycles in selected livestock

Animal nutrition

- feed on offer (FOO), stocking rates, and dry sheep equivalent (DSE)
- feed intake and feed conversion ratios

Animal health

- immune system, including antibody, antigen, immunity, antitoxin, passive and active immunity
- use of vaccination programs to promote immunity
- monitoring pests and diseases in a production system
- pest and disease management options, including integrated pest management (IPM)
- factors affecting the selection of pesticides, including withholding periods

Breeding and improvement

- genetic terms, including
 - gametes
 - chromosomes
 - genes
 - alleles
 - dominant
 - recessive
 - genotype
 - phenotype
- predict outcomes of crosses using punnett squares
- interactions between genotype and environment (GxE)
- breeding systems, including inbreeding, line breeding, and crossbreeding
- management of natural breeding programs

Economics, finance and markets

- applying the law of the minimum to animal production
- factors affecting supply and demand
- interpretation of supply and demand information for a product
- preparation of budgets for an enterprise and identification of items likely to impact on profit

Sustainable production

- identify risks to sustainable production
- review the sustainability of current management practices
- government legislation relating to a selected enterprise

Investigating animal production

- develop hypotheses to test, based on prior information
- design and conduct an investigation considering aspects of experimental design, including variables and controls
- analyse and interpret data, including calculating means
- present data using appropriate methods
- draw conclusions, based on experimental data and validate from other sources

Produce for purpose

- select animals to meet market requirements
- manage animals to optimise profitability
- assess quality of product against market specifications
- identify quality assurance programs for selected animal production systems, including their purpose and major features
- identify transport and storage requirements for animal products

School-based assessment

The Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) Manual contains essential information on principles, policies and procedures for school-based assessment that needs to be read in conjunction with this syllabus.

Teachers design school-based assessment tasks to meet the needs of students. The table below provides details of the assessment types for the Animal Production Systems ATAR Year 11 syllabus and the weighting for each assessment type.

Assessment table – Year 11

Type of assessment	Weighting
<p>Investigation</p> <p>An investigation is an activity in which ideas, predictions or hypotheses are tested and conclusions are drawn in response to a question or problem.</p> <p>Tasks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> planning investigations, proposing hypotheses and predicting outcomes designing investigations, including the procedures to be followed, discussion of variables, type and amount of data to be collected, risk assessments and consideration of research ethics conducting investigations in a safe, competent and methodical manner to collect valid and reliable data processing, representing and interpreting data, and identifying relationships and limitations in the data communicating findings in an appropriate form, including written, oral, graphic or combinations of these. <p>Appropriate strategies should be used to authenticate student achievement of an investigation that has been completed as a group or outside of allocated class time.</p>	10%
<p>Production project</p> <p>Production projects involve the synthesis of theory and practice of an animal production system.</p> <p>Tasks can involve selecting and applying appropriate production concepts to existing or new situations, managing processes for optimal production and to meet industry standards, and proposing adaptations to improve the management of animal production systems.</p> <p>Tasks can take the form of specific questions based on a selected animal production system, related practical activities, and integration of relevant information from scientific or media sources.</p> <p>It is highly recommended that work completed out of class is authenticated using an in-class assessment task under test conditions.</p>	30%
<p>Test</p> <p>Tests are designed to assess knowledge and the application of concepts relating to animal production systems. Questions can involve comprehension, evaluation and application of information, and problem solving.</p> <p>Tests typically consist of multiple-choice questions, as well as questions requiring short and extended answers.</p>	20%
<p>Examination</p> <p>Typically conducted at the end of each semester and/or unit. In preparation for Unit 3 and Unit 4, the examination should reflect the examination design brief included in the ATAR Year 12 syllabus for this course.</p>	40%

Teachers are required to use the assessment table to develop an assessment outline for the pair of units (or for a single unit where only one is being studied).

The assessment outline must:

- include a set of assessment tasks
- include a general description of each task
- indicate the unit content to be assessed
- indicate a weighting for each task and each assessment type
- include the approximate timing of each task (for example, the week the task is conducted, or the issue and submission dates for an extended task).

In the assessment outline for the pair of units, each assessment type must be included at least twice, except Investigation, which must be included at least once. In the assessment outline where a single unit is being studied, each assessment type must be included at least once.

The set of assessment tasks must provide a representative sampling of the content for Unit 1 and Unit 2.

Assessment tasks not administered under test/controlled conditions require appropriate validation/authentication processes.

Grading

Schools report student achievement in terms of the following grades:

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

The teacher prepares a ranked list and assigns the student a grade for the pair of units (or for a unit where only one unit is being studied). 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 and annotated work samples. The grade descriptions for the Animal Production Systems ATAR Year 11 syllabus are provided in Appendix 1. They can also be accessed, together with annotated work samples, through the Guide to Grades link 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.

Appendix 1 – Grade descriptions Year 11

A

Understanding and applying concepts

Applies detailed concepts about production systems and processes to enterprises, offering clear and accurate explanations.

Uses industry-specific and technical language frequently and accurately.

Comprehensively explains relationships between the social, economic and environmental issues arising from production systems.

Enterprise management skills

Selects and uses appropriate resources and equipment to confidently perform a range of tasks; consistently meeting safety and industry standards.

Completes all aspects of tasks systematically, paying attention to detail.

Consistently applies economic principles to evaluate viability and sustainability.

Applies theoretical concepts consistently when using a selected production system.

Science inquiry skills

Formulates a hypothesis stating the relationship between dependent and independent variables.

Designs investigations to identify and explain how appropriate variables are controlled, describing the experimental method in detail and accurately collecting data.

Organises data logically, and accurately presents it in a range of forms, including appropriate graphs, tables and charts to reveal patterns and relationships.

Provides clear recommendations to improve the validity and reliability of the investigation.

Uses evidence to draw valid conclusions that relate to the hypothesis.

B

Understanding and applying concepts

Applies concepts about production systems and processes to selected enterprises, offering mostly accurate explanations.

Uses industry-specific and technical language frequently.

Describes relationships between social, economic and environmental issues relevant to selected enterprises.

Enterprise management skills

Uses appropriate resources and equipment to complete most aspects of tasks, meeting safety and industry standards.

Uses economic principles to assess viability and to address sustainability.

Applies theoretical concepts when using most aspects of a selected production system.

Science inquiry skills

Formulates a hypothesis that includes the dependent and independent variables.

Designs investigations to identify and control appropriate variables, describing the experimental method and adequately collecting data.

Presents data in a range of forms, including appropriate graphs, tables and charts to reveal patterns and relationships.

Suggests ways to improve the validity and reliability of the investigation.

Uses evidence to draw conclusions that relate to the hypothesis.

C	<p>Understanding and applying concepts</p> <p>Describes key aspects of production systems, processes and the links to selected enterprises, providing partially accurate statements.</p> <p>Generally uses basic industry-specific and technical language.</p> <p>Identifies key social, economic and environmental issues relevant to a selected enterprise.</p>
	<p>Enterprise management skills</p> <p>Uses appropriate resources and equipment to perform a range of directed tasks and, with support, meet safety and industry standards.</p> <p>Identifies the economic principles required to assess viability, but uses them only occasionally and/or with errors.</p> <p>Applies theoretical concepts when using several aspects of a selected production system.</p>
	<p>Science inquiry skills</p> <p>Identifies dependent, independent and controlled variables.</p> <p>Makes a prediction as a hypothesis.</p> <p>Briefly outlines the experimental method and collects data.</p> <p>Follows set experimental procedures to collect data.</p> <p>Presents data using basic tables and appropriate graphs, identifying general trends in data.</p> <p>Makes general suggestions for improving the investigation.</p> <p>Draws simple conclusions that may not be linked back to the hypothesis.</p>
D	<p>Understanding and applying concepts</p> <p>Describes elements of production systems and processes, but with limited linking to selected enterprises.</p> <p>Provides brief, inaccurate and/or largely incomplete responses.</p> <p>Uses everyday language with minimal industry-specific and technical language.</p> <p>Identifies sustainable practices but without elaboration.</p>
	<p>Enterprise management skills</p> <p>Uses resources and equipment to carry out tasks, mostly collaboratively and with extensive reinforcement.</p> <p>Displays limited application of safety and industry standards.</p> <p>Poor linking exists between theoretical concepts and practical application.</p>
	<p>Science inquiry skills</p> <p>Incompletely/inaccurately identifies the dependent, independent and controlled variables.</p> <p>Describes method with insufficient detail.</p> <p>With guidance, follows set experimental procedures to collect data.</p> <p>Presents data that is unclear and insufficient.</p> <p>Includes anomalous results in the data without identifying them as anomalous.</p> <p>Overlooks trends in data.</p> <p>Offers simple conclusions that are not supported by the data or are not related to the hypothesis.</p>
E	<p>Does not meet the requirements of a D grade and/or has completed insufficient assessment tasks to be assigned a higher grade.</p>

Appendix 2 – Glossary

This glossary is provided to enable a common understanding of the key terms in this syllabus.

Animal production systems	Are those based on natural systems that have been managed, manipulated, adapted and refined to meet human needs for food, fibre, shelter and lifestyle.
Hypothesis	A scientific statement based on the available information that can be tested by experimentation. When appropriate, the statement expresses an expected relationship between the independent and dependent variables for observed phenomena.
Natural systems	Comprise ecological and physiological systems that exist without human intervention.
Skills	Include handling and restraining animals, harvesting animal products, applying animal health remedies, testing for and monitoring pregnancy, and artificial breeding techniques.
Social systems	Are those that have evolved to manage human interaction with each other and the built and natural environments.
Sustainability	Can be considered as meeting the needs of current and future generations through integration of environmental protection, social advancement and economic prosperity.
Systems	Can include animal production and marketing systems, management systems, value-adding systems, service and maintenance systems, biotic systems and abiotic systems.
Technologies	Include artificial breeding techniques, electronic tracking systems, genetic engineering, specialised equipment used in animal production, and information and communication technology (ICT).