

Different QCE Pathways- The ATAR



Facts & FAQs

A TERTIARY PATHWAY- THE ATAR

What are the different ways to the QCE?

The Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) is Queensland's senior schooling qualification. The QCE offers students flexibility in what is learnt, as well as where and when learning occurs. At The Gap State High School, students are typically on three distinct pathways; a Tertiary Pathway, a Vocational Pathway or a blended pathway - with both ATAR and Vocational Education outcomes.

Tertiary Pathway - The ATAR

Students on the tertiary pathway are eligible to obtain the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) for entrance into university. The ATAR is a standard measure of a student's overall academic achievement in relation to that of other students in their age group in any given year. It is intended to assist tertiary institutions to select applicant into their courses. The ATAR is a percentile rank, not a mark. It's

expressed as a number on a 2000-point scale from 99.95 down to 0.00 in steps of 0.05.

To be considered for this pathway, students must complete Year 10 English with a C grade or better. General subjects needed for ATAR eligibility require students to complete up to 2000-word assessment items, respond in examination conditions of up to 1000 words to be graded by an external marker, and communicate in a manner that provides a clear response, to meet the assessable objectives and cognitive verbs outlined in prescribed syllabuses.

Responsibility for calculating and issuing the ATAR has been assigned to the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) on behalf of Queensland tertiary institutions.

WHAT ARE THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR AN ATAR?

To be eligible for an ATAR, a student must:

- complete five General subjects (Units 3 and 4); or
- complete four General subjects (Units 3 and 4) plus one Applied subject (at Units 3 and 4) or a VET course at AQF Certificate III level or higher; and

Students must also satisfactorily

- complete (i.e. achieve a minimum grade of C or higher) an English subject (one of English, Literature, or Essential English).

While students must satisfactorily complete an English subject to be eligible for an ATAR, the result in English will only be included in the ATAR calculation if it is one of the student's best five scaled results. For more information about scaling and the ATAR, refer to QTAC's website.

PRECLUDED SUBJECTS AND SUBJECT COMBINATIONS

The following rules apply regarding precluded subjects and subject combinations in the ATAR calculation:

1. Only one General English or Applied English subject can be included in the ATAR, not both. For example, it is not possible to include both English (a General subject) and Essential English (an Applied subject) in a student's ATAR.
2. Only one General Mathematics or Applied Mathematics subject can be included in the ATAR, not both. For example, it is not possible to include both Mathematical Methods (a General subject) and Essential Mathematics (an Applied subject) in a student's ATAR.
3. Only one result for the same subject taken as a General subject and via Senior External Examination can be included in the ATAR. For example, it is not possible to include both the General subject Chinese and the Senior External Examination subject Chinese in a student's ATAR. Similarly, it is not possible to include both the General subject Biology and the Senior External Examination subject Biology in a student's ATAR.

Remember!

Some university courses have subject prerequisites that you must satisfy before you can be considered for tertiary entrance so if you have a desired course(s) in mind, consider this when selecting your subjects

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Who calculates the ATAR?

The Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) are responsible for calculating the ATAR. Upon completion of the full Units 3 & 4 assessment program QCAA forward and score out of 100 to QTAC. QTAC then calculate a rank score in relation to the rest of the students in their age group to arrive at a rank indication from 99.95 to 0.00. For more information on the calculation and scaling processes, please see the links below for access to the supporting documentation from QTAC.

How does my child gain the best possible ATAR?

In order to gain the best possible ATAR students need to perform well in their subjects. Students should aim for a score as close to 100 as possible upon exit. This score is calculated from the results of three internal assessment items and one external exam. Subjects will be scaled against each other. Students wishing to gain the best possible ATAR should select and complete 6 General subjects. If an ATAR is important to students, it is not recommended that they study only 5 General subjects due to the scaling process and impact of external exams. General subjects will contribute greater to the ATAR than Applied or AQF Certificate III or above due to the academic rigour required.

What are bonus rank points?

Bonus rank points are now called adjustment factors and are applied to assist access to a particular course at particular tertiary institutions. Adjustment factors do not change the ATAR and are applied once the ATAR has been calculated. Each institution has its own criteria for when adjustment factors apply. Common adjustment factors include:

- Equity adjustment: if an applicant has experienced difficult circumstances or disadvantage
- Subject adjustment: if a current Year 12 applicant has undertaken a secondary subject in a Language Other than English (LOTE) or Specialist Mathematics, or university enrichment courses
- Elite athlete adjustment: if an applicant is an elite athlete

USEFUL LINKS

School Website

<https://thegapshs.eq.edu.au/>

QTAC

<https://www.qtac.edu.au/student-resources>

USEFUL CONTACTS

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