

# Don't believe everything you read or hear in the media...

Unfortunately, many myths have been generated as a result of incorrect media reports.

## Outcomes and Standards Education

"English students will not be required to read a book, or demonstrate their ability to write continuous prose"

This is wrong. For example in the sample WACE English examination, Question 5 requires students to 'Write to convince a reader that one or more print texts (long or short fiction or non-fiction) that you have read is/are worth reading.' Level 6 of the reading outcome requires students to 'understand and interpret extended and complex uses of narrative, poetic, dramatic or expository conventions'.

Teachers are given greater flexibility and professional judgement in what they focus on in the classroom and research at schools shows students doing the new English course have opted to study books in greater numbers, because Vocational English has disappeared. The former Vocational English course had no requirement for students to read such texts.

"Music students are no longer required to play an instrument"

This is NOT NEW. The current TEE course provides an option for students to pass the Music course by either performing on a musical instrument (which the majority choose to do) or through presenting a folio of compositions demonstrating an understanding of the knowledge and skills required. There is also a third option - producing a research project, which encompasses a composition project that reflects the students' understanding gained through research as well as reflecting the required skills.

"Music lessons will now be more concerned with theory and sociology than actual skills"

No, the new Music course does not focus on these elements. Sociology is to be considered when researching the origins and developments of a particular genre.

Music theory has always been a critical part of understanding music. Performance and composition cannot be demonstrated effectively, with the absence of theory.

"Maths students will no longer be penalised for incorrect calculations"

Wrong again. The new mathematics courses have not yet been endorsed or accredited; the draft design brief for the examination states:

***'working should be in sufficient detail to allow answers to be checked readily and for marks to be awarded for reasoning. Correct answers given without supporting reasoning may not be allocated full marks. Incorrect answers given without supporting reasoning cannot be allocated any marks.'***

"In English and media classes, meanwhile, poor spelling, grammar and punctuation will no longer count against test takers"

Incorrect. A student is required to achieve Level 4 for the course to qualify for the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE). To achieve a Level 4 in the Writing Outcome a student is required to:

***'ensure correct spelling of common words; write appropriately constructed sentences using capital letters, full stops, question marks and commas appropriately; demonstrate structural conventions such as paragraphs and headings.'***

The Media course requires students to use appropriate 'codes and conventions'. Understanding 'audio and written codes', for example, is part of the essential content - the same codes and conventions that apply to all media outlets, so that written work is presented with correct spelling, grammar and punctuation.

"Rap songs backed by downloaded music will be considered perfectly acceptable come Music exam time"

This is also wrong. The task in question would require an original composition, consisting of six parts - one of which must be a sample (not necessarily downloaded from the Internet), but it would form only part of the accompaniment. Students performing a rap song, backed by downloaded music, will NOT be considered acceptable.

For more information visit <http://newwace.curriculum.wa.edu.au>

