

Ad Astra

TO THE STARS



What is Ad Astra?

Ad Astra is Canberra Girls Grammar School's (CGGS) holistic program that enables our students to gain the skills necessary for success in academic pursuits and future employment. It was

introduced in 2018 to Years 7 and 9, and in 2019 will be part of the curriculum for all year levels from 7–10.

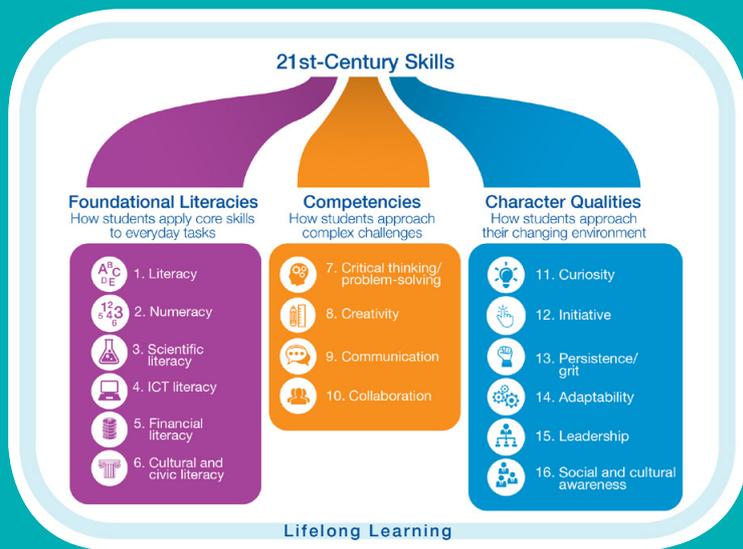
Why has Ad Astra been introduced now?

- ★ Learning methods change in light of the needs of society and contemporary educational thinking, and there is clear evidence of the value of future-focussed learning, both within, and out of, the classroom.
- ★ Business leaders and universities are demanding that students are skilled in ways appropriate for the 21st century, and Ad Astra provides a pathway for such skills to be learnt, developed and demonstrated.
- ★ CGGS has always sought ways to adopt new, challenging and contemporary methods of teaching and learning, whilst maintaining our academic rigour and strong pastoral focus.

What are the aims of Ad Astra?

There are many!

- ★ To provide opportunities to develop cross-curricula 21st century skills such as:
 - ★ Literacy across ICT, finance, scientific, cultural and civic platforms
 - ★ Critical thinking and problem solving
 - ★ Collaboration
 - ★ Creativity
 - ★ Communication
 - ★ Leadership
 - ★ Persistence and grit
 - ★ Social and cultural awareness



World Economic Forum, 2015*

- ★ To provide opportunities for students to work collaboratively with other members of their year group outside the boundaries of the classroom or disciplines
- ★ To provide opportunities for students to engage with members of the community in a variety of meaningful ways
- ★ To provide opportunities for students to explore ideas of identity, citizenship and service through undertaking projects and providing extended time over which to achieve them
- ★ To provide opportunities for students to participate in local, national or international projects, forums and exhibitions
- ★ To foster creativity, innovation and calculated risk-taking
- ★ To foster self-discipline, time management and goal-based strategising in student undertakings
- ★ To foster self-confidence and to build upon CGGS Pastoral Care goals in each year level

How does it fit into the timetable?

In Year 7: One full day each fortnightly cycle (every Day 3)

In Year 8: One full day each fortnightly cycle (every Day 8)

In Year 9: One full week each term

In Year 10: Two allocated lessons per 10 day-cycle for individual projects, with teacher mentors



How does Ad Astra differ across year groups?

Ad Astra aims to develop students through future-focused learning and the layering of skills year-on-year. This helps to cultivate an awareness of the world around them and understand how their individuality comes into play across different environments:

Year 7 – The Year 7 Identity Program (or ID Program), teach transferable skills that have been identified as being critical to the future of work. This, combined with a sense of their own identity as they enter CGGS, will provide the basic skills that will be used across all year levels and teaching areas. This will involve a series of workshops exploring the skills of: Critical Thinking, Research, Self-Management, Emotional Intelligence, Communication and Planning and Reflection.

Year 8 – Building on the skills developed in Year 7, students will explore in both a theoretical and practical way the finer points of teamwork, developed around a theme of the School Community. They will use their own passions to develop a project which will be of benefit to the school community through a series of guided workshops which will gradually allow students greater autonomy over their projects.

Year 9 – The Year 9 Canberra Community Project represents an opportunity for students to collaborate with peers, teachers and business mentors to identify challenges and opportunities that face Canberra as a community. Working in teams and taking into account their own passions and interest, students investigate possibilities for making a difference in the local community. The value of their design solutions are ultimately evaluated by members of the community.

Year 10 – In Year 10, students undertake a Personal Project which will use their skills and connections in the community to produce and exhibit a project or solution to a problem based on their own passions and interests. The Personal Project will be an individual effort but with a global slant and will encourage the students to look beyond our local community.

How is student achievement demonstrated and evaluated?

There is no formal assessment for the Ad Astra program, however students hold an exhibition at the end of each semester where business mentors, community members, parents and guardians, and fellow students are invited to

give feedback to the students. Informal assessment is also provided to all students via:

- ★ Documentation of the journey and achievements, including self-reflection
- ★ Peer review and feedback
- ★ Teacher review and feedback
- ★ Community, including business and industry review and feedback
- ★ Tutor comments in end of semester reports



What impact does Ad Astra have on the teaching and learning of the curriculum?

Ad Astra complements the broader curriculum through its trans-disciplinary approach. Some elements of the program are pulled from compulsory and elective subjects, giving students the opportunity to apply their skills to real-life scenarios. Importantly, by developing well-rounded students who have an appreciation of the skills required to succeed in life, students approach their studies with eyes wide-open, looking for areas in which they can employ 21st century skills in their learning journey.

Have a question?

Our dedicated Ad Astra team are responsible for the development and review of the program and are best placed to answer any questions you may have about Ad Astra:

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Acting Head of Senior School

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Specific Year co-ordinators:

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Years 9–10

Mrs Stephanie Spiller

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* Full reference: World Economic Forum (2015). New Vision for Education: Unlocking the Potential of Technology. [online] Geneva: World Economic Forum. Available at: http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEFUSA_NewVisionforEducation_Report2015.pdf [Accessed 5 Oct. 2018].



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