



## Frequently Asked Questions – Year 11 Course Selection 2017

Download the Course Selection Booklet for 2016 by clicking on the cover page image to your left!

### Why do ATAR (University Preparation) courses have prerequisites?

On page 18 of the Senior School Course Booklet you will find the prerequisites for each of the ATAR courses offered in Year 11. You will also find the same prerequisites given at the top of each course description. For example – Chemistry ATAR. To get a “Green Light” in the Subject Selection Online (SSO) program, a student would need to have a B grade in Science and have an “Adjusted” score of 65%.

#### Pre-requisites required for this course-



Science B grade/ Exam 65%

Prerequisites are based on historical data and the experience of the Head of Learning Area and teaching staff. For example to be successful at ATAR Chemistry a student would clearly have to be passing Year 10 Science well (around 65% in major tests and examinations) as well as demonstrating attributes such as a positive work attitude, strong work ethic, commitment and a history of homework completion. **The reality of ATAR courses is that they require students to have BOTH ability and work ethic. Each ATAR course requires students to complete at least 3 hours of homework/ study per week.**

If your child has not demonstrated this ability and commitment in Year 10 then they will receive a “Red Traffic Light” next to these courses. It is strongly recommended that students adhere to these guidelines as changing courses in Year 11 creates a range of issues. Students who need to shift out of courses once the year has started can face issues in having limited course selection options as well as having to catch up with courses that have already commenced!

Students can choose courses for which they are not recommended by completing an interview with a course counsellor. The process requires the student to apply for a “Course Disclaimer” (see below).

I would however ask parents and students to think carefully about selecting courses for which they are not recommended!



Think carefully before selecting against a red light!

### Why do the prerequisites use “adjusted” exam scores?

The exam mark given in the prerequisites is an “adjusted score”. The exam score is the most appropriate indicator of student ability. New exams have to be produced each year (for obvious reasons) and while Heads of Learning Area and teachers attempt to produce examinations of a consistent standard there is always going to be a degree of variability. As a result I have instructed Learning Areas to “Adjust Raw Exam Scores” to align the prerequisite cut off exam values (e.g. 65%) with student ability. This alignment will involve applying a linear shift of several percentage points up or down to ensure that the prerequisite cut off of 65% lines up with the appropriate student.

Another issue requiring adjustment of raw exam scores is that within a Learning Area there can be different ability groups including General students, SBAE and Gifted and Talented students. The scores of all of these different ability groups have to be adjusted to align them to a common scale.

**Please note that it is the “Adjusted Exam Score” that will appear in the Semester Report.** Students will be aware of their “raw” exam score and it is important that they do not confuse the two. On occasions the raw score will require little or no adjustment.

## Can my child still do the course even if they do not meet the prerequisites?

If your child encounters a “red light” when selecting courses it is because they have not met the prerequisites. I would ask that students (and parents) seriously consider their options if not recommended for a course. Some students will select a full ATAR program (4 or more ATAR courses ) under the misunderstanding that University Entry requires a full ATAR course. This is NOT correct (See the FAQ). Before progressing against a recommendation, please consider your options before progressing with a course that you potentially will not pass- see the FAQ on “passing Year 11”.

If you and our child then decide that you wish to proceed with a course selection against recommendation you will need to attend an interview. These are made by appointment through the Subject Selection Online (SSO). Interviews will be conducted during Week 2 and3 of Term 3.

After discussion with the Course Counsellor, if you decide to proceed with a non-recommended course you will be issued with a “Course Disclaimer” form. This disclaimer form will then be submitted and processed by the Associate Principal (Senior School). Students with disclaimers will be required to attend a number of revision and support programs designed to improve their skills and understanding in that course. Students will also be required to demonstrate to their course teacher that their work ethic and attitude has improved. A course disclaimer will need to be signed off by the relevant Head of Learning Area .

**Students who fail to complete or meet the requirements of the disclaimer will be required to attend a further meeting to discuss their options prior to entry into Year 11.**

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## My child wants to go to University – do they need to do a full ATAR course (4 ATAR courses)?



Several of our Universities now offer pathways into University courses **that do not require students to have an ATAR score.** These pathways are ideal for students who struggle with the rigour of a full ATAR program but who

have the potential to succeed at a range of University courses.



I would encourage you to explore the options by following some of the links below or by making an appointment with our Careers Advisor – Ms Maree Marcon. Here are a small range of options for you to explore:

**Portfolio Entry courses** – these programs allow students to enter a range of courses at the start of the University year.

[Portfolio Entry into ECU](#)

[Portfolio entry into Curtin](#)

[Portfolio entry into Murdoch](#)

### University Preparation Courses/ Enabling Programs

University Preparation Courses prepare students for entry into University Courses. They give students additional skills in essay writing,



**Curtin University**

research skills and a great transition ideal for many students. Check out the details but very often there is no cost involve and students can be ready to commence their courses mid year if not earlier. Some links to get you started include:

[ECU University Preparation Course](#)

[Curtin University – UniReady Enabling Program](#)

... And there are more. Please explore options with the Universities themselves or by speaking to Ms Marcon.

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## What is the “Rigorous Assessment Period” at the start of Year 11?

The Rigorous Assessment (RA) period runs for the first 6 weeks of Term 1. During this time all ATAR courses will have a minimum of two comprehensive assessment tasks such as extended tests. These tasks are designed to ensure that students are doing courses in which they can be successful. Students with course disclaimers from Year 10 will be examined very closely to ensure that they are progressing at suitable level.

It is important to move students into alternative courses as early as possible in Year 11. Clearly, students who move into new courses will be required to catch up on course content of their new courses.

Ensuring that students are placed in the correct courses to commence with is the best option which is why we prefer students to select courses for which they have the necessary prerequisites.

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## What do I have to achieve to ‘pass’ Year 11 and proceed to Year 12?

For a student to attain their Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) they need to finish year 11 with a **minimum** of four C grades. This is known as the **Year 11 Achievement Standard**. Should students not meet this standard then will be required to repeat Year 11 or seek an alternative educational venue such as TAFEWA.



Note – A Certificate II course can be counted as a C grade in both Year 11 and Year 12

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## Who can I speak to if I still have questions?

There is plenty of help available.

### *If your question is about WACE or ATAR requirements –*

Owen Goyder (Associate Principal – Senior School)

Nicole Baker (Senior School Coordinator)

### *If your question is about VET courses –*

Maree Marcon (VET/ Careers Coordinator)

## Dates to remember

- **Duncraig Senior High School – Career Expo – Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June (Open Reporting Day) – Library**
- **Year 10 Parent Night – Course Selection 2016 – Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July**

Owen Goyder

Associate Principal – Senior School