

**Aboriginal  
Pathways**



South Australian Aboriginal  
Secondary Training Academy



Government of South Australia  
Department for Education

# Information Guide

2026

**DREAM • BELIEVE • ACHIEVE • SUCCEED**

# Information Guide

2026

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## Introduction

The South Australian Aboriginal Secondary Training Academy (SAASTA) offers young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander South Australians in public schools a range of highly engaging learning and personal development opportunities.

SAASTA builds on the education offered in public schools, offering a tailored program with cultural connection, belonging and safety, specifically designed for Aboriginal students.

SAASTA provides Aboriginal school students with a unique sporting and educational program. Our academies work with school leaders and local communities across South Australia to provide students with the skills, opportunities and confidence to dream, believe, achieve and succeed in the areas of sport, education, employment, healthy living and connection with their culture.

Both male and female students in Years 10, 11 and 12 who are studying the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) in public schools can apply to join SAASTA.

Enrolment is open to Aboriginal students who are committed and passionate about pursuing success in education and building a strong foundation for their future.

Every academy student is encouraged to aim high and to raise the bar of expectation they place on themselves and their peers, particularly in the areas of attendance, participation, educational performance and behaviour. Because of this approach, academy students are widely considered as leaders for their schools, families and communities.

The SAASTA program is a key component of the Department for Education's Aboriginal Education Strategy (2019-2029) aiming to improve outcomes and success for Aboriginal families and students.



“

*I don't think I would be at the same place I am right now without the SAASTA Academy. The teachers are people I can rely on. They've provided a good environment for me and my peers – they've not only helped me in the classroom but outside the classroom [too].*

**Seth, Year 12 SAASTA Student  
Ocean View Academy**

”

## Acknowledgement of country

At SAASTA we recognise and acknowledge that a number of our academies are located on the lands of the Kurna people, the traditional owners of the wide Adelaide region. We would also like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands beyond Kurna country where our academies have been established. We respect the cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship that Aboriginal people have with the land and understand that this remains of significant importance today.

## What to expect from SAASTA

SAASTA offers a highly engaging, quality academic program that supports Aboriginal students to cope with the rigour of the SACE. In doing so staff, host schools and our partners are focused on supporting, encouraging and inspiring our students to reach their full potential.

Academy students can expect:

- to be led by quality, engaging and inspiring teaching staff and mentors
- their own academy room, providing a space for academy classes and activities
- a complete academy uniform, seniors jumper and sports uniform for sports competitions and carnivals
- individual support and mentoring
- cultural inclusiveness and connectedness
- to learn leadership skills
- to increase self-confidence and resilience
- curriculum that is embedded in Aboriginal perspectives
- no cost for the program.

## Enrolment

To enable more students the opportunity to enrol in SAASTA we offer three distinctive options:

- School-based Academies
- Specialist Academies
- SAASTA Connect

All SAASTA students are required to attend their non-academy subjects in their home school sites. Enrolment to our school-based and specialist academies is open to all Aboriginal students enrolled in public schools and typically takes place during a school's subject counselling. Acceptance into a SAASTA academy is dependent on each individual student's:

- attendance
- behaviour
- commitment to studies
- attitude to themselves and others.

Students interested in joining SAASTA School-based Academies should first contact the local SAASTA Coordinator at one of our schools (refer to School-based Academy Locations on pages 6 and 7) or for access to the Specialist academies email: [Education.SAASTA@sa.gov.au](mailto:Education.SAASTA@sa.gov.au). Due to workload demands, students are not supported to participate in both School-based academies and Specialist academies.

## Student pathways

It is important for every student to feel confident and secure about their future, and so to help our graduates reach their goals we have established a range of key partnerships to connect students with employers, further and higher education pathways.

Every SAASTA subject provides each student the opportunity to research information relating to their transition from school to employment or tertiary study when they complete their SACE.



# School-Based Academies | Overview

## Curriculum

The School-based academies provide a variety of curriculum offerings, but the table below shows a typical curriculum plan for an academy in 2026.

YEAR 10	
Semester One	Semester Two
Stage 1 Integrated Learning (10 Credits)	Stage 1 Aboriginal Studies (10 credits)

YEAR 11 AND 12
Full Year
Stage 2 Aboriginal Studies (20 Credits)



## Subject Outlines

School-based academy students typically study SACE subjects each year. These subjects are developed specifically for our students and contribute towards the successful completion of the SACE. The subjects are delivered in a structured and highly supportive academy classroom environment by SAASTA teachers with the assistance of ASETOs and relevant community members to support the learning.

### Stage 1 Integrated Learning – Aboriginal Power Cup

#### 10 SACE Credits

Open to both male and female academy students, the Aboriginal Power Cup subject has been developed using the SACE Integrated Learning framework and culminates in the annual Aboriginal Power Cup carnival, a three-day sporting event focusing on cultural activities, career pathways and the much anticipated nine-a-side round robin AFL competition.

Leading up to the carnival students work both individually and as part of their team to complete a Practical Exploration task designed around inquiry into their culture; a Connections task designed around building relationships and connecting with others through the sharing of culture; and a Personal Venture task outlining their learning through their personal involvement in the yearly SAASTA program.

Assessment Type 1: Practical Exploration

Assessment Type 2: Connections

Assessment Type 3 : Personal Venture

### Stage 1 Aboriginal Studies – SAASTA Shield

#### 10 SACE Credits

Open to both male and female academy students, the SAASTA Shield subject has been developed using the SACE Aboriginal Studies framework and culminates in a two-day multi-sport event with teams competing to claim the annual SAASTA Shield.

Leading up to the carnival students work both individually and as part of their team to complete three responses to their Learning Journey as well as one individual Creative Presentation task.

Assessment Type 1: Learning Journey

Assessment Type 2: Creative Presentation

A majority of each team's points are gained through strong attendance at school and successfully completing their curriculum tasks. The two highest-ranked male and female teams earn the right to play off in the Grand Final on day three as a curtain raiser to a scheduled Port Adelaide Football Club AFL game at Adelaide Oval.

### Stage 2 Aboriginal Studies

#### 20 SACE Credits - Full Year

This subject has been developed for Year 12 students as an extension to the Aboriginal Power Cup and SAASTA Shield.

Students complete three responses as part of the Learning Journey task, demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal narratives; they collaboratively plan and implement a Social Action communicating their own learning and understanding of the school or local community; and complete an Acknowledgement task whereby they have the opportunity to recognise the importance of, and celebrate/honour, the achievements and successes of Aboriginal people.

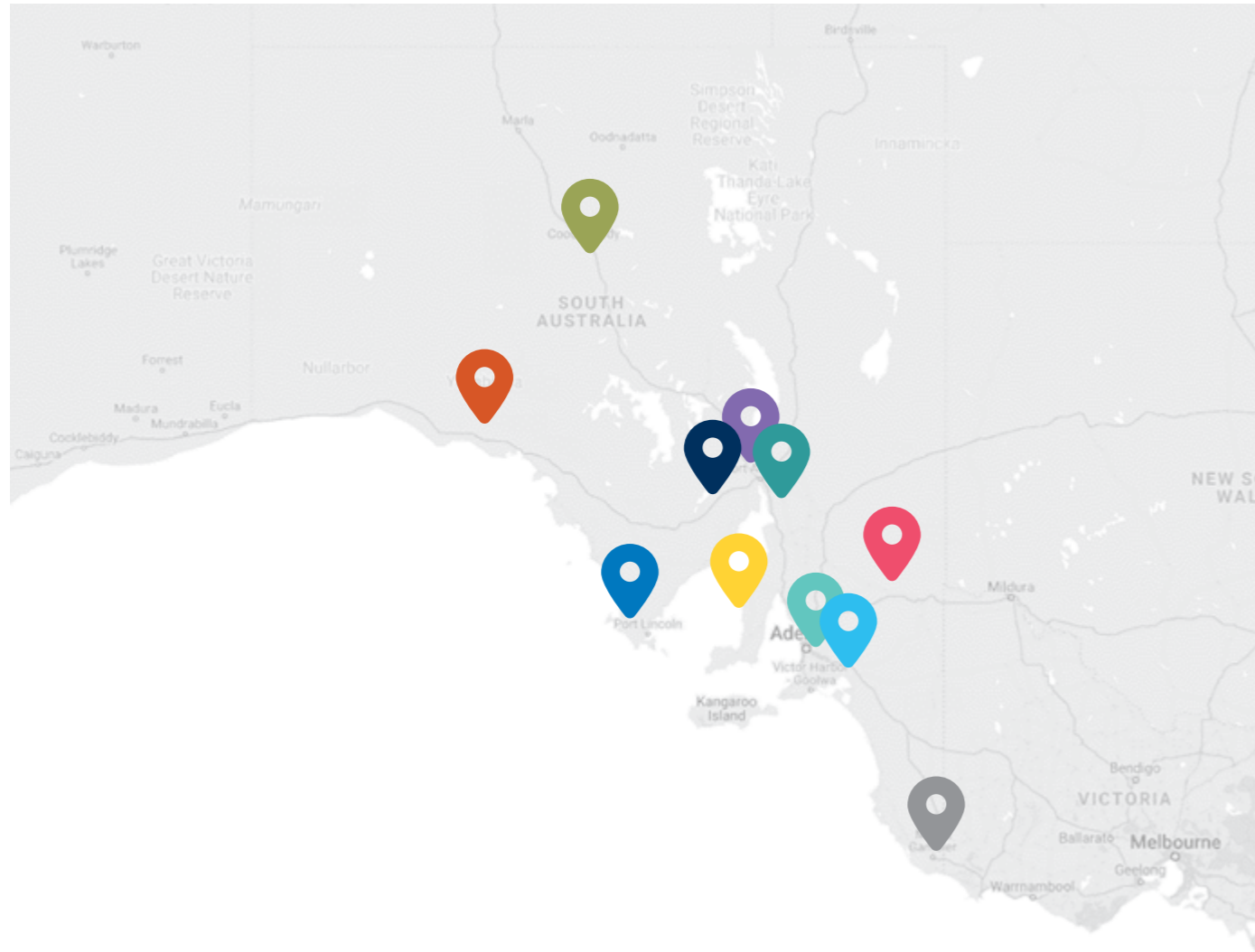
Assessment Type 1: Learning Journey (40%)

Assessment Type 2: Social Action (30%)

Assessment Type 3: External Assessment - Acknowledgement (30%)

Academy students enrolled in this subject are eligible to participate as competitors, coaches or event officials at both the Aboriginal Power Cup and SAASTA Shield carnivals.

## School-Based Academies | Regional



- Ceduna Academy**
  - Ceduna Area School
- Central Yorke Academy**
  - Central Yorke School
  - Moonta Area School
  - Minlaton District School
  - Kadina Memorial School
- Coober Pedy Academy**
  - Coober Pedy Area School
- Fleurieu Academy**
  - Victor Harbor School
  - Eastern Fleurieu R-12 School
  - Heathfield High School
  - Kangaroo Island Community Education
  - Goolwa Secondary College
  - Yankalilla Area School
- Murray Bridge Academy**
  - Murray Bridge High School
  - Meningie Area School
  - Mannum Community College
  - Coomandook Area School
- Port Augusta Academy**
  - Port Augusta Secondary School
  - Quorn Area School
- Port Lincoln Academy**
  - Port Lincoln High School
  - Tumby Bay Area School
  - Cummins Area School
- Port Pirie Academy**
  - John Pirie Secondary School
  - Gladstone High School
- Riverland Academy**
  - Berri Regional Secondary
  - Waikerie High School
  - Renmark High School
  - Loxton High School
- South-East Academy**
  - Grant High School
  - Mount Gambier High School
  - Penola High School
  - Millicent High School
- Whyalla High School Academy**
  - Whyalla Secondary College
  - Cowell Area School
  - Cleve Area School

\*Accurate as of December 2025

## School-Based Academies | Metropolitan



- Avenues Academy**
  - Avenues College
  - Roma Mitchell Secondary College
  - Modbury High School
- Christies Beach Academy**
  - Christies Beach High School
  - Seaford Secondary College
  - Willunga High School
  - Brighton Secondary School
  - Hamilton Secondary College
  - Seaview High School
  - Hallett Cove School
  - Aldinga Payinthi College
- Craigmore Academy**
  - Craigmore High School
- Findon Academy**
  - Findon High School
  - Henley High School
  - Seaton High School
  - Underdale High School
- Gawler Academy**
  - Gawler and District College
  - Nuriootpa High School
  - Kapunda High School
  - Northern Adelaide Senior College
- Le Fevre Academy**
  - Le Fevre High School
  - Woodville High School
- Mark Oliphant Academy**
  - Mark Oliphant College
- Oceanview Academy**
  - Oceanview College
- Para Hills Academy**
  - Para Hills High School
  - Banksia Park International High School
  - Valley View High School
  - The Heights
- Parafield Gardens Academy**
  - Parafield Gardens High School
  - Golden Grove High School
- Paralowie Academy**
  - Paralowie School
  - Riverbanks College
- Playford Academy**
  - Playford International College
  - Karna Plains School
- Riverbanks Academy**
  - Riverbanks College
- Salisbury Academy**
  - Salisbury High School
  - Salisbury East High School
- Warriappendi Academy (Official Academy)**
  - Warriappendi School
- Wirreanda Academy**
  - Wirreanda Secondary School
  - Aberfoyle Park High School
  - Reynella East College

\*Accurate as of December 2025

## Specialist Academies

The Specialist academies provide a culturally safe environment where students' identities are respected and celebrated and students are supported to build pride, strength and success through culture, leadership and opportunity

### Sporting Academies

There are currently three Specialist Sporting Academies, run in partnership with the following organisations:

- Football (Soccer) – North Eastern MetroStars Football Club
- Netball – Netball SA
- Basketball – Brooks Basketball Services & Consultancy

The Specialist Sporting Academies support Aboriginal secondary students by combining education, sporting excellence, cultural pride and leadership development. Students build confidence, strengthen achievement and connect with Elders, cultural leaders and community members. Through role models, professional coaching and leadership activities, participants develop teamwork, personal skills and pride in their identity within a culturally responsive environment.



### STEM Academy

The Specialist STEM Academy, delivered by experienced staff at UniSA's City West Campus, offers Aboriginal secondary students a program that blends STEM learning, cultural pride and leadership development. Students engage in hands-on, culturally rich studies while planning and leading workshops at the annual STEM Aboriginal Learners Congress, alongside STEM professionals and role models. Learning experiences include topics such as:

- The Science of Native Foods
- Marine Monitoring Methods
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ecosystem Management

### Curriculum Delivered in the Specialist Academies

- Stage 1 Society and Culture (20 Credits - Stage 1)
- Stage 2 Society and Culture (20 Credits - Stage 2)
- Stage 2 Society and Culture (20 Credits - Stage 2)
- Additional Community learning subject accreditation for sporting participation

Students in the Specialist STEM Academy (Year 10 and 11 students) study:

- Stage 1 Scientific Studies (20 Credits Stage 1)
- Stage 2 Scientific Studies (20 Credits Stage 2)

### Enrolment to the Specialist Academies

To be eligible, students must be enrolled in a public school in Year 11 or 12 (or Year 10 for sports academies) during the program year. Those starting in Year 10 or 11 may continue in following years if they meet program KPIs and succeed in the annual selection process.

Try-outs and interviews for specialist academies are held in late Term 3 or early Term 4, with dates shared through schools. Selection considers students' skills or aptitude, as well as their school attendance and academic performance.

## SAASTA Connect

SAASTA Connect is designed for Aboriginal students in Years 7, 8 and 9. The program offers a multidisciplinary curriculum that embeds Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across the curriculum taught in schools.

The cross-curriculum priority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures encourages authentic, meaningful connections through a range of topics, including:

- Land, Place, and Sustainability
- Storytelling and Knowledge Systems
- Innovation and Technology
- Music, Dance, and Performance
- Politics, Rights, and Social Change
- Food, Agriculture, and Science
- Astronomy and the Skies
- Language and Identity
- Art, Symbols, and Communication
- Contemporary Aboriginal Voices

The SAASTA Connect program encourages strong school attendance and engagement, positive participation in cultural, leadership, and sporting activities, and a deeper understanding of identity,

culture, and community. Throughout the year, students are encouraged to meet Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in attendance, behaviour, and academic achievement. These expectations prepare students for future participation in the School-based or the Specialist academies from Year 10.

### Program Delivery

The SAASTA Connect program operates in selected schools across the state. A key feature of the program is the use of local agencies and resources to complement in-school sessions. Students are encouraged to attend and participate positively in all cultural and sporting activities. The program regularly reinforces KPIs, including regular attendance, good behaviour, and learning about Aboriginal culture.

### Recognition and Celebration

Students' achievements are recognised through program rewards and participation in special events. Each year, eligible students are invited to attend the Winter Carnival and SAASTA Connect Carnival, state-wide celebrations of culture, learning, and sport.

### School Sites in the SAASTA Connect Program

- Adelaide Botanic High School
- Avenues College
- Balaklava High School
- Berri Regional Secondary College
- Central Yorke School
- Eastern Fleurieu R-12 School
- Goolwa Secondary College
- Grant High School
- John Pirie Secondary School
- Kangaroo Island Community Education
- Kapunda High School
- Mark Oliphant College
- Murray Bridge High School
- Norwood International High School
- Nuriootpa High School
- Ocean View College
- Para Hills High School
- Parafield Gardens High School
- Paralowie School
- Playford International College
- Port Augusta Secondary School
- Port Lincoln High School
- Renmark High School
- Riverbanks College B-12
- Salisbury East High School
- Seaford Secondary College
- Seaview High School
- Victor Harbor High School
- Wirreanda Secondary College

# Student Responsibilities and Expectations

SAASTA has five Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that guide students' participation and success.

These KPIs support academic achievement, personal growth and provide a strong foundation for future study or employment. Once accepted into the program, students must meet and maintain the KPIs across all areas of their schooling.

## Academy student KPIs

- 1 ATTENDANCE**  
Students must maintain at least 80% attendance across all subjects. All absences must be explained.
- 2 ACADEMIC PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE**  
With support from mentors, tutors and teaching staff, students are expected to engage fully and achieve success in all areas of study.
- 3 BEHAVIOUR**  
SAASTA has zero tolerance for dangerous or abusive behaviour, including cyberbullying and harassment. Students must follow their school's behaviour code at all times.
- 4 ENGAGEMENT**  
Students are expected to work well in teams and actively participate in all academy activities.
- 5 RESPECT**  
Students must show respect for themselves, others and culture. The SAASTA uniform must be worn correctly and with pride at all times.



## Awards

Each year SAASTA conducts a special Awards Ceremony to recognise the achievements of students and Academy staff through-out the year.

**Awards are presented in the following categories:**

- Student of the Year
- Academic Achiever
- Sports Achiever of the Year
- Academy of the Year
- Community Recognition Award
- Brianah Jacobson Resilience Award
- Aboriginal Pathways to Success Award

*High expectations of engagement and academic achievement are embedded in all aspects of the program, ensuring students are well-prepared for their future endeavours.*

**Jamin Tripp, SAASTA School Operations Coordinator**

## Achievements

The majority of students completing SAASTA have indicated that they have benefited personally and academically through their involvement in the SAASTA program. They gained confidence through studying in classes with other Aboriginal students.

The increase in the number of students engaging in SAASTA plus the increase in SACE completers are also key indicators of the success of the SAASTA program.

*The connection the group has made with each other this year was amazing. I think our School-based Academy has extremely high standards, especially in regard to the KPIs, and this has resulted in the vast improvement of our students. By actually following the KPIs we have set a standard and it has raised both the expectation and the results within the Academy.*

**Jacob Ellidge,  
Whyalla SAASTA Academy Coordinator**



## What Students are saying about the program

*I learnt to be a leader for my peers and to be more confident with speaking to bigger groups.*

**Kytanna, Year 12 Student,  
SAASTA School-based Academy,  
Central Yorke**

*I am more educated about my culture, know more about my mob, met family I didn't know I had and am way more confident within my own skin.*

**Brittany, Year 11 Student, SAASTA  
School-based Academy, Whyalla**

*Being in SAASTA has helped me find my true identity and how proud I am being an Aboriginal person and an Narungga woman.*

*For me SAASTA was the Best experience in my schooling I have ever had and I just wish I didn't have to leave it behind I would love to stay in it and watch all the younger generation experience what I have as well.*

**Latoya, Year 12 Student, SAASTA School Based Academy,  
Central Yorke**

*The teamwork involved and getting to know different people was one of the best parts of the carnivals. I have grown closer to my Academy due to the carnivals.*

**Gemma, Year 10 Student, SAASTA  
School-based Academy, Salisbury**

*During the SAASTA carnivals I developed my leadership skills a lot by being amongst new people.*

**William, Year 10 Student,  
SAASTA School-based Academy,  
Murray Bridge**

