



PSYCHOLOGY

ATAR course

Year 12 syllabus – What’s changing: General capabilities

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 to investigate the assessment and reporting of the general capabilities on the Western Australian Statement of Student Achievement (WASSA), the Authority has updated the statements about the general capabilities in each syllabus.

The Authority has mapped the general capabilities through the unit content and assessment types for each of the WACE courses. Students will have the opportunity to develop the general capabilities identified in the course through the teaching, learning and assessment programs. These general capabilities will be reflected on the WASSA.

Important information

WACE Refreshment: Investigating the assessment and reporting of the general capabilities on the Western Australian Statement of Student Achievement (WASSA)

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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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 should find opportunities to incorporate the following capabilities into the teaching and learning program for the Psychology ATAR course. The general capabilities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

Critical and creative thinking

Students develop critical and creative thinking as they learn to generate and evaluate knowledge, clarify concepts and ideas, consider alternatives and solve problems. In this course, critical and creative thinking is embedded in the skills of planning, conducting, processing and evaluating psychological research. Students generate and examine hypotheses, make predictions, solve problems, and analyse and evaluate evidence.

Ethical understanding

In this course, students learn about key psychological theories and studies, and the way in which the rights, integrity and dignity of people who are the subjects of psychological research are held in high regard. Students develop the capacity to form and make ethical judgements through the study of ethics in psychology and explore and apply ethical guidelines as they engage in planning, conducting, processing and evaluating psychological research.

Literacy

Students develop literacy skills as they are introduced to and become familiar with the lexicon of psychology. The course provides a specific and rich context for students to develop reading and writing abilities and skills in viewing and speaking as they apply language in different contexts and for different purposes. Students develop literacy capability as they learn key research and investigative skills which enhance their ability to access, interpret, analyse and challenge information, and evaluate the changing knowledge base in psychology. They formulate hypotheses, relate information, provide explanations and construct evidence-based arguments. Students communicate research findings using multiple ways of representing data to articulate and illustrate relationships they have observed or constructed.

Numeracy

Students develop numeracy skills as they consider and evaluate psychological research, including the ability to display, interpret and analyse quantitative data to draw evidence-based conclusions and evaluate research.

Addressing the other general capabilities

Although the following general capabilities have not been identified as a focus in the Psychology ATAR Year 12 syllabus, teachers may find opportunities to incorporate these capabilities into the teaching and learning program.

- Digital literacy
- Intercultural understanding
- Personal and social capability

Such opportunities may occur through the application of different contexts, pedagogical practices and/or assessment strategies that relate to the syllabus as part of the teaching and learning program.

Summary representation of the general capabilities in the Psychology ATAR course

A representation of the general capabilities for the two years is summarised in the table below.

Year	Course	Course type	General capabilities						
			CCT	DL	EU	IU	L	N	PSC
Year 11	Psychology (AEPSY)	ATAR	✓		✓		✓	✓	
Year 12	Psychology (ATPSY)	ATAR	✓		✓		✓	✓	

Key

CCT: Critical and creative thinking, DL: Digital literacy, EU: Ethical understanding, IU: Intercultural understanding, L: Literacy, N: Numeracy, PSC: Personal and social capability