



A division of St. Francis Methodist School

Curriculum Description for Australian Matriculation (Tertiary Entrance Examinations)

AUSMAT ENGLISH (WACE) (YEAR 11/ D004) (YEAR 12/ E004 L)

The English language is the means by which most Australians communicate with each other and share in the inheritance and formation of Australian culture. It plays a major role in their learning and development of a sense of self. English, and particularly Standard Australian English, is the language of power and influence in Australia. For these reasons, the study of the English language plays a vital role in the education of all Australian students.

The subject English focuses on the English language and its use in a variety of forms and contexts. In English subjects students develop their awareness of the ways in which the English language can be used and they learn to communicate more effectively.

This is one of a number of English subjects offered in Year 11 and is designed to meet the needs of students considering tertiary study at the end of Year 12. As such, it offers an education which is both worthwhile in its own right and a sound preparation for TEE English. This subject, unlike English for ESL Students, assumes that students attempting it are familiar with Australian culture and linguistic forms. It differs from English Literature in that students are taught to comprehend and compose non-fiction and non-print texts as well as literature, such as prose fiction and poetry. It differs from Senior English in the more complex and demanding study of texts which is required and the greater emphasis given to the development of students' critical awareness of language.

As students' development in English is a continuous process, this subject builds on the language abilities which students already have and on their widening experience of life. It is based on the study of texts drawn from a selected number of areas. For the purpose of this syllabus the word 'text' is used in its broadest sense, to include books, films, television programs, and so on. The word 'reading', therefore, includes viewing and listening to non-print texts. The texts on which the syllabus is based have been chosen for their ability to illustrate the various ways in which the English language can be used and contribute to the development of students' abilities to read, write and speak with greater maturity and sophistication.

General Aims

This subject is designed to enable students to:

- learn about and share in the language and cultural heritage of Australia
- learn and use the language forms and conventions used in schooling and the world beyond school
- use English as a medium for learning and personal growth
- understand how structures, patterns and audience expectations influence language and meaning.

Educational Objectives

Two sets of objectives are specified for this subject: process objectives and text objectives. Process objectives refer to students' language development. Text objectives refer to the content of the subject.

Process Objectives

Students should be able to demonstrate continued development of their ability to:

- write and speak using the conventions of Standard Australian English
- understand and use a wide vocabulary in their writing and speaking, employing idiomatic or specialised vocabulary where appropriate
- be critically aware readers and writers, able to form and modify expectations appropriately, make generalisations, draw inferences and perceive implied meanings
- identify the purpose(s) and intended audience(s) of a text, and vary their comprehending strategies accordingly; write and speak with awareness of purpose and audience
- discuss their reading, making reference, where appropriate, to the role of such elements as form, structure, style, point of view and tone in print and non-print texts; and use these elements with awareness in their writing and speaking
- recognise the relevance of their reading to various aspects of human experience; discuss this relevance orally and in writing
- consider wider issues arising from their reading; write and speak about such issues in a clear, coherent and perceptive way
- write and speak clearly, coherently and perceptively about their ideas, opinions and personal experiences
- write imaginative compositions in a variety of forms, showing awareness of structure, point of view and style.

Text Objectives

In their study of texts drawn from the following areas, students should be able to demonstrate development of the understandings outlined in the teaching–learning program:

Literature

Novels and short stories
Poetry and song

Non-fiction

Narratives
Letters and/or journals
Print advertising

Non-print

Any two of:
Television drama
Television and/or radio news and current affairs
Television advertising.

Teaching – Learning Program

The text objectives indicate the range of texts to be covered in the teaching-learning program, but do not prescribe the organisation of the program. Students' achievement in the subject will be enhanced by the integration of the content. Students will begin to appreciate the interconnection of language activities when they can see connections between their reading and their composing, between their writing and their speaking and between the literature, non-fiction and media texts they encounter.

The objectives of the subject can be achieved in a number of ways. Similarities of text content, particular language purposes, specified student activities, historical and geographical frameworks and many other forms of organisation can be used to provide the basis for particular units of work.

This subject recognises the interconnection of language and learning. Language is not only the tool by which people communicate their ideas, feelings and values and interact socially with each other; it is also their means of developing their own thinking. Language is therefore, not only the subject matter, but the means by which students learn.

The teaching-learning program should be designed around two strands – comprehending and composing –though these are to be seen as interrelated and not taught as separate elements of the subject.

Comprehending General Principles

The comprehending strand of the teaching-learning program in Year 11 is based on the study of a number of specific texts selected from the designated text areas. The texts studied in Year 11 will be those that are likely to engage the interests of the students; enable them to make ready connections between the world of the text and the world in which they live; and broaden their awareness of human experience. In Year 11 three general principles underlie this study.

The first principle is that students should develop an awareness of the relationship between their reading and human experience. During Year 11 students should begin to move from the generally egocentric approach to their reading common in lower school years to a recognition that reading can offer them a broader understanding of the world. Through their reading, therefore, students will perceive, explore and shape their understandings of a wider range of human experience.

The second principle is that the reading of texts in this subject should be a source of pleasure and satisfaction to students. This pleasure can develop from students' involvement in the text itself; from their appreciation of how the text is constructed; or from the information, ideas and stimulus to thinking that they find in the text. Students should be encouraged to find pleasure in all of these reading activities, discuss and explore their responses to their reading and broaden the range of texts that they read. In this way they will come to understand the different ways in which reading can be a source of pleasure and cope more thoughtfully and critically with the wide variety of texts they are likely to encounter outside their schooling.

The third principle is that students should become familiar with some of the techniques and conventions by which texts convey meanings and communicate values and views of the world. By applying this knowledge to the texts they encounter in future they can become more effective readers, gaining understanding and satisfaction from their reading. The analysis of the elements of a text should be a means to these goals, not a goal in itself.

Students' involvement in their reading and their ability to respond thoughtfully to the complex ideas and stylistic elements they encounter in most Year 11 texts will be strengthened if they do not come cold to their reading. Teachers may find it useful to provide students with information and organise activities such as group discussions, brainstorming and note-making, which strengthen their background knowledge and focus attention on some of the significant features of the text they are to read.

The sphere of work in each of the text areas is described below. In this subject the studies of literature, non-fiction and non-print texts are seen as interrelated.

Where possible the understandings gained in the study of examples from one text group should be applied to examples from the other text groups.

In their study of individual texts students should be asked to focus on one or two significant features so that they can study these in some depth. Teachers will, therefore, need to select texts and design a program which will ensure that students have covered the required areas by the end of the year.

Students' language development will also be enhanced by exposure to as wide a range of language as possible. Teachers can enrich students' language experience by presenting them with a wide range of different texts and encouraging them to read widely. The specification of text groups in this syllabus does not preclude teachers from presenting students with texts from other groups that will enhance their understandings and broaden their experience of language.

Literature Texts

Students who enrol in this subject should already have some familiarity with the concepts of genre, theme, plot, characterisation, setting and point of view. Their understanding of these concepts will be consolidated and extended in Year 11 through the study of more complex and demanding texts.

Novels and Short Stories

The study of novels and short stories emphasises the development of students' abilities to discern and discuss the themes – the ideas and views of human experience – of the texts they read.

To this end, students should study the ways in which narrative structures, characters, and settings contribute to the creation of particular themes. They should also examine the use of narrative point of view in positioning the reader in relation to the characters and events depicted, and the effects of choice of detail and language in the creation of plot, setting and character.

Poetry and Song

As with novels and short stories, the main emphasis in the study of poetry and song should be placed on the students' abilities to discern the themes of the texts they encounter. Students should study how these themes are communicated through poetic structure, point of view, choice of detail and language. Particular attention in this area should be given to the use of figurative language and symbolism.

The study of song can include traditional ballads, folk songs, hymns and contemporary popular songs.

Non-Fiction Texts

In lower school, students will have used non-fiction texts as sources of information. They will have learnt to identify key ideas in non-fiction texts and will have developed some understanding of their organisation, structures and purposes. These understandings will be consolidated in Year 11 through the study of more complex and demanding texts. Students' understanding of non-fiction will be extended beyond seeing it as a source of information towards a more distanced, critical awareness of the way in which such information is presented.

Narratives

Non-fiction narratives include such texts as biographies, autobiographies, historical accounts, travel records and some newspaper and magazine articles. The central focus of the study of these should be the development of students' abilities to understand the underlying thesis of the texts and discern the writers' attitudes to people, places and events.

Students should examine the selection and structuring of detail in narratives and the choice of language involved in descriptions of people, places and events, focusing on the effect of these on the reader's response to and understanding of the people, places and events depicted.

The extension of the boundaries of factual reporting for dramatic effect in some non-fiction narratives should also be examined.

Letters and Journals

In the study of letters and journals the focus is on the development of students' abilities to discern and discuss the experiences, ideas and emotions communicated by the texts.

Students should examine the way in which audience, purpose and context influence the choice of tone, content and language in letters and journals. This should include an examination of the consequences of the more direct relationship which exists between writer and reader in most letters and journals.

Print Advertising

The study of advertising can encompass corporate promotions, lifestyle campaigns, community service announcements, political advertising and propaganda, as well as the more direct forms of retail advertising.

In the study of print advertising emphasis should be placed on developing students' abilities to discern the messages, images and values created by particular advertisements with reference to the advertisements' target audiences.

Students should examine the choice of language used in advertisements, paying particular attention to the use of symbolism, connotation and emotive language (including scientific language used for emotive purposes).

Non-print Texts

In lower school, students will have developed some understanding of the content, organisation and structure of various types of non-print text. These understandings will be developed through the study of more complex and demanding texts and through a closer examination of the role of various forms of non-verbal language in these texts.

Television Drama

As in the study of prose fiction texts, students should develop their abilities to discern and discuss the themes of texts and examine the ways in which narrative structures, characters and settings contribute to the creation of these.

Students should also pay some attention to the effects of the choices made in such areas of film language as performance, lighting, music, sound effects and sets.

Television and/or Radio News and Current Affairs

Attention should be focused on discerning the underlying thesis of news items and the attitudes to people and events which the items reveal.

Students should examine the choices involved in the structuring of news items and the role of reporters, narrators and presenters in influencing interpretations of the events reported.

Attention should be given to the selection of information involved in the creation of news reports, and to the use of both verbal language and film language in the reports.

Television Advertising

As with print advertising, emphasis should be placed on the development of students' abilities to discern the images created by particular advertisements and the relationship between these and target audiences.

In their analysis of the creation of these images students should give particular attention to the use of symbolism and connotation in both film language and verbal language.

Composing General Principles

The composing and comprehending strands of this subject are closely interrelated. The texts read and the issues arising out of the reading should provide students with the subject matter for written and oral work. It is through both the breadth and the focus of their reading that students will develop their abilities to use language in their own spoken and written composing activities: the breadth of reading will widen their language experience; and the detailed focus on specific texts will make them aware of the various ways in which language can be used.

The texts studied can provide models of appropriate forms, structural patterns and stylistic features on which students can model their own written and oral compositions. Through this means students can become more consciously aware of their own and others' language use, and thus increase their control of language.

The expressive use of language is an important part of students' learning. They should be encouraged to write or talk informally about their initial responses to their reading and experience. In some situations expressive forms of writing and speaking will be the precursors to more crafted compositions. As such they will be a means of developing students' thinking rather than completed assignments in themselves. Informal group discussions and notemaking, because they give students the opportunity to explore and shape their ideas, are also important ways of achieving the aims of this subject.

Students should be made aware of the value of drafting and the importance of revising and editing their written work in order to improve its meaning and effectiveness. The more formal composing activities in which students engage should be based on their giving conscious attention to questions of purpose, audience, form, structure and style. Students should become aware that composing involves making choices from a wide range of language options and that these choices are open to them in their own compositions.

They should also be encouraged to improve their mastery of syntax, punctuation and spelling. Teachers should work with individual students on the problems revealed in their writing, allowing individuals to progress from the foundation of their existing language abilities. Direct class teaching will also be necessary in those areas which concern all students.

Purpose and Audience

In order to appreciate the importance of purpose and audience as major factors in the choice of content, genre, structure and style, students should write and speak for a range of purposes and audiences. Students will have had experience in lower school of composing for such fundamental purposes as recording, describing and reporting, and during Year 11 they should consolidate their abilities to write for these purposes. Particular attention, however, should be given to composing for the more demanding purposes of explaining their responses, beliefs and values; persuading others of particular ideas and attitudes; narrating stories from their own experience and imagination; and evaluating their reading and experience.

Although most written and oral compositions will be directed towards the classroom teacher and other class members, other real and implied audiences should be specified from time to time. Such audiences might include members of the school or wider community; the readership of particular magazines; or members of particular groups of whom the students have some knowledge.

Genres

In Year 11 English, students will consolidate their abilities to write and speak in a wide variety of genres. Particular attention should, however, be given to the written forms of the narrative, the letter and the essay and to the spoken forms of the group discussion and the formal talk. Narratives should include both factual and fictional forms, including those based on personal experience. Letter writing should encompass a range of forms, including expressive, transactional and opinionative forms. Students should develop the ability to use the tone, language and conventions appropriate to particular letter forms. Formal talks and discussions should encompass a variety of group sizes and degrees of formality, length and preparation.

Expertise in these genres is a vital part of students' abilities to think logically and creatively and to communicate and participate socially. The particular emphasis given to the essay in Year 11 English reflects the importance of the development of students' abilities to discuss more complex ideas in a coherent and structured manner.

Achievement in all these areas of composing will be enhanced if teachers provide students with a variety of appropriate models.

Structure

Students should be made aware that thoughtful structuring is an essential component of effective writing and speaking. They should be encouraged to plan, draft, revise and edit their written work as a means of achieving clear and coherent compositions.

Particular attention should be given to the use of appropriate introductions and conclusions, the effective ordering of content, and the use of topic sentences and transitional devices to provide cohesion within paragraphs and links between them.

Assessment Structure

Assessment structures are an integral part of all Accredited Subjects.

The structure specifies:

1. the components and learning outcomes to be included in assessment
2. weightings to be applied to these components
3. the types of assessment considered appropriate for the subject.

Table 1

Syllabus Content	Weighting percentage
Literature	30–40
Non-fiction	30–40
Non-print	20–30

Table 2

Learning Outcomes	Weighting percentage
Skills and processes	
comprehending	30–40
composing	30–40
Knowledge and understanding	20–40

Table 2 is intended to ensure that an appropriate blend of the Educational Objectives stated in the Syllabus is assessed. The weightings of this table are to serve as a

guide to the relative importance of these outcomes.

To assess knowledge and understanding separately from skills and processes is rarely appropriate in English. Generally assessment is done in a holistic way.

Table 3

Types of Assessment	Weighting percentage
Examination(s) and major tests	20–30
Written work: comprehending – responses to texts, and composing – expository compositions, narratives, letters, essays, and other genres reflecting subject content	40–60 20–30
Written work: comprehending and composing	

The assessment program must provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate coverage of the content requirements of the subject.

AND

Students must complete the assessment requirements of the subject.

Grade Related Descriptors

Grade-Related Descriptors describe the student performance standards that are used to award grades in this subject. Schools delivering this subject have been provided with a copy of the document.

Additional copies may be purchased from the Curriculum Council.