SUBJECT SELECTION GUIDE

COMMUNITY & FAMILY STUDIES

A Subject Built Around Real People, Real Families, Real Futures

Why Year 10 students are choosing CAFS for Year 11 & 12

What is Community and Family Studies?

CAFS is an **ATAR (Board Developed) HSC course** that explores how individuals, families and communities function, connect and manage resources to build wellbeing.

It sits within the PDHPE learning area, but its focus is social science: relationships, diversity, parenting, ageing, disability, technology, law and research — all through a practical, real-world lens.

Preliminary (Year 11) + HSC (Year 12) — two years building toward a final ATAR-contributing exam.

QUICK FACTS

- ATAR course — counts toward your ATAR
- Assessed across 2 years, incl. an Independent Research Project
- Small-group, discussion-rich classroom style
- 1 elective chosen from 3 options in Year 12

What You'll Study — Course Structure

YEAR 11 — PRELIMINARY

Resource Management (20%)

Core concepts: needs vs wants, values, decision-making, goal setting

Individuals & Groups (40%)

Roles, relationships and dynamics within and between groups

Families & Communities (40%)

Family structures, functions & how family and community interact

YEAR 12 — HSC

Research Methodology (25%)

Skills leading to your own Independent Research Project (IRP)

Groups in Context (25%)

Needs of specific community groups — ageing, disability, culture & more

Parenting & Caring (25%)

Roles, responsibilities and challenges of parenting/caregiving

Your Choice — 1 Elective (25%)

Family Law • Social Impact of Technology • Family & Societal Interactions

Topics You'll Explore

A snapshot of the real-world issues covered across both years

Wellbeing & Resource Management

Balancing needs, wants and values to manage life effectively

Relationships & Group Dynamics

How people communicate, cooperate and resolve conflict

Family Structures & Diversity

The many forms families take across cultures and life stages

Parenting & Caring Roles

Responsibilities, challenges and support for carers and parents

Groups in Context

Needs of ageing, disability, cultural & other community groups

Technology, Law & Society

Your elective: tech's impact, family law, or social change

Independent Research Project

Investigate a real issue you're passionate about

Communication & Advocacy

Presenting ideas and supporting wellbeing in real contexts

Skills You'll Build

Skills that transfer directly into uni and the workplace

Independent Research

Design and carry out your own investigation — a genuine head-start on uni assignments

Communication

Discuss, debate and present sensitive social issues with clarity and confidence

Critical Thinking

Analyse how social, economic and political factors shape people's lives

Empathy & Cultural Awareness

Understand and respect the diversity of families and communities

Planning & Resource Management

Apply a practical process to manage time, money and goals

Teamwork & Advocacy

Work collaboratively and speak up for people who need support

Careers CAFS Links To

A strong foundation for people-focused careers and further study

Nursing & Allied Health

Early Childhood Education

Teaching

Social Work & Community Services

Human Resources

Psychology & Counselling

Family Law & Policy

Social Research & Journalism

Also a great complement to Biology, PDHPE, Legal Studies, Society & Culture, and Business Studies.

Is CAFS Right for You?

YOU MIGHT LOVE CAFS IF YOU...

- Are genuinely curious about people, relationships and society
- Enjoy discussion, debate and hearing different perspectives
- Like research, writing and investigating real issues
- Want to work in health, education, community services or law one day
- Prefer practical, real-world content over abstract theory
- Care about wellbeing — your own, and other people's

KEEP IN MIND

- There's a genuine writing and research load — including a self-directed project
- It suits students who enjoy essay-style and short-answer responses, not just multiple choice
- Content can touch on sensitive topics (family breakdown, disability, ageing, grief)
- It's discussion-based, so participation matters

Why Students Choose CAFS

It's an ATAR course

Counts toward your ATAR and keeps university pathways open

Real independent research

Your IRP is a genuine head-start on the research skills uni expects

Choice built in

Pick the elective that matches your interest — tech, law, or society

Career relevant

Direct links to health, education, community and welfare careers

Practical & discussion-based

Learn through real case studies, not just rote content

Personally useful

Content genuinely applies to your own life, family and future

CAFS, the ATAR & Scaling — the Honest Picture

Yes — it's a genuine ATAR pathway

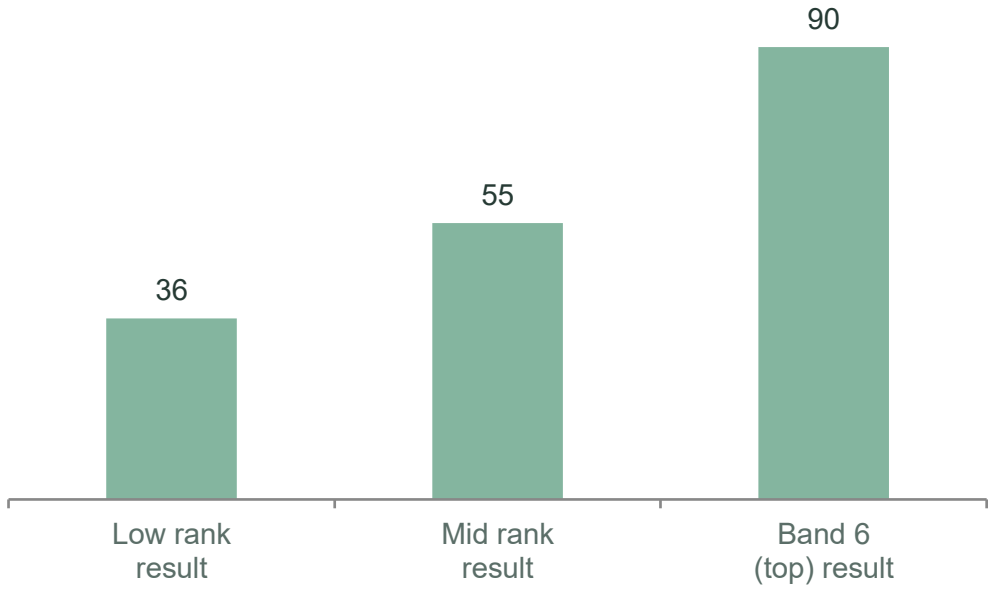
CAFS is a NESA Board Developed course. It can count as one of your best 10 units and contributes to your ATAR — leading straight into university entry like any other ATAR subject.

Scaling: like most humanities subjects, it's moderate

CAFS scales below subjects like Maths or Sciences, similar to other applied/humanities subjects. **But your rank in the course matters far more than the subject itself** — strong performers still get a solid, meaningful scaled contribution to their ATAR.

PICK THE SUBJECT YOU'LL EXCEL IN

A high rank in CAFS regularly outperforms a mediocre result in a "harder-scaling" subject.



Illustrative only — actual scaling varies each year based on the whole NSW cohort.

Ready to Choose CAFS?

A practical, people-focused ATAR subject that builds real research and life skills — while opening doors to health, education, community and welfare careers.

Talk to your PDHPE / CAFS teacher

Read the CAFS topic overviews on the subject line-up

Note it on your subject selection form

Questions? Speak with your Year Advisor or the PDHPE Faculty.