



CHINESE: SECOND LANGUAGE

ATAR course

Year 11 syllabus – What’s changing: General capabilities

For teaching in 2026

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 2026.

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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Progression from the Years 7–10 curriculum

The Western Australian Curriculum: Languages Year 7 to Year 10 is organised through two interrelated strands: Communicating and Understanding. Communicating is focused on using language for communicative purposes in interpreting, creating, and exchanging meaning, while Understanding involves examining language and culture as resources for interpreting and creating meaning.

These strands reflect three important aspects of language learning: engaging in communication, analysing various aspects of language and culture involved in communication, and understanding oneself as a communicator.

This syllabus continues to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills that ensure students communicate in Chinese, understand language, culture and learning and their relationship, and thereby develop an intercultural capability in communication.

Representation of the general capabilities

The general capabilities encompass the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that will support students to live and work successfully now and into the future. Teachers should find opportunities to incorporate the following capabilities into the teaching and learning program for the Chinese: Second Language ATAR course. The general capabilities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

Critical and creative thinking

Students enhance their critical and creative thinking skills through their study of the Chinese language and culture. Content in the course is presented through three contexts: – The individual, The Chinese-speaking communities and The changing world – encouraging students to compare information and evaluate ideas from diverse perspectives. By analysing and interpreting spoken and written texts, students strengthen their ability to identify and process information and engage in logical and reflective thinking. By building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the Chinese language, they learn to assess how language conveys meaning and how context, purpose, and audience influence communication.

Through the course, students learn and practise language learning and communication strategies. These strategies support and enhance the development of literacy skills and enable further development of cognitive skills through thinking critically and making connections. The process of transferring linguistic and cultural knowledge and applying it to new contexts fosters students' metacognition, problem-solving abilities and analytical skills.

Intercultural understanding

Intercultural understanding is core to language learning. In learning a second or additional language, students develop an appreciation of languages, cultures, and beliefs, including their own.

In the course, students explore key aspects of the culture, such as China as a travel destination, as well as the perspectives of speakers of the language, including their favourite activities, their daily life, technology and leisure pursuits, and travel. This helps students to develop connections with communities and cultures, become aware of similarities and differences, cultivate mutual respect and understanding, and improve communication.

The course also provides opportunities for students to apply communication strategies in culturally and linguistically diverse contexts. They understand the interconnection between language and culture, gaining insights into how cultural values and beliefs shape communication practices.

Intercultural understanding is one of the five content areas of this course.

Literacy

Students develop literacy capacity as they use Chinese to listen to, read, view and respond to a range of texts, participate in spoken interaction, and write texts in Chinese for different purposes and contexts. They expand their skills, knowledge and understanding of the Chinese language and apply their knowledge of linguistic resources to exchange information, ideas and opinions in Chinese.

For language learners, literacy involves skills and knowledge that need guidance, time and support to develop. These skills include developing an ability to decode and encode from sound to written systems; mastering grammatical, orthographic, and textual conventions; and developing semantic, pragmatic, and critical literacy skills. For learners of Chinese, literacy development in the language enhances and extends their knowledge and understanding of English literacy, which in turn supports their learning in Chinese.

Addressing the other general capabilities

Although the following general capabilities have not been identified as a focus in the Chinese: Second Language ATAR Year 11 syllabus, teachers may find opportunities to incorporate these capabilities into the teaching and learning program.

- Digital literacy
- Ethical understanding
- Numeracy
- 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 Chinese: Second Language ATAR course

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

Year	Course	Course type	General Capabilities						
			CCT	DL	EU	IU	L	N	PSC
Year 11	Chinese: Second Language (AECSL)	ATAR	✓			✓	✓		
Year 12	Chinese: Second Language (ATCSL)	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