



OUTDOOR EDUCATION

ATAR course

**Year 12 syllabus – What’s changing: Rationale and Aims
For teaching in 2027**

Acknowledgement of Country

Kaya. The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) acknowledges that our offices are on Whadjuk Noongar boodjar and that we deliver our services on the country of many traditional custodians and language groups throughout Western Australia. The Authority acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We offer our respect to Elders past and present.

Background

As part of the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) Refreshment for reviewing the nomenclature of courses, the Authority has updated the rationale and aims of each syllabus.

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

Important information

WACE Refreshment: Reviewing the nomenclature of courses

This document contains information that will be included in the syllabus effective from 1 January 2027.

Users of the syllabus are responsible for checking its currency.

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

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Rationale

The Outdoor Education ATAR course provides students with the opportunity to explore and develop an understanding of their relationships with the environment, others and themselves through direct interaction with the natural world. Students participate in outdoor activities aimed at developing personal growth, teamwork and environmental awareness, which will ultimately encourage them to contribute toward a more sustainable world.

Through activities that involve planning, participating and reviewing, students engage in various outdoor activities and expeditions. These experiences help them develop expedition planning skills including risk assessment and awareness of the environment in which they will travel. The progression of theoretical concepts into practical application during expeditions is a vital component in outdoor education.

The course provides many opportunities for students to participate in a variety of outdoor activities and expeditions. During these, students develop leadership and decision-making skills which contribute to their management of risk and responses to emergencies. The course also develops their knowledge and skills in environmental management.

Students apply their learning by planning and participating in outdoor activities, assessing environmental impact and implementing risk management strategies. They engage in practical experiences that require teamwork, problem-solving and reflection, promoting sustainable practices and a sense of responsibility for the natural environment.

The skills and knowledge gained from the Outdoor Education ATAR course provide a strong foundation for future study and careers in fields such as outdoor leadership, ecotourism, environmental management, military service and outdoor education. The course equips students with valuable life skills that can be applied to a range of personal, educational and professional settings.

Aims

The Outdoor Education ATAR course aims to develop students’:

- advanced outdoor skills and knowledge to engage safely and effectively in a range of complex outdoor activities
- confidence and competence in planning, preparing for and leading challenging outdoor pursuits
- leadership skills through decision-making, communication and conflict resolution in group settings
- ability to work in a team, cooperate and collaborate in diverse and challenging outdoor environments
- sense of stewardship for natural environments and adoption of sustainable practices through a deep understanding of environmental systems and the impact of human activity
- risk management and critical thinking skills to assess complex risks and apply appropriate management strategies in dynamic outdoor settings
- problem-solving, situational awareness and decision-making skills when under pressure
- lifelong engagement in outdoor activities for physical, mental and social health and wellbeing.