

Stage 6 Life Skills courses

ACE 7001

Last Updated: 23 December 2013

Stage 6 Life Skills courses have been developed for the small percentage of students with special education needs for whom the regular outcomes and content of Board Developed and/or Board Endorsed Courses are not appropriate.

The Stage 6 Life Skills courses can be undertaken in combination with other Board Developed and/or Board Endorsed Courses to meet the requirements for the award of the Higher School Certificate.

Stage 6 Life Skills courses have Board Developed status. Each Stage 6 Life Skills course comprises a 2-unit 120-hour Preliminary course and a 2-unit 120-hour HSC course.

The Stage 6 Life Skills courses are as follows:

- Community and Family Studies Life Skills¹
- Creative Arts Life Skills
- Dance Life Skills
- Drama Life Skills
- Music Life Skills
- Visual Arts Life Skills
- English Life Skills
- Human Society and Its Environment Life Skills²
- Aboriginal Studies Life Skills²
- Business and Economics Life Skills²
- Citizenship and Legal Studies Life Skills²
- Geography Life Skills²
- History Life Skills²
- Society and Culture Life Skills²
- Studies of Religion I Life Skills³
- Studies of Religion II Life Skills²
- Mathematics Life Skills
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education Life Skills
- Science Life Skills
- Technology Life Skills
- Agriculture Life Skills
- Design and Technology Life Skills
- Food Technology Life Skills
- Industrial Technology Life Skills
- Information Processes and Technology Life Skills
- Textiles and Design Life Skills
- Work and the Community Life Skills.

1. Available as a Preliminary course commencing in 2014 and an HSC course commencing in 2015.

2. Available as a Preliminary course commencing in 2012 and HSC course commencing in 2013.

3. Available as a Preliminary course and an HSC course commencing in 2014.

Exclusions

As with the study of all Board Developed Courses, exclusions apply to the study of Life Skills courses such that students may not study more than one 240-hour course in the same subject. For example, a student cannot include both English (Standard) and English Life Skills in the pattern of study for the award of the Higher School Certificate.

Eligibility for Stage 6 Life Skills courses

ACE 7002

Last Updated: 27 August 2013

Most students with special education needs will undertake regular course outcomes in Board Developed and/or Board Endorsed Courses to meet the requirements of the Higher School Certificate.

For a small percentage of students, in particular those with an intellectual disability, it may be determined that the regular Board Developed or Board Endorsed Courses are not appropriate. For these students, it may be appropriate to develop a pattern of study that includes one or more Stage 6 Life Skills courses.

The decision to access one or more Stage 6 Life Skills courses is made collaboratively with the student, parents/carers and other significant individuals in the student's life (eg teachers, learning support personnel and community service providers).

Before deciding that the student should access one or more Stage 6 Life Skills courses, consideration should be given to other ways of assisting the student to achieve regular course outcomes. This assistance may include adjustments at school level for course work and/or assessment tasks and/or accumulation of courses towards the HSC and/or disability provisions for the HSC examinations.

Students enrolling in any Stage 6 Life Skills courses will usually have completed Years 7–10 Life Skills outcomes and content in one or more courses.

The Board expects that the majority of students who enrol in Stage 6 Life Skills courses will be students with an intellectual disability.

Schools are not required to seek permission or submit planning documentation to the Board of Studies for students to undertake one or more Stage 6 Life Skills courses.

Students undertaking only Stage 6 Life Skills courses are not required to complete the *HSC: All My Own Work* program or its equivalent.

See also ACE 5006 for credentialling of Preliminary Life Skills courses.

Higher School Certificate entry procedures for Stage 6 Life Skills courses

ACE 7003

Last Updated: 12 December 2011

When entering students for Stage 6 Life Skills course(s), the **principal** is certifying that the student is eligible and the decision is the result of a *collaborative planning process*.

Schools should not enrol students in Preliminary or HSC Life Skills courses after the school year has commenced unless special circumstances apply and these circumstances have been taken into account in the context of a collaborative planning process.

Where a school has a student undertaking one or more Life Skills courses in Stage 6, the school must inform the Board of Studies via the submission of Preliminary and HSC entries through Schools Online .

Students with special education needs undertaking one or more Stage 6 Life Skills courses will enter for the award of the Higher School Certificate according to the procedures detailed in ACE 9001 Student entry procedures: Preliminary and HSC course entries, ACE 9002 Student entry procedures: confirmations of entry and ACE 9003 Student entry procedures: amendments to entry.

Requirements for the Higher School Certificate for students with special education needs

ACE 7004

Last Updated: 12 December 2011

To qualify for the award of a Higher School Certificate all students must fulfil the requirements detailed in ACE 8004 Eligibility requirements for the Higher School Certificate.

Students with special education needs can meet requirements for the Higher School Certificate using a combination of Board Developed Courses (including Life Skills courses) and Vocational Education and Training (VET) Industry Curriculum Framework courses/options or a combination of Board Developed Courses and Board Endorsed Courses (including Content Endorsed Courses).

Students with special education needs may access Vocational Education and Training (VET) Industry Curriculum Framework courses by undertaking the course under regular course arrangements or by undertaking selected units of competency within the course, identified through the collaborative curriculum planning process. For more information, see the Stage 6 Industry Curriculum Frameworks Support Document for Students with Special Education Needs

This flexibility allows schools to develop a pattern of study that challenges each student according to his or her needs and that facilitates a successful transition from school to adult life.

Stage 6 Life Skills courses have Board Developed status, 240 indicative hours (120 hours Preliminary courses and 120 hours HSC courses) and can be used to meet the requirements for the award of the Higher School Certificate.

Stage 6 Life Skills courses have no HSC examinations and results cannot be used in the calculation of a student's ATAR.

Board Endorsed Religion and Language Courses

Schools may develop courses for students with special education needs for Religion and in a Language for Stage 6 for Board endorsement.

For more information see School Developed Board Endorsed Course - Guidelines for Course Proposals .

For information on the Stage 6 Languages Life Skills Syllabus Framework contact the Board Inspector, Languages.

Collaborative curriculum planning for Stage 6 students with special education needs

ACE 7005

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All students with special education needs should be encouraged to choose the most appropriate course of study in keeping with their learning needs, strengths, goals and interests. This is best done in the context of collaborative curriculum planning with the student, parent/carer and other significant individuals in the student's life (eg teachers, learning support personnel and community service providers). Collaborative curriculum planning is appropriate for all students with special education needs and essential for students accessing Stage 6 Life Skills courses.

Definition

Collaborative curriculum planning is the process by which a team of people meet to discuss and make decisions about curriculum options that will lead to the award of the Higher School Certificate and the adjustments that will enable a student with special education needs to access course work and demonstrate achievement of outcomes.

The planning should consider whether a student could access the regular outcomes and content with adjustments in the delivery of course work and/or assessment tasks (including disability provisions for Higher School Certificate examinations).

Principals are responsible for the management of this collaborative curriculum planning process. Consultation with the respective support personnel in schools is important when making decisions about the most appropriate curriculum options and adjustments for students with special education needs.

Schools do not need to send planning documentation to the Board of Studies.

Procedures

When making decisions about curriculum options it is important to consider:

- the student's learning needs, strengths, goals and interests
- the support and/or adjustments that may be necessary for the student to access course work and demonstrate achievement of outcomes
- the transition needs of the student from school to adult life
- how the student's overall study pattern will meet the requirements for the award of the Higher School Certificate.

School planning for the implementation of Stage 6 Life Skills courses

ACE 7006

Last Updated: 27 February 2013

When it has been decided that a student should undertake one or more Stage 6 Life Skills courses, school planning to support the student in the learning process should:

- involve appropriate personnel in the design and implementation of the student's overall study pattern for the Higher School Certificate
- select the Life Skills outcomes and content appropriate to the student's needs that will form the basis of the student's study in the Stage 6 Life Skills course(s)
- identify the most appropriate contexts for the student to demonstrate achievement of outcomes, eg school, community or workplace
- estimate the time needed for addressing outcomes and content
- identify the resources required to assist the school in meeting the needs of the student
- plan teaching strategies that are appropriate to the age and abilities of the student
- identify adjustments that may be required to enable the student to access the Life Skills outcomes and content and demonstrate achievement of outcomes
- identify strategies for monitoring the student's progress
- include ongoing collaborative planning to assist the student's successful transition through school to adult life.

Schools may develop integrated programs that address outcomes from selected Stage 6 Life Skills courses to meet the needs of individual students. In developing integrated programs, schools should be mindful of the indicative hours of the selected courses.

Outcomes and content should be selected on the basis of individual students' learning needs. Schools will assess the student's achievement of Life Skills outcomes from these courses for recording on the HSC Profile of Student Achievement.

Satisfactory completion of a Stage 6 Life Skills course

ACE 7007

Last Updated: 13 October 2011

It is not necessary for students to address or achieve all the Life Skills outcomes in order to satisfactorily complete the course. The number of outcomes addressed and/or achieved will vary for individual students.

The course completion criteria for the Stage 6 Life Skills courses are the same as those for all Board Developed and Board Endorsed Courses.

A student will be considered to have satisfactorily completed a course if, in the principal's view, there is sufficient evidence that the student has:

- followed the course developed by the Board; and
- applied themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and experiences provided in the course by the school; and
- achieved some or all of the course outcomes.

Assessment of Life Skills outcomes in Stage 6

ACE 7008

Last Updated: 26 October 2011

Students undertaking a Stage 6 Life Skills course will be assessed on their achievement of the Life Skills outcomes identified in the planning process for the individual student.

Students can demonstrate achievement of outcomes in a number of ways, and across a range of environments including the school, community and workplace. Assessment should reflect the student's ability to generalise the knowledge and skills to a range of adult environments.

The content listed with each outcome provides examples of assessable activities on which teacher judgement will be based. Students do not need to complete all of the associated content to demonstrate achievement of a Life Skills outcome.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes can be gathered through ongoing assessment for learning and assessment of learning at particular points in the course of study.

Students entered for Life Skills courses may achieve the designated outcomes independently or with support.

See *ACE 7009 - Determining whether the Life Skills Outcomes have been 'achieved independently' or 'achieved with support'* for further information.

Determining whether the Life Skills outcomes have been ‘achieved independently’ or ‘achieved with support’

ACE 7009

Last Updated: 12 December 2011

An outcome should be considered as ‘**achieved independently**’ if there is evidence that a student can demonstrate the achievement of an outcome either:

- without adjustments or
- with the adjustments that enable the student to access course work and/or demonstrate achievement during assessment opportunities. These adjustments will have been determined through the collaborative curriculum planning process.

Examples of such **adjustments** might include:

- the positioning of a student in a classroom
- additional time to communicate
- use of assistive technology
- provision of alternative formats, eg large print or Braille
- provision of a reader or writer.

Some students will only be able to demonstrate achievement if they are provided with **additional support**. This type of adjustment is provided when a student requires assistance to demonstrate the achievement of an outcome. In such cases an outcome should be considered as ‘achieved with support’.

Examples of additional support include:

- verbal prompts
- visual prompts
- physical assistance
- provision of partial responses.

HSC Profile of Student Achievement

ACE 7010

Last Updated: 7 February 2013

An HSC Profile of Student Achievement is issued to each student who completes the requirements for the HSC and satisfactorily completes one or more Board Developed Stage 6 Life Skills courses. The HSC Profile reports the student's achievement of the syllabus outcomes identified in the planning process for the individual student. Outcomes can be reported as either 'achieved independently' or 'achieved with support' and are presented under course headings.

The HSC Profile of Student Achievement is intended to provide a complete picture of the student's achievement of Stage 6 Life Skills outcomes upon completion of the HSC. Student achievement of additional Life Skills outcomes in courses for which the student has not been entered may also be reported on the Profile.

Schools submit information on Schools Online regarding outcomes that have been achieved, either independently or with support, for all students undertaking HSC Life Skills courses at the time of collection of HSC assessment marks.

Outcomes achieved in School Developed Board Endorsed Life Skills courses will not be reported on the Profile of Student Achievement.

Students will receive the HSC Profile of Student Achievement together with any other HSC credentials being awarded.

Students who are accumulating Life Skills courses for the Higher School Certificate and who leave school prior to gaining the Higher School Certificate will receive a Profile of Student Achievement in conjunction with the award of the RoSA or Transcript of Study.

See also ACE 5006 for credentialling of Preliminary Life Skills courses.

Assessment of Stage 6 Life Skills courses

ACE 8100

Last Updated: 20 March 2014

Assessment of students in Life Skills courses in Stage 6 is in relation to the outcomes selected in the collaborative curriculum planning process (*see Related Topics link below*).

Profile of Student Achievement

The Board issues a Profile of Student Achievement to each student completing one or more Stage 6 Life Skills courses.

The Profile will contain a list of all Stage 6 Life Skills syllabus outcomes that have been achieved, either independently or with support, by the student during Stage 6.

The Profile will be issued to students as part of their Higher School Certificate credentials.

Information about the Profile of Student Achievement, and how it is generated is available on the Board's website.

(See: Profile of Student Achievement Life Skills)

Approaches to the assessment of students for Life Skills courses in Stage 6 are detailed in the Life Skills syllabuses.

Students who satisfactorily complete a Stage 6 Life Skills course and are leaving school without completing the Higher School Certificate will have their Stage 6 Life Skills course/s reported on the Record of School Achievement (RoSA) or the Transcript of Study (for students ineligible for the RoSA). For these students, a Profile of Student Achievement will also be issued showing the outcomes achieved in any Stage 6 (Preliminary and/or HSC) course satisfactorily completed.