

## SECTION 2: COURSES AND SUBJECTS

Throughout this manual, the term 'course' refers to the WACE courses implemented in schools from 2006 to 2010 and the term 'subject' refers to TEE and WSA subjects (D and E codes).

### 2.1 Courses and subjects available in 2009

#### 2.1.1 Courses

In 2009, an additional 31 new courses will be implemented for the first time and 10 new VET industry specific courses. There are no WACE examinations for any of these courses in 2009, as it is their first year of implementation.

#### WACE courses implemented for the first time in 2009

Accounting and Finance	German
Ancient History	Health Studies
Animal Production Systems	Hospitality (VET industry specific)
Automotive (VET industry specific)	Human Biological Science
Automotive Engineering and Technology	Indonesian: Second Language
Biological Sciences	Information Technology (VET industry specific)
Building and Construction	Integrated Science
Business Management and Enterprise	Japanese: Second Language
Business Services (VET industry specific)	Literature
Chemistry	Mathematics
Children, Family and the Community	Mathematics Specialist
Community Services (VET industry specific)	Modern History
Construction (VET industry specific)	Music
Creative Industries: Art (VET industry specific)	Physics
Creative Industries: Media (VET industry specific)	Plant Production Systems
Design	Primary Industries (VET industry specific)
Economics	Politics and Law
Food Science and Technology	Religion and Life
French	Tourism (VET industry specific)
Geography	Visual Arts
	Workplace Learning

Once the new training packages are available, a further two new VET industry specific courses, Creative Industries: Music, and Sport and Recreation will be developed and available for use in schools in 2010.

See Appendix 1 for a full list of all courses available in 2009 and their unit codes.

#### Studying the same course unit in different contexts

There are five courses with specific defined contexts. These courses and their different contexts are as follows:

- Materials Design and Technology: wood; metal; textiles
- Design: dimensional design; graphics; photography; technical graphics
- Children, Family and the Community: living independently; caring for others
- Food Science and Technology: hospitality; product development; nutrition and health promotions
- Music: western art; jazz; contemporary; world and indigenous.

The units in these courses have different unit codes and should not be confused with units from other courses which students may choose to repeat. In these courses, students can enrol in and study more than one context. However, they can only sit one WACE exam for the course at either Stage 2 or Stage 3.

#### 2.1.2 Subjects

All E code TEE and WSA subjects that have not been replaced by a new course are available in 2009. There will also be a continuation of some subjects to accommodate student interest in subjects that do not link directly to new courses.

See Appendix 1 for a list of all subjects available in 2009 and their codes.

## 2.2 Syllabus structures

Each course and subject has a syllabus.

### 2.2.1 Courses

The syllabus for each course (other than VET industry specific courses) includes the following elements.

<b>Rationale</b>	Makes explicit the purpose for learning.
<b>Outcomes</b>	Statements of what students should know, understand, value and be able to do as a result of what they are taught and what they learn in a course.
<b>Course content</b>	Provides a broad structure of the content, along with details about the major content areas for each course unit.
<b>Course units</b>	Provides an overview of each unit. The units are structured from Preliminary (P) Stage (in some courses) to Stage 3. Each unit has a focus of suggested learning contexts and specific content that should be taught. The cognitive difficulty of the content increases with each stage.
<b>Time allocation and course completion</b>	Outlines requirements and time allocation for course completion.
<b>Assessment</b>	Identifies the types of assessment required for the course, the weightings of these types and the guidelines specific to the assessment for the course.
<b>Grade descriptors</b>	Provides a link to the grade descriptors package for the course. Grade descriptors (A-E) for Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 are used in reporting student achievement at the end of a course unit. Preliminary units are not graded.
<b>Examination details</b>	States the requirements for examinations.
<b>Vocational education and training information</b>	Information about integrating VET with courses is included for schools wishing to provide students with the opportunity to achieve VET units of competency while studying the course. Details of the relevant training packages are also provided.
<b>Resources</b>	Provides any recommended or set text lists. Reference is also made to a detailed list of relevant textbooks, teacher references, teacher guides and manuals that can be found at <a href="http://www.det.wa.edu.au/education/cmis/eval/curriculum/courses/">www.det.wa.edu.au/education/cmis/eval/curriculum/courses/</a> .
<b>Outcome progressions</b>	Teachers may use the outcome progressions along with the unit content to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• plan appropriate lessons and activities for their students</li> <li>• develop specific assessment tasks with marking keys.</li> </ul>

Note: In addition to these elements, syllabuses the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies and Aboriginal Languages of WA also include a 'protocols' section. The syllabuses for English as an Additional Language/Dialect and all Languages also include a section on 'eligibility criteria'.

The syllabus for each VET industry specific course includes the following elements.

<b>Rationale</b>	Makes explicit the purpose for learning.
<b>Course delivery</b>	Explains the requirements for the delivery of the course, including AQTF requirements and workplace learning requirements.
<b>Course content</b>	Provides a broad description of the content, including general information about units of competency.
<b>Time and completion requirements</b>	Explains the time and completion requirements for the allocated course units.
<b>Assessment</b>	Outlines the required competency-based approach to assessment.
<b>Examination information</b>	Identifies requirements for the examination.
<b>Course units</b>	Provides an overview of each unit. Course units are allocated to a qualification. Information is provided about compulsory and elective units of competency and workplace learning requirements.

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The cognitive difficulty of the content of units increases with each stage (Preliminary, Stage 1, 2 and 3) and is referenced to the broad development of learning described in the progressions.

<b>P Stage units</b>	P Stage units provide opportunities for practical and supported learning to develop the skills required to be successful upon leaving school or in the transition to Stage 1 units. Preliminary units are not graded. They are recorded as having been completed or not completed. Post-school pathways may include TAFE and the workplace.
<b>Stage 1 units</b>	Stage 1 units provide bridging support and a practical and applied focus to develop skills required for students to be successful upon leaving school or in the transition to Stage 2 units. Post-school pathways generally include TAFE, apprenticeships, traineeships and the workplace.
<b>Stage 2 units</b>	Stage 2 units provide opportunities for applied learning with more focus on academic learning for transition to Stage 3 or post-school options including TAFE, apprenticeships and traineeships, university and the workplace.
<b>Stage 3 units</b>	Stage 3 units provide opportunities to extend knowledge and understandings in academic learning contexts. The post-school pathway is typically university with some students opting for the workplace or enrolling in TAFE courses.

### 2.2.2 Tertiary entrance subjects

The syllabus for each tertiary entrance subject includes the following elements.

<b>Rationale</b>	A summary statement focusing on the need for the subject and its relationship to other related approved subjects. Makes clear that the subject syllabus defines a sufficient body of knowledge, and requires students to demonstrate an appropriate range of skills and understandings.
<b>General aims</b>	Provides a summary of the educational objectives.
<b>Educational objectives</b>	Identifies knowledge, skills, attitudes and intended outcomes. Includes objectives which contribute to the development of students' English language competence.
<b>Teaching-learning program</b>	Outlines a suggested teaching and learning program which relates the objectives and content to possible learning experiences.
<b>Resources</b>	Describes the resources needed to implement the proposed subject in a school. Outlines the required special facilities, specialist staff (as appropriate), non-textual teaching materials and textual materials.
<b>Examination details</b>	Provides the structure of the examination paper for E code TEE subjects.
<b>Assessment structure</b>	Outlines the components and learning outcomes to be included in assessment; the weightings applied to these components; and the types of assessment considered appropriate.
<b>Grade-related descriptors</b>	Describes those behaviours expected to be displayed by typical students at each grade.

### 2.2.3 Wholly school assessed subjects

The syllabus for each wholly school assessed (WSA) subject includes the following elements.

<b>Subject outcomes</b>	Provides a concise description of the understandings and skills which students are able to demonstrate upon completing the subject.
<b>Outcome components</b>	Amplifies the context and meaning of the outcome. Schools may apply to the Council to vary the components stated in the syllabus, which provides schools with the flexibility to adapt subjects to suit their students.
<b>Performance criteria</b>	Describes the standard of performance expected for each outcome. Defines three levels of student performance. Assessment support materials illustrate these levels of student performance through annotated work samples.
<b>Common assessment tasks</b>	Provides an outline of the common assessment tasks.
<b>Rating and grading procedures</b>	Determines the standard of performance demonstrated on tasks in relation to the relevant outcome. Final grades are assigned using an algorithm which determines the cut-offs for each grade.

## 2.3 Syllabus review and accreditation

### 2.3.1 Courses

In the first two to three years of implementation of a WACE course, syllabus implementation is carefully monitored by the Council's course committees. Feedback provided by teachers, moderators and/or course officers is evaluated to determine whether minor or major syllabus review is required.

Minor syllabus change requires schools to be notified at least six months before implementation. Major syllabus change requires schools to be notified 18 months before implementation. Formal processes of syllabus review and reaccreditation are applied.

After this initial period, it is intended that syllabuses are formally accredited for a period of five years, during which time there are opportunities for minor syllabus changes.

### 2.3.2 VET industry specific courses

VET industry specific courses are subject to changes made in the national training packages that provide the framework for the courses.

Guidelines on transition arrangements for Western Australia state that no new enrolments into qualifications and/or units of competency from a superseded training package should be allowed from 12 months after the *National Training Information Service* release date. The same rule applies to *NQC Endorsement Required* and *ISC Upgrade* changes.

All guidelines provided for training package transition arrangements in Western Australia will be followed and any changes made to training packages used as frameworks for the courses, will be reflected in timely amendments to information provided in the courses.

## 2.4 Syllabus committees

The Curriculum Council seeks input from teachers and school administrators, training sector, industry and university partners, parents and the wider community directly and through a range of expert panels, committees, working parties and reference groups.

For each of the WACE courses, the Council has established an advisory committee comprising teachers from all school sector/systems, university representatives and, as appropriate, representatives from TAFEWA, industry and community. The committees meet regularly and provide advice to the secretariat on matters related to syllabus development, review and accreditation, school assessment and moderation, the design and appropriateness of external assessments and trends and issues related to the implementation of the course.

Further information on the role and conduct of these course advisory committees can be found at [http://www.curriculum.wa.edu.au/internet/About Us/Committees Consultation](http://www.curriculum.wa.edu.au/internet/About%20Us/Committees%20Consultation).