

Assessment in the SACE International Program

The SACE International program is a well-established pre-university qualification offered in Malaysia and China. It was formerly known as the South Australian Matriculation (SAM) program.

The program is administered by the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) Board, a statutory authority of the South Australian Government.

SACE International is designed to prepare students for the demands of university study. Upon successful completion of the program, students receive the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) and are eligible to receive an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

The ATAR is a universal index that is used by many universities to select students into their courses.

SACE International graduates go on to study at leading universities around the world — including Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Malaysia.

Performance Standards and Grades

Students in the SACE International program select five subjects to study. Each subject has a performance standard which describes 15 levels of achievement from A+ to E-.

Students are able to refer to the performance standards to identify the knowledge, skills, and understanding that they have demonstrated, and those specific features they need to demonstrate to reach the highest possible grade.

Assessment

There are two assessment components for every subject: school assessment and external assessment. These components are weighted at 70% and 30% respectively.



The grade levels A+ to E- are used to assess and report a student's achievement in:

- school assessment (comprising up to two or more assessments, for example, a folio, extended study, analysis)
- external assessment (for example, an examination).

School Assessment

Teachers are responsible for setting and marking the school assessment component of the SACE International program, according to the specifications in the subject outline. School assessment comprises 70% of a student's final grade. Teachers report the results for each assessment type, for each student, to the SACE Board.

The college's grading decisions are reviewed by SACE Board-appointed and trained moderators to ensure performance standards are interpreted and applied consistently.

This moderation process is based on a sample of students' work. During this process the SACE Board confirms or adjusts the grades submitted by the college.

External Assessment

External assessments, including examinations, are developed by panels under the leadership of a Chief Assessor appointed by the SACE Board. The external assessment component of each subject comprises 30% of a student's final grade in the subject.

Combining the Assessments

The school assessment and the external assessment grades are combined. During this process, grades are converted to numerical equivalents ranging from 1.0 to 15.0.



Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR)

Students' SACE International results can be converted into an ATAR, which can then be used for university entry in any Australian state, and towards entry at many universities around the world.

The process for converting a student's SACE International results into an ATAR is as follows:

1. The numerical equivalents (1.0–15.0) for the student's final subject grades are scaled by the South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC) and reported as 0.0–20.0.
2. The scaled scores are used to calculate the university aggregate, as follows:

the full score from the student's best four full-year subjects

plus

either half of the score from the student's fifth full-year subject *or* the score from the half-year Research Project.

The university aggregate is reported as a score out of 90.0*, with intervals of 0.1.

3. This aggregate is converted to an ATAR — a ranking which ranges from 0 to 99.95, with intervals of 0.05. The ATAR indicates how well a particular student has performed compared to other students.

The ATAR is calculated by converting university aggregate scores from a cohort of students into a percentile ranking. For example, if 10% of a cohort gain a university aggregate of 70.4 or better out of 80.0, the score of 70.4 will correspond to a percentile rank of 90.00.

A student's relative position on the ATAR range is unchanged from their relative position on the university aggregate range.

As a rank is not a score, the ATAR cannot be calculated arithmetically from a university aggregate.

*80.0 in 2014; 90.0 from 2015.

For more information visit the SACE International website:

www.sace-international.edu.au