

1. ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies – what languages can be studied?

Under the current framework and suite of omnibus courses for senior secondary languages in the ACT, there are three course documents – one each for beginning, continuing and advanced levels. These course documents encompass the requirements for all modern languages. An appendix provides details of language -specific content for each of the accredited languages. Currently, these are Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Spanish and Tamil. The courses – Beginning, Continuing and Advanced Modern Languages – are accessible via links on the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS) website at https://www.bsss.act.edu.au/asset_lists/atmcv_courses.

2. What are the course levels and which ones are delivered by CAL?

The Canberra Academy of Languages is delivering French, German, Japanese, Korean, Spanish and Tamil in 2022. Arabic, Hindi, Indonesian, and Italian may also be offered in 2023 if there are sufficient students interested and if qualified teachers are available. Chinese is offered by another provider, so is not offered by CAL. Beginning courses are for students with minimum prior experience in the language. Continuing courses are suitable for students with a basic working knowledge of everyday usage in the language (for example, completion of language studies in Years 9-10), while Advanced courses are for students who are background speakers with significant prior use of the language. The levels are described in detail in the [BSSS Languages Eligibility Form](#).

3. How does CAL decide on the courses to run?

Canberra Academy of Languages will run programs in languages for which we have enough student enrolments to cover the costs of delivering a program, such as teacher salaries, online services, venue hire, printing and publishing, insurance and accounting fees for annual returns to government. At the time of writing, enrolments are open for students commencing in 2023.

4. What teacher qualifications are required of teachers recruited for the programs?

As outlined on the Programs page on the CAL website, to ensure effective delivery of the curriculum, teaching staff members are required to have:

- Working with Vulnerable People (WwVP) registration
- Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) registration or Permission to Teach *
- Speaking and writing skills in the target language at least equivalent to completion of a university sub-major, or equivalent to a university major for advanced classes
- Evidence of a sound understanding of language teaching methodology
- ICT capabilities including the ability to identify suitable authentic source documents in the target language and to curate online learning resources for access by students

* To obtain TQI registration, teachers who completed any of their teaching qualifications outside Australia, New Zealand, the UK, the Republic of Ireland, the USA or Canada may need to provide TQI with certified evidence of either an IELTS or ISLPR assessment as outlined below on TQI website. Refer to <https://www.tqi.act.edu.au/teach-in-the-act/english-language-proficiency> for details.

5. What is the schedule for program delivery?

Arrangements depend on what suits the teacher and students and on availability and cost of room hire. The venue for all CAL language classes is Ainslie School, 33 Donaldson Street, Braddon. In 2022, French, Spanish and Tamil classes are held on Wednesday evenings; German, Japanese and Korean on Thursday evenings.. Current information on days and venues is on the [Programs page on CAL website](#).

The teaching program is based on two hours on-site and two hours off-site, with the off-site work programmed by the teacher online for students. Students are accountable to do the work set to gain work-required attendance recognition. The minimum standard deliverable time for a senior secondary full semester unit is 55 hours. Our program delivers above that figure, generally 60+ hours per semester. We teach from Week 2 to Week 18 in Semester 1 and from Week 1 to Week 16 or 17, depending on assessment end-dates for BSSS, in Semester 2.

6. Can a student enrol in a senior secondary course before commencing Year 11?

Provision for commencement before Year 11 is documented in the ACT BSSS Policy and Procedures Manual (<https://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information-for-teachers/policy-and-procedures>) under the heading “Early Access Students” and in Appendix 5: Guidelines for Early Access. The purpose of early access is to enable high school students (generally in Years 9-10) to engage in senior secondary studies prior to those in their cohort. Beginning Languages are not available for early access. The guidelines now require also that candidates demonstrate that they are highly accomplished in the subject and have completed any relevant 7-10 curricula to a high standard. With early access, scores are finalised when the participating students and their peers graduate at Year 12. Participation in senior secondary studies will start the five-year period that students have to complete the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate.

Families should negotiate early access arrangements with current home schools and prospective colleges ahead of time, and prior to students’ commencement in CAL programs. As the program provider, the CAL Convener will contact the Office of the BSSS about early access students whose families and schools have provided school endorsements and will include day schools in the communications with BSSS about this.

7. How does scaling work for students who study languages through CAL?

Each program with CAL will be in the CAL languages scaling group and will be moderated by us with our other languages. The cohort goes by graduating year, so the 2023 Year 11 intake will belong to the 2024 Year 12 graduation cohort. If the CAL languages cohort has 10 or fewer students, ACT BSSS generally uses small group procedures (see the BSSS Policy & Procedures Manual, section 5.4.2). Under these procedures, a languages specialist from another college will usually review Year 12 portfolios (portfolios are sent to BSSS in two stages, as below).

In past years (2017 to 2020), small group portfolios for Year 12 cohorts, were collected by ACT BSSS around mid-August (for the previous three semesters) and towards the end of November (for the fourth semester). The small group portfolios consisted of the same kind of documentation that is required for moderation days. However, with our increasing numbers from 2021, we use in-house meshing of scores across our Year 12 CAL cohorts, now that these numbers in the year group have risen above the standard BSSS small group threshold of ten.

For more information about scaling, see:

- [Scaling and the ATAR](#) (ACT BSSS)
- ACT BSSS [Policy and Procedures Manual](#), available from BSSS website, including sections 4.3.6.2 (Procedures for calculating unit scores), 5.4.1 (Course combination into scaling groups), and 6 (ACT Scaling Test).

8. Do students have access to university entrance incentives to study languages?

For information about possible extra ATAR points, see the ANU’s online page about the national access scheme at <https://www.anu.edu.au/study/apply/national-access-scheme>. The ANU’s online page states that a Major is required.

9. How do students access places in CAL programs and what are the costs?

CAL offers language courses at continuing and advanced levels, and, some cases, also at beginning level. For more about levels, see section 2 on the previous page. Students usually enrol with us for their senior secondary years, but there are also early access provisions – see section 6 above. It is important that families confer with day schools, so that course advisers know that a subject is being undertaken with us as an external provider and that it will count towards the student’s study package. Our enrolment fees are \$500 per term, invoiced at the start of each semester. Student places may be sponsored by the family or the school, as negotiated with the day school. Once you have decided that our programs suit your needs, we will send you the CAL enrolment form and the BSSS languages eligibility form so that we can set up a place for you in your chosen program.

10. What are the assessment tasks during each semester?

With the new languages curriculum, implemented in 2020, we run one task for each of the four macro skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) each semester, alternating between enquiry-based mode and test conditions mode for each of the tasks from one semester to the next. Scheduling is listed on the Events page on CAL website. There are additional details in unit outlines and assessment task descriptions on class pages on the [Languages.Org.Au](https://www.languages.org.au) website. Scheduling of assessment tasks is summarised also on the [Events page on CAL website](#), with a pencil-and-paper icon to help identify the relevant entries in the calendar.

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