

## SECTION 1: THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION

The Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) is awarded to secondary school students who satisfy its requirements. Generally, students will complete two years of senior secondary study, although the Council's provisions enable students to meet the WACE requirements over a lifetime. The WACE is recognised by universities, industry, TAFEWA and other training providers.

The school is the main WACE provider for students up to the age of 17 years. Schools may work in partnership with other providers to deliver courses, vocational education and training (VET) or other programs, but retain the responsibility for managing programs, reporting achievement to the Curriculum Council and maintaining a record of learning for all students.

An overview of the WACE requirements is provided in the table below. More detailed information is available in Section 8.

**Table 1: Overview of WACE requirements 2009–2015**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010-2015</b>
<b>Completion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete at least 10 full-year (or equivalent) subjects</li> <li>• Up to 50 per cent can be endorsed programs</li> <li>• A single course unit equivalent will count as a half-subject equivalent. For every six course units at least one two-unit combination must be included</li> <li>• Complete four units from an English course.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete at least 20 units, including at least three two-unit combinations</li> <li>• Up to 50 per cent can be endorsed programs</li> <li>• Completion of a full-year D or E code subject will equate to two course units</li> <li>• Complete four units from an English course.</li> </ul>
<b>Standard</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve an average of C grade or better in at least eight full-year (or equivalent) subjects</li> <li>• At least four of these subjects must be at Year 12 level (E code). Course units completed during the final year of senior secondary schooling can be counted towards the four subjects at Year 12 level (E code)</li> <li>• Achievement of an industry specific VET course unit equates to a C grade</li> <li>• Up to three subject equivalents can be endorsed programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve an average of a C grade or better across 10 course units from at least five courses/subject equivalents (at least three two-unit combinations must be included)</li> <li>• Achievement of an industry specific VET course unit equates to a C grade</li> <li>• Up to 10 unit equivalents of endorsed programs can be included to reduce this load to six course units from three courses (endorsed programs do not count toward the C grade average)</li> </ul>
<b>English language competence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet the English language competence standard, as defined by work samples, or pass the English language competency test</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet the English language competence standard, as defined by work samples, or pass the English language competency test</li> </ul>
<b>Breadth of study</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coverage of the 13 overarching outcomes of the Curriculum framework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete at least one course from List A and at least one course from List B in the final year of school</li> </ul>
<b>Community service</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete 20 hours of community service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete 20 hours of community service</li> </ul>
<b>Examinations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WACE courses: all students in their final year who are enrolled in a pair of units at Stage 2 or 3 sit the exam (unless exempt).</li> <li>• TEE subjects: optional exam</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WACE courses: All students in their final year who are enrolled in a pair of units at Stage 2 or 3 sit the exam (unless exempt)</li> </ul>

## 1.1 Planning curriculum pathways for all students

Schools cater for students from diverse backgrounds and needs who are university-bound, some with a specific vocation in mind involving further education and training and those who are planning to enter the workforce on leaving school.

The school leaving age increased to 17 from 2008. As a result, the number of students staying on to complete Year 12 increased. Education and training courses and programs are available to provide all young people with the opportunity to develop knowledge, understanding and skills about themselves, their community and the broader world in which they live. All contribute to the WACE with all students receiving a statement of results at the end of Year 12.

When planning pathways in senior secondary school, schools can consider a mixture of courses, subjects, vocational education and training and endorsed programs to cater for students' interests and different rates of learning and motivation.

### 1.1.1 Courses

All courses (WACE courses) consist of stage units, each with their own syllabus. Students start each course with units appropriate to their stage of development.

Typically:

- university-bound students would study a program of Stage 2 and Stage 3 units over their senior secondary years. In their final year, most of the units would be at Stage 3.
- students who may be headed to TAFE and further education and training or the workforce would typically take a mixture of Stage 1 and 2 units in Year 11 and 12. Some may study all Stage 1 units.
- students with special needs study Preliminary stage units and possibly some Stage 1 units.

See section 2 for more information about courses and Appendix 1 for more details about the course implementation timeline.

### 1.1.2 Subjects

Subjects are either tertiary entrance examination (TEE) subjects or wholly school assessed (WSA) subjects (D and E code).

As the Western Australian senior school reform is being implemented, courses are replacing existing TEE and WSA subjects. Typically, subjects are studied by Year 12 students in 2009. Year 11 students will study new courses.

See Section 2 for details.

### 1.1.3 Endorsed programs

Endorsed programs provide areas of learning not covered by the courses and can contribute to the student's WACE requirements. Programs can be delivered in a variety of settings by community organisations, schools, universities, training organisations and workplaces.

See Section 3 for details.

### 1.1.4 Vocational education and training (VET)

Vocational education and training in schools engages students in work-related learning built on strategic partnerships between schools, business, industry and the wider community. VET should be undertaken as part of the WACE and its completion by the student provides credit towards a nationally recognised VET qualification within the Australian Qualifications Framework, providing a broad range of post-school options and pathways.

See Section 6 for details.

## 1.2 Learning and teaching

The following principles provide guidance for teachers in developing learning and teaching programs.

<b>Opportunity to learn</b>	Learning experiences should enable students to observe and practise the expectations of the relevant course, subject or program.
<b>Connection and challenge</b>	Students should be provided with opportunities to connect their existing knowledge, skills and values while extending and challenging their current ways of thinking with their new experiences.
<b>Action and reflection</b>	Students should be encouraged to reflect on their own thinking processes, development of ideas, evaluation and problem-solving.
<b>Motivation and purpose</b>	Learning contexts should be meaningful and relate to issues that are relevant to students' lives and cultures. They should be encouraged to develop their creativity and be provided with opportunities to set their own goals and negotiate the nature of their learning activities.
<b>Inclusivity and difference</b>	There should be provision of flexible learning contexts through which course and unit content can be taught and learnt, along with a diversity of learning experiences which recognise that students learn in different ways.
<b>Independence and collaboration</b>	Students should experience opportunities for both individual and collaborative learning.
<b>Supportive environment</b>	Classroom policies and practices should be designed to foster students' belief that they can be successful learners and to support the development of a confident approach to learning and a desire to do well.

## 1.3 School assessment

Student achievement is recorded in grades (A, B, C, D or E) for each course unit or subject completed. Marks out of 100 are also awarded to examination candidates who complete a pair of course units at Stage 2 or Stage 3 or a TEE subject in their final year of school. See Section 3 for details.

For Preliminary Stage units, student progress is recorded as having completed or not completed the unit requirements.

VET assessment is competency-based and specific requirements are outlined in industry training packages. See Section 6 for details.

Assessment of endorsed programs is based on the requirements of each program. See Section 5 for details.

## 1.4 External examinations

### 1.4.1 Courses

From and including 2009, there will be separate external examinations for Stage 2 and Stage 3 units. Examinations for students enrolled in a pair of Stage 2 or 3 units are compulsory, unless exempt.

Examinations maybe introduced in some VET industry specific courses.

### 1.4.2 Subjects

Tertiary entrance examinations in E code subjects will continue until replaced by a corresponding course.

See Section 7 for full details of external examinations and Appendix 1 for the examination timeline for courses and subjects.

## 1.5 Community service

To be awarded a WACE from and including 2009, all students will need to have completed 20 hours of community service. Community service supports the development of leadership skills, social responsibility and citizenship. This requirement can be completed over Years 10, 11 and 12.

Guidelines for community service are available on the Council website at [http://www.curriculum.wa.edu.au/internet/Senior\\_Secondary/Community\\_Service](http://www.curriculum.wa.edu.au/internet/Senior_Secondary/Community_Service).