

# 2020 Areas of Emphasis

## A letter to Principals from the Chair of the Board

Dear Principal

I am pleased to share the School Curriculum and Standards Authority's (the Authority's) areas of emphasis for 2020 and hope that the term has started smoothly for your staff and students.

As we begin our work for 2020, it is important to note that the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (the Declaration), available at <https://docs.education.gov.au/documents/alice-springs-mparntwe-education-declaration>, was released on 12 December 2019 and replaces the Melbourne Declaration. The Declaration sets out two key education goals for young Australians:

1. The Australian education system promotes excellence and equity
2. All young Australians become
  - confident and creative individuals
  - successful lifelong learners
  - active and informed members of the community.

The Education Council also agreed in December 2019 to bring forward a review of the Australian Curriculum for Foundation (Pre-primary) to Year 10, to ensure it is meeting the needs of students. Ministers noted that it is now timely to undertake a review, which will commence with Mathematics in 2020 alongside conceptual work on Science. The Education Council agreed for ACARA to develop terms of reference for the review to be brought to the first Education Council meeting in 2020. Please ensure that your teachers are informed that the *Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline* (the *Outline*) continues to set out the mandated curriculum, assessment and reporting of student achievement requirements for Western Australian schools. As ACARA presents consultation opportunities, the Authority will ensure that it communicates the views of Western Australian teachers, across the school systems/sector.

Work has begun on the development of the Authority's new *Strategic Plan 2021–2024*. Meanwhile, our focus remains on the successful implementation of the Western Australian curriculum for students from Kindergarten to Year 12 as outlined in the *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Strategic Plan 2017–2020*. This includes 21 international schools that are licensed to deliver the Western Australian curriculum offshore.

The Authority is committed to using inclusive consultation and communication to develop focused and effective partnerships across government, industry and the community. Communication between schools is also critical. The Authority's moderation activities provide opportunities to promote communication and understandings between schools.

Moderation activities are used by the Authority to support understandings in teaching communities and to ensure the comparability of school marks and grades between schools. In 2020, the Year 6/7 moderation project will be expanded to include Health and Physical Education, Technologies (Design) and the Arts (Visual Art) while continuing with English, Humanities and Social Sciences, Mathematics, and Science. The Authority will be introducing a moderation pilot for Year 3 Languages in 2020.

In the senior secondary years, the Years 11 and 12 syllabus delivery audit and consensus moderation will strongly focus on General courses. In addition, the Authority will pilot an Assessment Task Review moderation activity for a small number of selected courses. The Authority will provide more information on moderation activities to schools in Term 1.

During the year, the Authority will continue to work with its Curriculum Advisory Committees (CACs) who provide valuable advice. In particular, several CACs will continue work on the review of senior secondary syllabuses. Part of this review includes ensuring that the Authority's assessment requirements do not generate workloads and/or stress that, under fair and reasonable circumstances, would unduly diminish the performance of students. I encourage you also to work with your staff to ensure that school-based assessment of student achievement across Pre-primary to Year 12 is based on the Principles of Assessment, as outlined in the *Outline* and the *WACE Manual 2020*.

The Authority website ([www.scsa.wa.edu.au](http://www.scsa.wa.edu.au)) is critical to sharing information and communicating with key stakeholders, including teachers, school administrators and parents. Improvements in the Authority's digital communications continue to be made to support the daily operations and service delivery through online tools. The parent and community website (<https://parent.scsa.wa.edu.au/>), launched in 2019, is just one example of this, providing accessible information to parents and members of the community about K–12 curriculum, assessment and reporting on student achievement.

The Authority's publications continue to focus on reader engagement and increased accessibility. You and your teachers are encouraged to register not only for the Extranet, but to keep up-to-date by subscribing to the monthly online *Kto10* and *11to12* circulars at <https://www.scsa.wa.edu.au/publications/circulars>. The attached Primary Insight, Secondary Insight and NAPLAN Online information sheets contain details of our plans for 2020 for you to share with your staff.

I would like to remind you to ensure that the NAPLAN and NAPLAN Online updates provided to schools are distributed to your relevant personnel. These updates contain essential information for your staff to ensure that NAPLAN is effectively administrated in 2020.

Thank you for your ongoing collaboration to ensure that collectively our work focuses on improving learning outcomes for students. Once again, my best wishes to you and staff for a smooth start to the school year.

Yours sincerely



**PATRICK GARNETT**  
**CHAIR, SCHOOL CURRICULUM AND STANDARDS AUTHORITY**

31 January 2020

## Primary insight

### Our Priorities: Sharing Prosperity (WA)

The State Government's *Our Priorities: Sharing Prosperity* establishes 12 priorities to address important issues facing Western Australia. *A Bright Future* is one of these priorities and includes a target that, by 2024, Western Australian NAPLAN Year 5 and Year 9 Reading and Numeracy mean scores improve by more than 10 scale points.

Further information is available at <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/our-priorities-sharing-prosperity>.

### Allocation of the Western Australian student number (WASN)

Thank you to all primary schools for their efforts in 2019 to ensure that all students were allocated a WASN. The allocation of the WASN will support smoother transitions for students and seamless provision of student achievement data, as students move through their years of schooling and between schools. The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) is aware that the timeline for the registration of students in 2020 is very tight; however, registrations are needed early in the year to support activities such as NAPLAN Online, Brightpath and ABLEWA.

The allocation of the Western Australian student number (WASN) has highlighted potential issues with schools enrolling students in non-sequential year levels. We trust that schools consider the socio-behavioural, emotional and academic ability of students when allocating them to a particular year group to ensure continuity of their learning is not disrupted.

### Pre-primary to Year 6 student achievement data upload pilot

The Authority continues to work with the information technology branches of the Department of Education and Catholic Education Western Australia to develop an automated upload of Pre-primary to Year 10 student achievement data. The Authority will support independent schools with the upload of student achievement data by running a pilot program for interested schools in 2020.

### Curriculum Advisory Committees (CACs)

The work of the new CACs, including the Years K–2 CAC (Early Childhood) and Years 3–6 CAC (Middle Childhood), has brought practising teachers together with university, professional association and school systems/sector representatives.

During 2020, these committees will be asked to provide expert advice to the Authority on a range of matters, including, but not limited to:

- the *Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline* (the *Outline*)
- the Principles of Teaching, Learning and Assessment
- the *Pre-primary to Year 10: Teaching, Assessing and Reporting Policy* and *Policy Standards for Pre-primary to Year 10: Teaching, Assessing and Reporting*
- external assessments – National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) and the Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (OLNA)
- assessment and moderation – Pre-primary to Year 10
- the Australian Curriculum trends and emerging issues pertaining to Kindergarten to Year 10 curriculum and assessment.

Membership of the CACs can be viewed at <https://www.scsa.wa.edu.au/about-us/curriculum-advisory-committees>.

## Curriculum support resources

The phased implementation of Languages will continue with Year 5 in 2020, complementing the suite of learning areas (English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities and Social Sciences, Health and Physical Education, Technologies, The Arts, and Languages at Years 3 and 4) already implemented by schools.

For the purposes of Languages education in Western Australia, the Authority is providing syllabuses for Second Language: Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Italian and Japanese. The Authority has also made the Australian Curriculum Languages not adopted and adapted by Western Australia through the development of a syllabus and resource materials, including ACARA's *Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages Framework*, to support schools implementing local languages, available at <https://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/home/teaching/curriculum-browser/languages>.

To assist schools with implementing the *Outline*, the Authority has developed a range of teacher support materials, including Teaching and Learning Outlines, Assessment Tasks, Assessment Snapshots and Judging Standards resources that include assessment pointers and annotated student work samples.

ABLEWA resources were updated in 2019 to include Stages A–D Content Descriptions, Elaborations and Achievement Standards (<https://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/home/resources/ablewa>). These resources assist teachers to design teaching and learning programs suitable for students with disability and additional learning needs who are unable to access the P–Year 10 curriculum.

A further 12 schools have opted into the Brightpath project for 2020, bringing the total number of schools registered to use the assessment tool to over 600. Brightpath assists teachers to identify what learning is required to enable students to progress and demonstrate improvement and can be used together with the Judging Standards materials, which support teachers when: reporting against the achievement standards for each year of schooling; giving assessment feedback; and explaining differences in student achievement.

Schools wishing further information about registering for Brightpath should contact Maureen Lorimer by emailing [Maureen.Lorimer@scsa.wa.edu.au](mailto:Maureen.Lorimer@scsa.wa.edu.au).

## NAPLAN

Schools must upload initial registration and demographic information for students in Years 3 and 5 into SIRS by **Thursday, 13 February**.

The NAPLAN paper tests will be held between **Tuesday, 12 May** and **Thursday, 14 May**. NAPLAN Online will be held between **Tuesday, 12 May** and **Friday, 22 May**.

Further details about NAPLAN Online are provided in the attached NAPLAN Online information sheet.

## Secondary Insight

### Our Priorities: Sharing Prosperity (WA)

The State Government's *Our Priorities: Sharing Prosperity* establishes 12 priorities to address important issues facing Western Australia (WA). *A Bright Future* is one of these priorities and includes targets that by 2024:

- Western Australian NAPLAN Year 5 and Year 9 Reading and Numeracy mean scores improve by more than 10 scale points
- Western Australia has 85 per cent of Year 12 students completing two or more STEM courses and/or STEM-related vocational, education and training (VET) qualifications.

Further information is available at <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/our-priorities-sharing-prosperity>.

### State-wide briefings

Secondary school principals and deputy principals are invited to register to attend a briefing about the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority's (the Authority's) 2020 Key Messages. The briefings will be organised to provide updates on the *Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline* (the *Outline*) for Years 7–10 and the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) in 2020. Allan Blagaich, Executive Director – School Curriculum and Standards, and senior members of the executive team will present the briefings across the State in February and March. Registrations are open on the Authority website at <https://scca.wa.edu.au/events/2020-key-messages-secondary-school-leader-briefings>.

### New WACE pathway for 2020 Year 11s

Schools are reminded that current Year 11 students have an additional pathway to achieve their WACE in 2021, through the completion of at least five Year 12 General courses (or a combination of General and up to three Year 12 ATAR courses or equivalent). There is a range of information about the WACE requirements available on the Authority website at <https://senior-secondary.scca.wa.edu.au/the-wace/wace-requirements> that schools can share with their students and communities.

### Curriculum Advisory Committees (CACs)

The work of the new CACs, including the Years 7–10 CAC (Early and Middle Adolescence) and Years 11–12 CAC (Late Adolescence/Early Adulthood), has brought practising teachers together with university, professional association and systems/sector representatives to provide expert advice to the Authority on:

- the *Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline* (the *Outline*)
- the Western Australian Curriculum – Years 11 and 12
- the Principles of Teaching, Learning and Assessment
- external assessments – National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (OLNA), externally set tasks (ESTs) and Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) course examinations
- assessment and moderation – Years 11 and 12
- the WACE syllabus requirements
- the Australian Curriculum
- trends and emerging issues pertaining to Years 11 and 12 curriculum and assessment.

Membership of the CACs can be viewed at <https://www.scca.wa.edu.au/about-us/curriculum-advisory-committees>.

## Syllabus review – Years 11 and 12

In 2020, the Authority, with the expert advice of the CACs, will continue the process of reviewing five senior secondary syllabuses, which began in 2019, with an additional 10 courses proposed for review this year.

### Continuing in 2020

- Years 11 and 12 Integrated Science (General)
- Years 11 and 12 Animal Production Systems (ATAR)
- Years 11 and 12 Plant Production Systems (ATAR)
- Years 11 and 12 Media Production and Analysis (ATAR)
- Years 11 and 12 Geography (ATAR)
- Years 11 and 12 Drama (ATAR)
- Years 12 Physical Education Studies (ATAR)
- Years 12 English as an Additional Language/Dialect (ATAR)

### Commencing in 2020

- Years 11 and 12 Ancient History (ATAR)
- Years 11 and 12 Computer Science (ATAR)
- Years 11 and 12 Design (ATAR)
- Years 11 and 12 Economics (ATAR)
- Years 11 and 12 Engineering Studies (ATAR)
- Years 11 and 12 Human Biology (General)
- Years 11 and 12 Modern History (ATAR)
- Years 11 and 12 Music (ATAR)
- Years 11 and 12 Psychology (ATAR)
- Years 11 and 12 Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies (ATAR, General)

Updates about the review of these courses, including consultation opportunities, will be communicated via the Authority's *11to12 Circular* and on the Authority website at <https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/syllabus-and-support-materials/syllabus-review>.

## Moderation 2020

The Authority is providing learning area specific seminars during Term 1 to assist schools in supporting students to meet the WACE requirements in 2020.

These seminars are designed for:

- schools that are offering a course for the first time
- schools that are reintroducing a course
- teachers delivering one or more WACE courses for the first time (e.g. graduate teachers, teachers who have not previously taught Year 11 or Year 12, teachers whose past experience has been interstate or overseas)
- new school leaders (e.g. heads of learning areas).

### Consensus moderation 2020

In response to feedback and the review of previous moderation processes, consensus moderation meetings for WACE courses in 2020 will be full day meetings. Consensus moderation gives teachers opportunities to build common understandings of the course standards that underpin comparability. Comparability between schools ensures fairness for all students.

## Curriculum support resources

The Authority has developed a Years 7 to 10 sequence for six Second Languages: Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Italian and Japanese to acknowledge some students would enter Year 7 provided with, or having to choose, a language different from the one(s) they studied in their primary years. Syllabuses for these Second Language courses will be available on the Authority website in Semester 2, 2020. Schools are due to implement Year 7 Languages in 2022 as part of the phased implementation of Languages.

The Authority has also made the Australian Curriculum Languages not adopted and adapted by Western Australia through the development of a syllabus and resource materials, including ACARA's *Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages Framework*, to support schools implementing local languages, available at <https://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/home/teaching/curriculum-browser/languages>.

To assist schools with implementing the *Outline*, the Authority has developed a range of teacher support materials, including Teaching and Learning Outlines, Assessment Tasks, Assessment Snapshots and Judging Standards resources that include assessment pointers and annotated student work samples.

ABLEWA resources were updated in 2019 to include Stages A–D Content Descriptions, Elaborations and Achievement Standards (<https://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/home/resources/ablewa>). These resources assist teachers to design teaching and learning programs suitable for students with disability and additional learning needs who are unable to access the P–Year 10 curriculum.

## Applications for special consideration

Each year we receive a number of special consideration applications from Year 12 students concerning changes to course enrolments that preclude them from achieving the WACE. Schools should encourage Year 12 students to take responsibility for their own audit of the WACE requirements, and to use the Authority-developed WACE Checker (<https://wacechecker.scsa.wa.edu.au/>) to confirm WACE eligibility, prior to withdrawing from any course.

## Student Records Management System update (SRMS)

The development of the new SRMS has resulted in the release of the student portal and the online application process for English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D). In addition, all data has now been migrated to the cloud. This year will see the piloting of the dashboard and online applications for Year 11 equivalences and languages.

## Year 7 to Year 10 student achievement data upload pilot

The Authority continues to work with the information technology branches of the Department of Education and Catholic Education Western Australia to develop an automated upload of Pre-primary to Year 10 student achievement data. The Authority will support independent schools with the upload of student achievement data by running a pilot program for interested schools in 2020.

## NAPLAN

Schools must upload initial registration and demographic information for students in Years 7 and 9 into SIRS by **Thursday, 13 February**.

The NAPLAN paper tests will be held between **Tuesday, 12 May** and **Thursday, 14 May**. NAPLAN Online will be held between **Tuesday, 12 May** and **Friday, 22 May**.

Further details about NAPLAN Online are provided in the attached NAPLAN Online information sheet.

## NAPLAN Online 2020 – News

This year, as in 2019, the majority of schools in Western Australia will participate in NAPLAN Online. ACARA and Education Services Australia (ESA) have advised that they have addressed the firewall issue that caused a major disruption to the first day of online testing in 2019 and they have put in place a range of strategies to mitigate a similar occurrence in 2020. Two of these – refresher training and a combined practice test – apply to NAPLAN Online primary and secondary schools; a third strategy – rescheduled writing days – involves NAPLAN for Years 7 and 9, affecting secondary schools only.

### Refresher training

The Executive Director – School Curriculum and Standards is the Jurisdictional Responsible Officer (JRO) for NAPLAN Online in Western Australia (WA). ACARA requires the JRO to ensure that **all** school staff involved in the delivery of NAPLAN Online are trained in the procedures necessary for ensuring as smooth a delivery of the tests as possible. This includes how to manage unexpected technical disruptions, such as in 2019.

The Authority will provide three online training modules, one each for Principals, NAPLAN coordinators and test administrators. **All** staff involved in the set-up or delivery of NAPLAN Online are expected to complete the module suited to their role. A participation certificate will be available on successful completion of the module. This professional learning can be used towards teacher registration renewal.

### Combined practice test

NAPLAN Online schools all across Australia will be participating in a Coordinated Practice Test (CPT) – at the same time on the same day – so that ACARA and ESA can monitor the load on the test platform at the national level, and so that systems/sectors and schools can monitor the load on their local networks.

All NAPLAN Online schools are asked to participate in the CPT by having their maximum load of students (that is, the maximum number of students that will be testing **at any one time** during the May tests) do the CPT at same time. The CPT for WA schools is 9.00 am on **Monday, 23 March**. The practice test will be available for all schools from **Tuesday, 17 March** until **Friday, 8 May**, so that students and test administrators not involved in the CPT also have the opportunity of a dress rehearsal before the May tests.

### Rescheduled writing test days for Years 7 and 9

In 2020, the writing test days for Year 7 and 9 classes will be days 2 and 3 of the test window – **Wednesday, 13** and **Thursday, 14 May**. (There is no change for Year 3 students who will do their test on **Tuesday, 12 May**, or for Year 5 students who will do their writing test on **Tuesday, 12** and **Wednesday, 13 May**.)

Secondary schools must schedule Year 7 and 9 classes to do the writing test from day 2 (**Wednesday, 13 May**) and all classes must have sat the writing test by the end of day 3 (**Thursday, 14 May**). To ensure online schools are able to complete NAPLAN tests within the nine-day testing window, schools may choose to start Years 7 and 9 students with the reading test on day 1 (**Tuesday, 12 May**). However, where reading tests start on day 1, Years 7 and 9 writing tests must take priority and start on day 2, even if all classes have not yet sat the reading tests. Any classes that did not sit the reading tests on day 1 must be scheduled to sit reading after all classes have sat the writing tests.

### Back-up paper tests

Back-up paper tests will be provided to all NAPLAN Online schools. However, schools may not revert to paper tests without explicit direction from the Test Administration Authority (TAA) to do so. The TAA in WA is the School Curriculum and Standards Authority, which will provide details relating to this process early in Term 1.