



Frequently Asked Questions – WACE Refreshment – Certificate IV qualifications

The Board of the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) is undertaking the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) Refreshment to ensure the WACE continues to maximise its value for students as they move into further education, training, and employment.

The following questions and answers are based on queries from teachers and school leaders regarding the Certificate IV qualifications WACE Refreshment.

Under this WACE Refreshment, from 2028, the Authority will provide unit equivalents towards WACE achievement for Certificate IV qualifications, including Certificate IV accredited courses, delivered by identified registered training organisations (RTOs) which are included on the *Certificate IV Specified List* published by the Authority.

Background

1. What is the new policy change for students undertaking a Certificate IV qualification?

From 2028, the Authority will provide unit equivalents towards WACE achievement for completed or partially completed Certificate IV qualifications delivered by identified RTOs that are included on the *Certificate IV Specified List* published by the Authority.

2. What is the Certificate IV qualifications specified list?

The *Certificate IV Specified List* will include Certificate IV qualifications that support quality vocational education outcomes for students. The *Certificate IV Specified List* is published on the Authority website at <https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/vet/all-about-vet>.

3. How will the specified list be developed?

In 2026, the first iteration of the *Certificate IV Specified List* will be limited to Certificate IV qualifications which are green coded on DTWD 2026 VET Register. In Term 2, 2026, the Authority will consider applications from RTOs for qualifications coded red and amber on the VET Register for inclusion on the list. In Term 3, 2026, the Authority will consider applications from RTOs for qualifications coded green on the VET Register for inclusion on the list.

4. What criteria must RTOs address to add Certificate IV qualifications to the specified list?

RTOs must address the following through their application to the Authority to have Certificate IV qualifications added to the *Certificate IV Specified List*:

- a) there is industry support for the qualification to be delivered to secondary school students
- b) a suitable delivery plan for training and assessment is in place to deliver the qualification to secondary school students which includes nominating the schools at which students will enrol in the Certificate IV qualification
- c) the Certificate IV qualification must not duplicate any of the WACE courses at the time of applying for inclusion on the specified list.

Requirements a) and b) align with current obligations on RTOs under national and State regulatory requirements.

5. After 2026, how often will the specified list be updated?

After 2026, the *Certificate IV Specified List* will be updated on the basis of the Authority's annual application process and through the Authority's regular review schedule and processes.

6. How long will a Certification IV qualification appear on the *Certificate IV Specified List*?

Certificate IV qualifications on the *Certificate IV Specified List* will be endorsed for three years, unless circumstances warrant removal from the specified list earlier; for example, if the RTO no longer offers the qualification.

7. What consultation was undertaken for this policy change?

The Certificate IV qualification WACE Refreshment was informed by consultation which included students, VET coordinators and school principals across the school systems and sector from different locations and demographic groups, private training providers, TAFE colleges, regulatory bodies, industry and representatives from the tertiary sector.

8. What research was conducted for this policy change?

The Authority's research considered a range of current and emerging State and national VET policy and reports relevant to the WACE Refreshment including:

- a. *Report on VET Delivered to Secondary Students: Investigating the provision of VET to secondary students in regional, rural, and remote areas* – <https://www.education.gov.au/regional-education-commissioner/resources/report-vet-delivered-secondary-students>.
- b. *Looking to the Future: Report of the Review of Senior Secondary Pathways into Work, Further Education and Training* – <https://www.education.gov.au/recurrent-funding-schools/resources/looking-future-report-review-senior-secondary-pathways-work-further-education-and-training>.

9. What were the consultation and research findings?

The Certificate IV WACE Refreshment changes reflect consultation with stakeholders across schools, training and industry and research and reinforce the standards of the WACE as a reliable measure of student readiness for a range of post-school pathways. Certificate IV and Diploma qualifications are not typically designed for completion by students as part of their WACE studies as they require a substantial amount of learning, development of industry-specific skills, related work experience and aligned assessment.

10. From 2028, will students be able to study a Certificate IV qualification while at school despite not receiving unit equivalents towards WACE achievement?

From 2028, students may enrol in Certificate IV qualifications that are not included on the specified list; however, they will not receive unit equivalents towards WACE achievement for these qualifications. Students should consider how they will complete the demands of Certificate IV qualifications that are not on the *Certificate IV Specified List* while meeting all requirements to achieve a WACE.

11. Will Certificate IV qualifications completed by students in 2028 or beyond be recorded on the Western Australian Statement of Student Achievement (WASSA)?

Partially or fully completed Certificate IV qualifications which are included in the *Certificate IV Specified List* will be recorded on the WASSA. Certificate IV qualifications that are not included in the list from 2028 will not be recorded on the WASSA.

12. Does the specified list include Diploma-level and above qualifications?

From 2027, Diploma-level qualifications will no longer receive unit equivalents towards WACE achievement. Diploma-level qualifications and above will not be included on the specified list. For information about Diploma-level and above qualifications, see <https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/vet/all-about-vet>.

University entry

1. Will the change to unit equivalents for Certificate IV qualifications under this WACE Refreshment impact admission to university?

University admissions are the responsibility of each university. Schools, students and/or parents/guardians/carers should contact the relevant university to find out about their admission requirements.

School responsibilities

1. What is the role of the school in relation to this change?

The role of the school is to communicate the change to unit equivalent arrangements for Certificate IV qualifications that are not on the *Certificate IV Specified List* to students and parents/guardians/carers.

2. What should schools communicate to students and parents/guardians/carers?

Schools are encouraged to provide clear guidance on the appropriateness of Certificate IV qualifications for secondary students. As a starting point, schools should consult the:

- a) DTWD VET Register available at <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/publications/vocational-education-and-training-delivered-secondary-students-qualifications-register>.
- b) the Authority's *Guidelines for the delivery of Certificate IV and above VET qualifications to secondary students* available at <https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/vet/vet-credit-transfer>.

3. How will a school check if a student is meeting the requirements to achieve a WACE with the implementation of this WACE Refreshment?

The Authority will update its WACE Checker for the 2028 school year to include the changes to unit equivalents for Certificate IV qualifications under this WACE Refreshment.

2. Can schools still deliver Certificate IV qualifications through third-party RTO arrangements?

The Authority does not stipulate how any VET qualification should be delivered. Schools can contact the relevant RTO regarding suitable VET delivery options, including the requirements of the Department of Education for VET delivery in public schools.

Students

1. How does the WACE Refreshment affect credit recognition (Year 11 equivalent studies) for Certificate IV qualifications?

From 2028, students who complete or partially complete a Certificate IV qualification that is not on the *Certificate IV Specified List* will not be able to use the qualification to receive credit recognition (Year 11 equivalent studies) towards WACE achievement.

2. How does the WACE Refreshment affect Certificate IV qualifications completed on a Notice of Arrangements (NOA) and return to education?

From 2028, students on an NOA who complete a Certificate IV qualification (not on the *Certificate IV Specified List*) while not enrolled in secondary education will not gain credit recognition for the qualification if they decide to return to secondary education.

3. Will this change affect unit equivalent arrangements for students who complete a Certificate IV prior to 2028?

If a student completes a Certificate IV qualification that is not on the *Certificate IV Specified List* prior to 2028, while in Years 10 or 11, they will receive six unit equivalents towards WACE achievement and the completed Certificate IV qualification will be recorded on the WASSA.

4. Will the change affect unit equivalent arrangements for students who partially complete a Certificate IV qualification prior to 2028?

If a student partially completes a Certificate IV qualification not on the specified list with at least 220 nominal hours prior to 2028, they will receive four unit equivalents towards WACE achievement and the partially completed Certificate IV qualification will be recorded on the WASSA.

5. If a student partially completes a Certificate IV qualification not on the specified list in 2028, will they receive unit equivalents towards WACE achievement?

From 2028, completion or partial completion of a Certificate IV qualification that is not on the specified list will not provide unit equivalents towards WACE achievement.

6. Will Certificate IV qualifications not on specified list continue to contribute points for Certificates of Merit and Certificates of Distinction from 2028?

From 2028, points cannot be accrued from Certificate IV qualifications that are not on the *Certificate IV Specified List* towards the achievement of Certificates of Merit and Certificates of Distinction issued by the Authority.

Registered Training Organisations – Certificate IV qualifications

1. How can an RTO apply to have a qualification added to the specified list?

RTOs can make an application to the Authority by providing evidence that the Certificate IV qualification meets the required criteria, including industry support, suitability for senior secondary students, and alignment with regulatory standards. The application form is available at <https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/vet/all-about-vet>. The Authority will assess the application and update the *Certificate IV Specified List* as qualifications are approved.

2. How does the specified list get updated?

As RTOs are approved, the *Certificate IV Specified List* will be updated, and the information will be reflected on the Authority website.

3. How long will qualifications on the *Certificate IV Specified List* be recognised?

Certificate IV qualifications will be recognised for a maximum of three years, with a review each year.

4. How do RTOs apply for re-recognition of a qualification on the *Certificate IV Specified List*?

RTOs will be contacted by the Authority and invited to reapply for re-recognition at the beginning of the final year of recognition.

5. Can RTOs reapply if their application is unsuccessful?

RTOs may resubmit an application if their initial submission for inclusion on the *Certificate IV Specified List* is unsuccessful. The Authority will provide feedback on areas that should be addressed in the resubmitted application.

6. Can any RTO deliver a Certificate IV qualification on the specified list?

From 2028, Certificate IV qualifications on the specified list will provide unit equivalents towards WACE achievement. In Term 2, 2026, RTOs will be able to apply to deliver qualifications coded red and amber on the VET Register for inclusion on the specified list. In Term 3, 2026, RTOs will be able to apply for qualifications coded green on the VET Register for inclusion on the specified list. Students will be able to use qualifications on the specified list from endorsed RTOs for unit equivalents.

7. Why will RTOs be identified on the specified list?

RTOs will be identified on the specified list as they will have completed an application process that demonstrates their capacity for appropriate delivery arrangements and consideration of student circumstances for the qualification in consultation with schools.

8. Are RTOs approved at school systems and sector level permitted to deliver Certificate IV qualifications that provide unit equivalents from 2028?

Only those RTOs identified on the specified list can deliver Certificate IV qualifications that provide students with unit equivalents for WACE achievement. The Authority is working with the school systems/sector on the implementation of this WACE Refreshment.

9. When will RTOs be required to apply to have Certificate IV qualifications added to the specified list?

In 2026, the first iteration of the specified list will be limited to Certificate IV qualifications which are green coded on the Department of Training and Workforce Development (DTWD) 2026 *Qualification*

register for Western Australian secondary students (VET Register). In Term 2, 2026, the Authority will consider applications from RTOs for qualifications coded red and amber on the VET Register for inclusion on the specified list. In Term 3, 2026, the Authority will consider applications from RTOs for qualifications coded green on the VET Register for inclusion on the specified list.

10. Do RTOs need to apply for green coded qualifications that are already on the first iteration of the Certificate IV Specified List?

Yes, from Semester 2, 2026, all RTOs seeking to offer any Certificate IV level qualifications are required to apply to the Authority for students to gain unit equivalence towards WACE achievement. The DTWD *Qualification Register for Western Australian secondary students* (VET Register) does not comment on delivery at the training provider level. Therefore, RTOs must apply to the Authority for recognition of all Certificate IV level qualifications, including any that are green coded. This is to ensure a fair and equitable assessment process. Future iterations of the *Certificate IV Specified List* will identify approved RTOs and the schools where they wish to deliver these Certificate IV qualifications for WACE unit equivalence.

Other

1. Will the Authority be updating the *WACE Manual* or any of its other publications with this information?

The *WACE Manual* is updated each year to reflect the requirements for WACE achievement. The new rules regarding unit equivalents for Certificate IV qualifications will be included in the *WACE Manual* 2027 and following. The Authority will also update its associated publications.

2. Who do I contact for additional information regarding the Certificate IV qualifications changes?

Schools may contact the Programs and Vocational Studies team at the Authority for further information by email at VETinfo@scsa.wa.edu.au. Students should contact tertiary providers, training organisations or employers that they are aiming to engage with when they finish school.