

5 February 2025

New SACE subject launches in 2025

A SACE subject successfully piloted by a group of South Australian and Northern Territory schools is available to all secondary school students from the start of term 1.

Activating Identities and Futures (AIF) is an innovative subject introduced by the SACE Board to equip senior secondary students with the learning skills and expertise increasingly required to meet the rapidly changing demands of modern workplaces, tertiary institutions, and life in general.

It is completed by Stage 2 SACE students over one semester based on a learning goal of their choice.

AIF will replace the compulsory Stage 2 Research Project, which can still be offered by schools in 2025 but will no longer be available from 2026.

While the Research Project largely focused on students' use of formal research methodologies to produce a Research Outcome, AIF focuses on students' personal growth, learning strategies, and requires students to take greater ownership of their learning in a context that is interesting and relevant to their passions and future goals.

In AIF, students choose a learning goal based on an area of personal interest or passion, decide on the strategies that will help them achieve it, and have the freedom to use a variety of formats to demonstrate their learning. Across the semester, teachers guide students as they progress towards their goal.

AIF encourages students to take initiative and ownership of their own learning, drawing on the knowledge and skills they've developed throughout their schooling, and preparing them for the workplace or further study.

The new subject has been rigorously tested over the last three years by the SACE Board in partnership with across more than 68 government, independent and Catholic schools.

Students involved in trialling AIF have transferred skills to other subjects, like Mathematics, Science, and English, and showed greater responsibility in managing their studies and meeting deadlines.

"AIF facilitated more flexibility for me to learn how I learn most effectively. I was able to use the learning techniques that worked well for me during AIF to study for my other subjects," said a student who chose to investigate intervention techniques to improve the quality of life for Parkinson's disease patients in light of their grandmother's Parkinson's diagnosis.

AIF is a compulsory, semester-long Stage 2 SACE subject that complements Exploring Identities and Futures (EIF), a SACE subject completed by students at Stage 1.

Attributable to Minister for Education, Training and Skills Blair Boyer

"As workplaces and technology evolves, education needs to as well, so we can ensure we are preparing our students and giving them the tools they need for success when they leave school.

"The focus of the AIF is to look at how students learn and problem solve – this is a major skill that employers frequently talk to me about that is sometimes lacking in young people as they enter the workforce.

"By focusing on understanding how they learn, students will be able to use those skills in any pathway they chose, whether it's an apprenticeship, traineeship, a university course or as they enter the workforce, which is exactly what we should be doing as part of the education system to prepare our young people for their future."

Attributable to SACE Board Chief Executive Michaela Bensley:

"AIF is an opportunity for young people on the cusp of adulthood to demonstrate initiative, to show the world what they know and can do, and to set themselves up for where they want to go in life."

"Being able to direct their own learning encourages students to be self-starters, problems-solvers and good managers of their own time and energy – qualities that will set them up to succeed in the workplace, at tertiary institutions, and in life generally."

"AIF, which complements Exploring Identities and Futures, is an integral part of a wider effort by the SACE Board to ensure that the SACE continues to be a modern and responsive qualification for a changing world."

"We are incredibly grateful to all the schools that participated in the pilot of this new and innovative subject and commend their dedication to providing quality education, improving student learning experiences, and openness to exploring new teaching methods to advance the future of education."

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