



Our Ref: PN0379/05 2020/2664v2

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to provide information about the Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (OLNA). I will explain its purpose and what it means for your child.

In 13 years of compulsory schooling we expect young people to have developed the literacy and numeracy skills required for the next phase of their life. We believe this is very important, which is why it is a requirement for students to demonstrate a minimum standard of literacy and numeracy to be eligible to achieve the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE).

This standard reflects the skills that are described in Level 3 of the nationally accredited *Australian Core Skills Framework*.

This standard can be demonstrated in two ways:

- performance in the Year 9 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), or
- performance in the OLNA.

Normally, if students achieve Band 8 or higher in their Year 9 NAPLAN reading, writing or numeracy tests they are not required to sit the corresponding components of the OLNA. While NAPLAN and WACE achievement are independent, research has shown that students who achieve Band 8 or higher in Year 9 NAPLAN are working at or above the minimum standard required for the WACE. They are, therefore, not required to again demonstrate their skills in the corresponding component through the OLNA.

Students who need to demonstrate the minimum standard in reading, writing and/or numeracy are scheduled by their school to sit the required components of the OLNA each March and September from Year 10. This gives students up to six opportunities before the end of Year 12 to demonstrate the required skills in each component. Once a student has demonstrated the required skills in a component they are not required to sit that component again.

In 2020, as students in Year 9 were not able to prequalify for OLNA through NAPLAN, the Authority will provide an additional sitting of OLNA, for Year 9 students only, as an opportunity for them to demonstrate the literacy and numeracy standard. The proposed test window is three weeks for Reading and Numeracy (10–25 August) and 2 days for writing (10–11 August 2020). This opportunity is optional and would not count towards the students' six normal opportunities before Year 12. This attempt would be considered to be the prequalification opportunity for these students.

Furthermore, students who achieved Band 8 or higher in Year 7 NAPLAN writing will be prequalified for the writing component as students in Year 7 and 9 sat the same test. These students will not need to sit the OLNA in Year 9. There is no prequalification for students achieving Band 8 or higher in Year 7 NAPLAN reading or numeracy.

As its name indicates, the OLNA is an online test. The reading and numeracy components each comprise 45 multiple-choice questions and students have 50 minutes to complete each component. The writing component is a typed response of up to 600 words. Students have 60 minutes to complete this component.

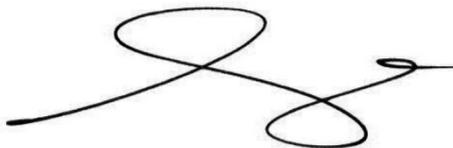
I would encourage you to read the *OLNA Information for parents/carers brochure*, which is available online at <http://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/assessment/olna>. While you are on the website, I would also encourage you to look at other available information. Schools are expected to provide students with access to the OLNA Practice tests and/or the OLNA Example tests for students who opt-in. Students can use the Practice tests to familiarise themselves with the assessment format and website functionality. The Example tests provide students, teachers and parents/carers with a complete test that is indicative of the difficulty and the diversity of skills assessed. There is an Example test for each of the reading, writing and numeracy components. It includes a set of 45 multiple-choice questions for reading; a set of 45 multiple-choice questions for numeracy and one writing prompt. Users have 50 minutes to complete the reading and numeracy components and 60 minutes to complete the writing component.

After each OLNA round, the Authority provides schools with individual feedback on each student's performance. Schools can use these reports to structure student learning to assist them in developing the skills they need to demonstrate the required standard. Significantly, those students at risk of not achieving the minimum standard of literacy and numeracy are identified through their performance in the OLNA. For these students, schools can deliver Foundation courses, which have been specifically developed to improve literacy and numeracy standards. There is also an interim report schools can use to keep parents/carers informed of their child's progress.

The Authority reports on student performance at the end of Year 12 through the Western Australian Statement of Student Achievement (WASSA). If a student has demonstrated **all** of the WACE requirements, the student will also receive a WACE. More information about the WACE requirements is available on the Authority website at <http://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/the-wace/wace-requirements>. Students who do not manage to demonstrate the literacy and numeracy standard by the end of Year 12 will be able to 'bank' their other achievements whilst they continue to work towards achieving their WACE. The WACE can be achieved over a lifetime.

If you have any further questions I encourage you to speak with your school. Schools are best placed to advise you on your child's learning development. If you have specific questions about the OLNA and cannot find the answer on our website, please email us at olna@scsa.wa.edu.au.

Yours sincerely



ALLAN BLAGAICH
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SCHOOL CURRICULUM AND STANDARDS

3 June 2020