



2024 Rules and Procedures guide

The content on this page has moved to a [new location](#).

Why has it moved?

We are migrating our website content to a new location on the NSW Government website so it's easier for you to find and read content.

All HSC information is now available at [nsw.gov.au/NESA](#).

From 20 March, this page will no longer exist, and you will be automatically redirected to the NSW Government website.

On this page

[Students Online](#)

[Students with atypical circumstances](#)

[Before you start your HSC](#)

[Early in Year 12](#)

[Terms 2 and 3](#)

[Term 4](#)

[Results](#)

[Copyright and privacy](#)

[My checklist](#)

All students entered for any HSC course in 2024 **must** read this Higher School Certificate (HSC) Rules and Procedures guide.

In signing your Confirmation of Entry (see section 3.2, [Confirming your entry for the HSC](#)), you are certifying you have read this guide.

The *Education Act 1990* (NSW) governs the award of the HSC. The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA), under this Act, grants certificates to students who comply with the Act and NESA requirements.

The main rules and requirements for the HSC are set out in this guide.

Students can obtain more detailed explanations of the rules and requirements by referring to the [Assessment Certification Examination website](#).

In this guide, we use the following abbreviations:

- **AQF** (Australian Qualifications Framework)
- **ATAR** (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank)
- **HSC** (Higher School Certificate)
- **NESA** (New South Wales Education Standards Authority)
- **PDF** (Portable Document Format)
- **RoSA** (Record of School Achievement)
- **RPL** (Recognition of Prior Learning)
- **RTO** (Registered Training Organisation)
- **TAFE NSW** (Technical and Further Education New South Wales)
- **UAC** (Universities Admissions Centre)
- **VET** (Vocational Education and Training).

Students Online

The [Students Online](#) website is an important channel of communication between you and NESA. This website provides information and advice. NESA will publish important information here, including your HSC timetable and HSC results. Check your personal details are correct, including your email and mobile phone number. Please note your account will close on **30 June** the year after you complete your final HSC exam.

Activating your Students Online account

If you have not already used [Students Online](#) to see your Years 10 and 11 course entries and results, follow the instructions after clicking [activate your account now](#). If there is an error in activating your account, please ask your school to enter your email address in Schools Online to ensure your account is created.

You can then see your personal study details such as your HSC exam timetable, assessment ranks, HSC course entries and results, and all previous Years 10, 11 and 12 course entries and results.

1 Students with atypical circumstances

1.1 Understanding HSC pathways

While most students complete their HSC over 2 years during Years 11 and 12, there are other study options. For example, if you want to study while you work, care for your family or take part in elite sports or cultural activities, one of these 5 pathways may suit you.

Pathway	Description
1. Accumulating	You can take up to 5 consecutive years to finish your studies, starting from the first year you complete an HSC course.
2. Repeating	You can repeat one or more courses within the 5 years (see pathway 1) without a penalty. Your RoSA will report the results of all attempts. If eligible, the Universities Admissions Centre (UAC) will calculate your Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) from your most recent HSC results.
3. Credit transfer and recognition of prior learning (RPL)	<p>You may be able to count courses you did at TAFE or other non-school educational institutions towards your HSC as Credit Transfer.</p> <p>Or you may not need to complete some course components, if you can show that you have met the necessary outcomes in another way via RPL, such as through interstate study.</p> <p>For general education this may apply to a Preliminary course, part of a Preliminary course or part of an HSC course. For more information, see Credit transfer and recognition of prior learning on the NESA ACE website.</p> <p>For VET this may apply to part of a course or the entire course. For more information, see Recognition of prior learning (RPL) and credit transfer within VET courses on the NESA website.</p>
4. Accelerating Early commencement VET	<p>You may be able to complete an HSC course, sit for the HSC exam in that course and accumulate these results before you are in Year 12.</p> <p>You may be able to start a Stage 6 VET course while in Year 9 or Year 10 and accumulate the course unit credit towards the HSC.</p>
5. Undertaking a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship	You can start an apprenticeship or complete a traineeship while you study at school. A school-based apprenticeship or traineeship combines paid work, training and school studies. You will gain an industry recognised national VET qualification and credit towards your HSC.

1.2 Leaving without your HSC

If you decide to leave school before completing the requirements for your HSC, you can access various records that summarise the courses you have studied and any results:

- **eRecord:** You can retrieve a record of your results from *Students Online > Certificates/eRecord* at any time until 30 June the year after you leave school.
- **Transcript of Study:** Once your school nominates you as a school leaver, you can download a PDF copy from *Students Online > Certificates/eRecord* until 30 June the year after you leave school.
- **Record of School Achievement (RoSA):** You may be eligible for a RoSA if you meet certain criteria. The RoSA shows your courses and results for Years 10 and 11, and any HSC courses you have taken. Once your school nominates you for a RoSA, you can download a PDF copy from *Students Online > Certificates/eRecord* until 30 June the year after you leave school.
- **Reading, writing and numeracy test results** While you are still enrolled in school, you can take optional online minimum standard reading, writing and numeracy tests and show the results to potential employers. Access results via the Messages section in [Students Online](#).

Talk to your teachers about the RoSA and the reading, writing and numeracy tests, if you are thinking about leaving school before you complete the HSC. You should also talk to your school about how to request your [RoSA credential](#).

2 Before you start your HSC

2.1 Maintaining honesty and integrity

Honesty is key for all students and staff

All HSC candidates, their teachers and others who guide them **must** comply with our [Honesty in HSC Assessment – the Standard](#) to maintain the integrity of the HSC. You should also read your [course syllabuses](#) and related NESA policies, such as those on malpractice and satisfactory completion of a course, on our website.

You must be honest when completing all your school-based assessment tasks, exams and submitted works.

Always acknowledge your sources

You must acknowledge any part of your work that was written, created or developed by someone other than you. This includes any material from other sources, for example books, journals, electronic resources and the internet. For practical works, this includes work undertaken by others. You do not need to formally acknowledge material that you learnt from your teacher in class.

2.2 Understanding malpractice

Cheating of any kind is unacceptable

Behaving dishonestly to gain an unfair advantage in assessments or exams is malpractice or cheating. Any form of malpractice, including plagiarism, is unacceptable. We treat allegations of malpractice very seriously. Identified malpractice may result in a penalty such as reduction in marks, cancellation of your results in the course or cancellation of your HSC. Serious and deliberate malpractice is corrupt conduct, which we can report to the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

Malpractice includes:

- copying part or all of someone else’s work and presenting it as your own
- using material directly from books, journals, electronic media or the internet without acknowledging its source
- building on someone else’s ideas without stating their source
- buying, stealing or borrowing someone else’s work and presenting it as your own
- submitting work that someone else, eg a parent, tutor or subject expert, substantially contributed to
- using someone else’s words, ideas, designs or work in projects and performance tasks without mentioning the source
- paying someone to write or prepare material and presenting it as your own
- not acknowledging any work completed by others for your submitted work or performance

- breaching school exam rules
- cheating in an HSC exam
- using non-approved aids in a school-based assessment task
- giving false reasons for not handing in work by the due date
- helping another student to engage in malpractice
- providing fraudulent evidence in applications for disability provisions or illness/misadventure
- being responsible for actions done or omitted to be done that confer an unfair advantage relating to the outcome of any HSC exam – irrespective of whether such actions occur before, during or after such an exam or assessment.

You might need to prove your work is your own

If you are suspected of malpractice, you will need to show that all unacknowledged work is entirely your own. You might need to:

- prove and explain your work process with diaries, journals, notes, working plans, sketches or progressive drafts that show how your ideas developed
- answer questions about the assessment task, exam or submitted work being investigated to show your knowledge, understanding and skills.

3 Early in Year 12

3.1 Meeting HSC eligibility requirements

Know the eligibility basics

To be eligible for the HSC, you must:

- meet the requirements for a RoSA or equivalent recognised by NESA
- attend a NSW government school, an accredited non-government school, TAFE or a NESA-recognised school outside NSW
- complete [HSC: All My Own Work](#) (or its equivalent), unless entered in a pattern of study comprising only Life Skills courses for Years 11 and 12
- satisfactorily complete courses in a Year 11 and Year 12 pattern of study required by NESA (detailed below)
- demonstrate a [minimum standard of literacy and numeracy](#) of at least Level 3, by sitting for the online tests in reading, writing and numeracy
- sit for and make a serious attempt at the required HSC exams.

Certain patterns of study and course requirements apply

You must satisfactorily complete:

- a preliminary pattern of study that includes at least 12 units
- an HSC pattern of study that includes at least 10 units.

Both patterns of study must include at least:

- 6 units of Board Developed Courses
- 2 units of a Board Developed Course in English
- 3 courses of 2 or more units (either Board Developed or Board Endorsed Courses)
- 4 subjects.

Some courses have certain rules and prerequisites, for example:

- you can enrol in an extension course, only if you are enrolled in the corresponding 2-unit course
- where courses have an optional exam, you can enrol in the optional exam, only if you have enrolled in the corresponding course (or in the case of VET, the 240-hour or 360-hour course where applicable)
- you cannot do more than one non-extension course from a subject (eg you cannot do Mathematics Standard and Mathematics Advanced).

There are [specific eligibility rules](#) for some Languages courses including all [Language]* Beginners courses and some [Language]* Continuers and [Language]* in Context courses.

* insert relevant language, eg Chinese

Additional rules apply if you want an ATAR. The [ATAR eligibility rules](#) are determined by UAC.

NESA advises students of their ATAR eligibility on behalf of [UAC](#). For example, the HSC pattern of study must include 10 units of examinable courses including English.

3.2 Confirming your entry for the HSC

Make sure you are entered for all your courses

You must be entered with NESA for all the courses you are attempting this year. This includes any courses outside your school that your principal has approved, for example, VET or distance education courses and study with an outside tutor.

Your school will provide you with a Confirmation of Entry showing:

- your personal details
- your NESA student number
- your courses
- whether or not you are eligible for an HSC and an ATAR.

You must carefully check all your personal details such as name, date of birth, address and contact details. Advise your school if any of these need to change. Carefully check any eligibility messages and discuss these with your school. You **must** sign the declaration on the Confirmation of Entry form either physically or digitally and return paper or digital copies to your school.

If you would like an ATAR so you can apply to universities, make sure your Confirmation of Entry indicates that you are eligible for an ATAR.

Your Students Online account will show key details

Your [Students Online](#) account is automatically updated as your school enters or updates your course enrolments and other details with NESA.

You can log in with your NESA student number and NESA PIN to see:

- messages from NESA
- your personal details

- your results history, eg grades for Years 10 and 11.

When available, you will also be able to see your:

- personalised exam timetable
- assessment ranks
- HSC results
- VET qualification, if the VET course was delivered by a school system RTO.

3.3 Changing or correcting your entry, school or contact details

Check your Confirmation of Entry carefully

When you get your Confirmation of Entry, check it closely and tell your school about any changes (eg your name, date of birth and address details) as soon as possible. Also raise with your school any unexpected eligibility errors, or if your school has not provided all information about you (for example Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin). You will then receive a new Confirmation of Entry, which you **must** sign and return to your school.

If you transfer to another school after entering for the HSC, your new school must give you a new Confirmation of Entry to sign.

Update your contact details immediately

If you change your postal address, email address or mobile phone number during your HSC year, log into [Students Online](#) and update your details. You should provide a **personal** email address and mobile phone number. We need your current contact details to send you important information, for example:

- exam details
- the status of applications, eg for disability provisions or illness/misadventure
- nomination for showcase event(s)
- your HSC results
- other relevant communications after you leave school.

If you are eligible for an ATAR, make sure you update your details with UAC also. Visit the [UAC website](#) or phone (02) 9752 0200.

3.4 Applying for disability provisions

We may approve [disability provisions](#) for HSC exams if you have a disability that would, in a normal exam situation, prevent you from:

- reading exam questions or
- communicating responses.

If you need to apply for disability provisions, speak to an appropriate staff member you are comfortable with at your school. This could include your:

- principal
- school learning and support team member
- disability provisions coordinator.

Your school must submit applications for known conditions by the end of Term 1 in the year of your first HSC exam. If you know you will need disability provisions, ensure you speak to your school as early as possible so they can submit your application on time.

Emergency arrangements can be made, if you have an illness or injury just before the exam that affects your ability to read or respond in the exam. If this happens, please tell your principal, the disability provisions coordinator or learning and support teacher immediately.

We **cannot** approve disability provisions to compensate you for:

- difficulty completing a course or preparing for the exam
- lack of familiarity with English.

When we have processed your application, we will send a decision letter to your principal. We will also send you a [Students Online](#) message that a decision has been made. Your school will provide you with your decision letter. If the school does not give you your decision letter, contact your school's disability provisions coordinator. Read your decision letter carefully and speak to your school if you are unsure about the decision or how to use any of your approved provisions.

4 During Year 12

4.1 Completing your school-based assessments

For most Board Developed Courses with HSC exams, school-based assessment makes up 50% of your HSC mark and is shown on your RoSA (see [6.1 Getting your HSC results](#)).

If you study English Studies, Mathematics Standard 1 or Numeracy, your final result will be a grade (A to E) submitted by your school. If you do the optional HSC exam for English Studies or Mathematics Standard 1 course, your final result will be an exam mark and an HSC Performance band. Your final HSC mark will be the same as your exam mark.

Schools prepare and run an assessment program for each course, in line with NESA requirements. NESA determines which course components are assessed, and how they are weighted in the assessment and reporting documents for [each syllabus](#).

Schools set individual assessment tasks and decide due dates and weightings for each. These tasks measure knowledge, skills and understanding for a wide range of outcomes. They may include tests, written assignments, practical activities, fieldwork and projects. When you start your HSC courses, your school must give you details of your assessment schedule, including weightings and due dates.

All work that you present in any HSC school-based assessment task or exam must be your own. Malpractice, including plagiarism, could mean that you receive zero marks for that task or exam (see [2.1 Maintaining honesty and integrity](#) and [2.2 Understanding malpractice](#)).

NESA moderates your final school-based assessment mark in calculating your final results for courses that have HSC exams.

Your school uses your performance in assessment tasks to calculate your school-based assessment mark for each course. If you study a course at an institution outside your home school, that institution provides your assessment mark.

At the end of the assessment program, your school (or other institution delivering the course) sends your assessment marks to NESA. NESA then [moderates these marks](#) to calculate the assessment marks that appear on your results (see [6.1 Getting your HSC results](#)). Moderating means adjusting the school assessment marks so they are on the same scale as the school exam marks for that course. Each school group's assessment marks are adjusted based on how it performs in the HSC exam. We do not change your rank order (your position in the school group for each course) that your school submits.

The estimated mark your school provides for the following courses is only used if you have an upheld illness/misadventure application:

- exam mark for English Studies, Mathematics Standard 1 and VET Industry Curriculum Framework courses
- assessment mark for courses with an outside tutor.

Assessment marks for courses without external exams are not moderated. These marks are reported as submitted by your school.

4.2 Completing your courses and work placements

Your principal certifies that you have completed a course

Your principal will certify that you have completed a Board Developed or Board Endorsed Course if, in your principal's view, there is enough evidence that you:

1. followed the course
2. applied yourself with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and experiences that the school provided in the course
3. achieved some or all the course outcomes.

For courses where school-based assessment marks are submitted, students must make a genuine attempt at assessment tasks that contribute more than 50 percent of the available marks.

For most VET Industry Curriculum Framework courses and some VET Board Endorsed courses, you must undertake set work placement hours to develop industry competencies and practise learned skills. You must complete any required work placement to complete these courses. If you do not complete mandatory work placements, your school will issue you with a non-completion of course determination.

You will receive a warning if your performance is unsatisfactory

If you are in danger of not completing a course, your school will give you a written warning in time for you to meet criteria 1 to 3 above.

If you do not complete a course:

- you will receive no result in that course
- the course will not appear on your NESA record
- the course will not count towards your HSC pattern of study.

Your school will tell you, in writing, if your principal determines you did not complete a course. You will then have the right to appeal to the school against this determination. If your appeal is unsuccessful, you can appeal to NESA. Your principal will explain this to you and tell you how to appeal.

4.3 Planning for exams and getting your timetable

Check Students Online for your personal HSC exam timetable

We publish the [HSC exam timetable on our website](#) in Term 2. You can get your personal timetable in [Students Online](#). Check that all your exams appear and tell your school immediately if any courses are missing. Be especially careful with courses with similar names, such as the different Mathematics courses, and ensure the correct course appears on your timetable. Check your exam centre location and make sure it is correct.

If the published HSC timetable lists an exam clash for you, both you and your principal will have been notified by email. You will be able to see the adjustment in your personal timetable. Please contact your school immediately if there is an error.

You must read your timetable carefully. If you miss an exam because you misread the timetable, contact your principal immediately. You cannot apply for illness/misadventure on these grounds (for further information, see [5.1 Attending your exams](#)).

If you change any courses during the year, you must be aware of the updates to your personal timetable on [Students Online](#). You cannot apply for illness/misadventure due to having an outdated timetable.

If you are studying English Studies, Mathematics Standard 1 or a 240- hour or 360-hour (if applicable) VET Industry Curriculum Framework course, you may sit for the corresponding optional HSC exam. You will not automatically be entered for these exams as they are not compulsory. If you want to sit for the optional HSC exam, tell your school, even if you are studying the course at TAFE NSW or at another RTO. The exam for these courses will be held at your main school, not the school where you are studying the course.

Your exam mark for each Board Developed Course is based on how you perform in the external HSC exam, which we set and mark. Each exam may involve written, performance and submitted work components.

There are no external HSC exams for Life Skills courses or Board Endorsed Courses.

4.4 Completing performance exams and submitted works

Check the requirements for performance exams or submitted works

The HSC exams for the following courses include performance exams or submitted works:

- Dance
- Design and Technology
- Drama
- English Extension 2
- Industrial Technology
- Languages (except classical languages and [Language] and Literature courses)
- Music
- Science Extension*
- Society and Culture
- Textiles and Design
- Visual Arts.

See [hand-in dates](#) for all submitted works.

* The Science Extension Scientific Research Report forms part of your school assessment mark for the course. Your report is uploaded and may be used as a reference during the HSC Science Extension online exam.

You need to maintain general community standards in your [HSC performances and submitted works](#). This means considering the values and culture of your school and its community as you develop these works. Works may not be selected for showcase events, if the content and presentation of the work are considered inappropriate for a general audience.

The assessment and reporting documents for each course are also on the NESA website. They show the requirements for performances and submitted works. You should read and understand them to ensure you meet all the requirements. The marking of performances and submitted works considers the requirements of the course.

You cannot submit any part of a work for more than one course. If you are repeating a course that includes a submitted work, you cannot resubmit a work that has already been marked for the

For submitting any part of a work more than one day after the deadline, you are repeating a course and must do a submitted work, you cannot receive a new mark and only receive marks for the HSC without NESA's permission. If you developed a major work for a previous HSC exam but did not submit it, you can only submit it for your current course if your school agrees.

Your school must certify all submitted works

For all submitted works, you will need to sign a declaration stating that:

- the work is your own
- you have properly acknowledged anyone else’s words, ideas, designs or work that you have used (see [2.1 Maintaining honesty and integrity](#)).

Your teacher will monitor and record your progress of your submitted work. Your teacher and principal must then certify that you did the work under the teacher’s supervision and that it:

- is your own work
- is consistent with earlier drafts and other examples of your work
- was finished by the due time/date.

If school staff cannot certify the work, you may receive fewer or zero marks. If you are planning a work that you will need to work on at home, you need your teacher’s permission.

Loss or damage

We will take every care with your submitted work but are not responsible for any loss or damage sustained in transit or during marking. You should insure your work if you are concerned.

Keep copies of your submitted works if you can.

Some courses have specific exam details

Course	Performance or submitted work detail
Dance	Performance exams may be held at different exam centres. Check Students Online or ask your school for details.
Design and Technology	Hand in your major project to your teacher by the due date.
Drama	Performance exams may be held at different exam centres. Check Students Online or ask your school for details. Hand in individual projects in Critical Analysis, Design, Scriptwriting and Video Drama to your teacher by the due date. Your teacher will tell you if you need to submit your project as a PDF.
English Extension 2	Hand in your major work and reflection statement to your teacher electronically as PDFs by the due date. Your teacher will tell you if you need to submit your project in hard copy.
Industrial Technology	Hand in your major project to your teacher by the due date.
Languages	Oral exams take place in Term 3 and may be held at different exam centres. Check Students Online or ask your school for details.
Music	Hand in compositions and musicology essays to your teacher electronically as PDFs by the due date. Performance exams may be held at different exam centres. Check Students Online or ask your school for details.
Science Extension	Hand in your Scientific Research Report to your teacher electronically as a PDF by the due date.
Society and Culture	Hand in your Personal Interest Project to your teacher electronically as a PDF by the due date.
Textiles and Design	Hand in your Major Textiles Project to your teacher by the due date.
Course	Performance or submitted work detail
Visual Arts	Hand in your Body of Work to your teacher by the due date.

5 Term 4

5.1 Attending your exams

Arrive early and be prepared for each exam

On the day of the first English exam and for the Science Extension exam, arrive at the exam centre at least 30 minutes before the exam starts. For all other exams, arrive at least 10 minutes early. If you arrive more than one hour after an exam has started, you can enter the exam, but you will need to explain why NESA should accept your responses for marking. The presiding officer will give you instructions on how to submit this explanation to NESA.

If you miss an exam because you misread the timetable, contact your principal immediately. You cannot apply for illness/misadventure on these grounds.

If you miss an exam for which there are no other exam components, for example Economics or Modern History, you will not be eligible to receive a result in that course. You must see your principal, who will need to write to NESA to explain the situation. If NESA accepts the reason, you will receive zero marks for the exam, but you will retain the course and the assessment mark.

If you miss an exam for which there are multiple exam components, for example English or Visual Arts, you will:

- retain the course if you have completed the other components
- receive zero marks for the component you missed.

You **must**:

- be prepared to attend exams at your own expense at the times and exam centres that we arrange
- sit for your exams at the centres specified on your personal exam timetable, even if you studied elsewhere
- contact your school if you cannot get to your exam because of unusual circumstances, for example a flood. You may be able to sit for the exam at another centre

- only sit for exams in courses for which you are entered. You cannot change or add courses during exams
- sit for all exams you are entered in, unless you are incapable of attending due to unforeseen illness or misadventure.

Students are reminded not to put themselves in danger by attempting to attend an exam, for example, during bushfires or floods.

Tell someone immediately if you are ill or have a misadventure

If you have an illness or misadventure:

- and cannot attend an exam, tell your principal immediately
- before the exam but you can still attend, tell the presiding officer when you arrive
- during an exam and it may have affected your performance, tell the presiding officer immediately.

If you do not attend an exam and we decline your illness/misadventure application, you will receive no result for that course and it will not appear on your NESAs record. This could mean you are no longer eligible for your HSC or ATAR (see [5.5 Applying for illness/misadventure provisions](#)).

If you are entered for an Extension course (other than Mathematics Extension 2) and do not sit for the related 2-unit course exam, you will receive no result for either course – unless you submit an illness/misadventure application, and we uphold it.

If you are an English Extension 2 or Mathematics Extension 2 candidate and you do not sit for the related Extension 1 exam, you will receive no result for either course – unless you submit an illness/misadventure application, and we uphold it.

5.2 Bringing the right exam equipment

Know what to bring with you

You should bring the [exam equipment](#) you need and know what equipment is allowed for each exam. Make sure that your equipment is in good working order, because we will not uphold misadventure applications for equipment failure.

You can bring the following items into your exams:

- black pens (no pens with ink that can be erased)
- pencils (must be at least 2B), erasers and a sharpener
- a ruler marked in millimetres and centimetres
- highlighter pens
- a clear bottle of water with no label
- a watch (**not** a programmable or smart watch), which you must take off, place on your desk in clear view and not touch during the exam.

You need to bring certain equipment (eg a calculator) for some exams. Check the list of equipment for specific exams on [Students Online](#) or the [NESA website](#).

If you are allowed a scientific calculator, make sure you have an [approved model](#).

If you are studying Science Extension, you need a computer that conforms to the requirements and has had the latest version of the lockdown browser loaded onto it. Speak to your teacher to make sure you have the right computer.

When equipment is listed for an exam, it means that you might need it to answer some questions. If equipment is listed as optional, it is not essential for answering any questions, but you can bring and use it if you wish.

Leave other items outside the exam room

You **must not** bring any of the following items into your exam room :

- mobile phones
- programmable watches or smart watches
- electronic devices (except a calculator, if allowed), including communication devices, organisers, tablets, music players, electronic dictionaries, earphones (eg AirPods), except where permitted in the Science Extension exam
- stopwatches
- paper, printed or written material (including your exam timetable)
- dictionaries (except in language exams, if allowed)
- correction fluid or correction tape
- writing on your body, even if it is unrelated to the exam
- wallet.

You cannot borrow equipment during exams. Exam supervisors may inspect your equipment when you enter the room and will tell you where to place any unauthorised items. Supervisors are permitted to ask you to remove any unauthorised items. Otherwise, they can take them away from you during an exam. They are not responsible for taking care of any removed items.

If any writing is visible on your body before the exam, you will be asked to remove it. If writing is discovered during the exam, supervisors will follow malpractice procedures.

5.3 Following exam room procedures

Check your desk and papers carefully

Before starting each exam, you must sit at the desk that shows your name and NESAs student number. Desks may be set up differently at each exam.

Make sure that you have the correct exam paper for the course you have entered. When the supervisor asks you to, you must also check that no pages are missing from your exam paper.

For any exams with personalised exam materials, check that you have been issued the correct booklets with your NESAs student number and/or name printed.

You will have a set reading time for each paper. During this time, you must not write, use any equipment including highlighters, or mark your paper in any way. Students are permitted to highlight during reading time in the Science Extension online exam only.

If you are allowed a dictionary, you can read it, but you cannot write on or mark it during reading time.

Follow all written and verbal instructions

During each exam, you **must**:

- read the instructions and all questions carefully. Presiding officers and supervisors cannot interpret or give instructions about exam questions
- write your exam centre number and student number on all writing booklets, question and answer booklets and answer sheets (unless that information is already printed on them)
- write clearly with black pen (use pencil only if instructed to)
- write your answers in the correct answer booklets. Tell the supervisor if you see the wrong booklet. Write answers on the front and back of each booklet, starting with your name on every page. The

- write your answers in the correct answer booklets. Tell the supervisor if you use the wrong booklet. Write a note on the front and back of both booklets stating that you wrote an answer in the wrong place. Do not rewrite your answers, but make sure you label and hand in all parts of your answers
- stop writing immediately when the supervisor tells you to
- follow the supervisor’s instructions for arranging completed answers, and wait for the supervisor to collect them
- complete the Student Completion Record listing the number of booklets you used. Wait for the supervisor to check and countersign it before you leave your desk.

Take care with identifying information and avoid leaving early

During each exam, you **must not**:

- start writing until the supervisor tells you to, or continue to write when the supervisor tells you to stop
- write your name, your school’s name, or any other identifying name, symbol or mark on writing booklets, answer booklets or sheets
- write on anything other than writing books, answer booklets or other writing material provided by the presiding officer. You should not write on any other equipment including your body, clothing or tissues
- leave the room, except in an emergency. If you have to leave and want to come back to continue the exam, you must be supervised while you are out of the room
- leave (finish) the exam in the first hour. Your school may not allow any students to leave early
- leave the exam in the last 15 minutes
- take any exam materials out of the room. Speak to your teacher if you want to see a paper after the exam
- leave your seat without permission.

5.4 Conducting yourself during exams

Follow your school’s usual rules

You must follow the day-to-day rules of the school or institution where you sit for your exams. If you do not follow these conduct rules, you may get zero marks for the exam or no result for the course. If this reduces your completed courses to less than 10 units, you may no longer be eligible for the HSC.

The presiding officer and supervisors are in charge of students from the time they assemble outside the school or institution until they leave.

Behave politely and take exams seriously

During each exam, you **must**:

- always follow the supervisors’ instructions
- make a serious attempt at the exam by answering a range of question types (**Note:** answering only multiple-choice questions is not considered a serious attempt – you may have the course cancelled)
- answer in English, unless the question paper directs otherwise. If you do not write in English, you will get zero marks for your answer
- behave politely and courteously towards the supervisors and other students.

During each exam, you **must not**:

- cheat
- include frivolous, offensive, threatening or objectionable material
- take any of the items prohibited in [section 5.2](#) into the room
- speak to anyone other than a supervisor
- behave in any way that may disturb another student or upset the running of the exam
- be affected by alcohol or illegal drugs
- eat unless approved by NESA (eg if you have diabetes)
- take any exam material out of the room
- write on your body (eg your arms), tissues or material that is not exam material
- leave the room if your principal requires all students to stay until each exam ends.

Supervisors can ask you to leave the exam if you do not follow these rules. You will then be reported to NESA. You could get zero marks for the exam and retain the course, or your course may be cancelled which may affect your eligibility for the HSC. If your actions might be illegal, you will also be reported to the police.

5.5 Applying for illness or misadventure

Apply if an illness or misadventure affects your exam performance

If illness or misadventure stops you from attending an exam or affects your performance in the exam, it is your right and responsibility to submit an illness/misadventure application.

To do this, ask your principal or the exam’s presiding officer for the application forms and the Information Guide for Students, which explain how to apply. Follow the instructions and keep the acknowledgement letter you will receive in [Students Online](#).

Illness/misadventure applications are for cases where an illness or misadventure:

- occurred immediately before or during an HSC exam
- was unexpected
- was beyond your control
- prevented you from attending OR diminished your exam performance.

These applications do **not** cover:

- difficulty preparing or lost preparation time
- alleged deficiencies in teaching
- lost time or facilities for study before the formal study vacation
- misreading exam timetables
- misreading exam instructions
- entering or sitting for the wrong exam
- long-term illness (eg glandular fever, asthma or epilepsy), unless you suffer a flare-up of the condition during the exam
- conditions for which you have been granted disability provisions, unless you have further unexpected difficulties
- conditions for which you should have applied for disability provisions
- courses where you are a self-tuition student

- other commitments such as participation in entertainment, family holiday, work, sporting events, or attendance at exams conducted by other education organisations.

Always attend exams if you can, even if you have had an illness or misadventure. NESA does not expect you to attend an exam against medical advice or if it is unsafe to do so.

Speak to your principal if you are unable to attend an exam.

Understand what happens next

If you apply for illness/misadventure, you will need to include advice from a relevant independent expert. For example, a doctor or police officer must complete Section C of the form to indicate why you could not attend the exam or how your exam performance was affected. You **must** seek independent evidence on the **same day**, either immediately before or after each exam for which you are applying. The documentation you provide must be current, specific to the date and time of the exam, and submitted with the Illness/Misadventure form. **A medical certificate that merely states you were unfit for work/study is unacceptable.**

NESA will not uphold an illness/misadventure application without sufficient evidence supporting a genuine reason.

Your school must lodge the illness/misadventure application for HSC written exams with NESA within one week of the affected exam. If you are affected in multiple exams, the school must submit your application within one week of your last affected exam. For performance exams or submitted works, your school must submit your application within one week of the exam, performance or submission date. Your principal or delegate must certify your application. We will only consider late applications in exceptional circumstances.

If we uphold your application, you will receive either:

- your exam mark, or
- a mark calculated from your assessment mark/estimated mark or unaffected components of your exam

whichever is higher.

You will receive a decision letter for your illness/misadventure application via [Students Online](#) on the same day as the release of your HSC results.

5.6 Appealing an assessment rank

Talk to your teacher if you believe your rank is incorrect

You can find out your assessment ranks (your final position in each school course) in your [Students Online](#) account after the final HSC exam.

You cannot appeal your marks for individual assessment tasks. But if you feel your rank is wrong in a course, talk to your teacher immediately.

If you are still not satisfied that your rank is correct, you can apply to your principal for a review.

In this review, the school will consider whether it:

1. weighted its assessment tasks in line with the NESA requirements
2. complied with its stated assessment program when deciding your final assessment mark
3. miscalculated or made a clerical error when deciding your assessment mark.

If you want to apply for a review, you must do this before NESA’s cut-off date. Your school will tell you the review outcome and inform NESA if your assessment mark should change.

You can appeal to NESA if you are unhappy with your school’s review

If you are dissatisfied with the **process** of the school’s review, you can ask your principal to lodge an appeal with NESA. We will only consider whether the school’s review was:

- adequate for deciding items 1 to 3 above
- done properly.

We will not revise assessment marks or rank order. If we uphold your appeal, we will ask the school to correct any errors.

Your school can provide you with an assessment rank appeal form. You must lodge appeals to NESA at your school by the cut-off date on the form. We will not process any appeals after this date, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

6 Results

6.1 Getting your HSC results

In December, your HSC results will be available in [Students Online](#) and sent to you by email and SMS.

The first page of your RoSA will list each HSC course you completed and the corresponding results. For Board Developed Courses with an external HSC exam, the results will report your achievement against standards that clearly describe your level of knowledge, skills and understanding. VET courses will refer to ‘Vocational documentation’. Life Skills courses will refer to ‘Profile of Student Achievement’.

NESA will provide your full credentials and VET qualifications as free PDF documents in [Students Online](#) in the Certificates/eRecord section until 30 June the year after you leave school. You can print your credentials and VET qualifications directly from these PDFs or apply for a printed copy from NESA for a small fee: see [HSC results services for students](#). If you are eligible for the HSC, you will receive a hard copy testamur by mail in January.

VET qualifications (Certificate and Transcript, or Statement of Attainment) will only be available through [Students Online](#) for VET courses delivered by a school system RTO. Where a VET course has been delivered by TAFE NSW or another provider, the VET qualification will be available from that RTO.

6.2 Understanding different course records

Your RoSA will list your completed courses and results for Year 11 and Year 10 on separate pages.

The following table explains the results and records you will receive for your courses:

Course type	Results and records
Board Developed Course	For most courses you will receive an assessment mark, an exam mark and an HSC mark. The HSC mark is the rounded average of your exam mark and assessment mark, and a performance band.
Board Developed Course with an optional HSC exam	<p>For English Studies and Mathematics Standard 1, you will receive a grade (A to E) for your school-based assessment. If you do the optional HSC exam for the course, you will receive an exam mark. The HSC mark and performance band are based on the exam mark only.</p> <p>For VET courses, all course names and unit values will be listed. You will receive an exam mark for any VET exams you complete. The HSC mark and performance band are based on the exam mark only. You will also receive an AQF VET Certificate and Transcript, or a Statement of Attainment for your achieved units of competency.</p>

Board Developed Course with Life Skills content and outcomes	<p>The course name and unit value will be listed if you completed the course.</p> <p>You will also receive a Profile of Student Achievement listing your achieved outcomes.</p>
VET Board Endorsed Course	<p>All course names and unit values will be listed.</p> <p>You will also receive an AQF VET Certificate and transcript, or a Statement of Attainment for your achieved units of competency.</p>
Board Endorsed Course (other than VET courses)	<p>Your assessment mark is the unmoderated mark that your school or provider submitted. This mark cannot be compared with marks for similar courses at other schools.</p>
Course studied with an outside tutor	<p>Your result will be reported as an exam mark and an HSC mark.</p> <p>Your assessment mark will only be listed if you lodged an illness/misadventure application, which was upheld.</p>

6.3 Getting course reports or a RoSA

Course reports for each Board Developed HSC course will be available in [Students Online](#). These reports will show you:

- the performance bands
- what a typical student knows and can do at each achievement level
- a graph of the mark distribution for the course.

Students will receive a course report for English Studies, Mathematics Standard 1 or a VET Industry Curriculum Framework course only if they have sat for the optional exam.

If you are not eligible for an HSC and are leaving school, you may still receive a RoSA. Your RoSA will show your grades in all the Year 10, 11 and 12 courses that you completed.

If you are not eligible for a RoSA, you will receive a Transcript of Study listing your completed courses and results, and the courses you were studying at the time you left school.

6.4 Finding out your ATAR

For information about your ATAR or UAC PIN, visit [UAC](#) or phone (02) 9752 0200.

The ATAR is provided directly to students from UAC. It will not appear in Students Online.

7 Copyright and privacy

7.1 Using your material

NESA publishes a range of educational materials based on the HSC exams to help teachers and students understand the required standards. These materials include samples of de-identified students’ work and may be in printed or electronic form.

NESA may use your original HSC exam responses, including performances, Language-speaking exams and submitted works, in our educational publications.

7.2 Giving your details to other organisations

The Technical Committee on Scaling calculates your ATAR for UAC. We will give the personal details and HSC results of all NSW HSC students to this committee and UAC, to undertake annual ATAR calculations.

With your consent, we will also give your Year 10 and Year 11 grades to UAC to help with early offers under the Schools Recommendation Scheme. This consent is recorded on your Confirmation of Entry.

We also provide your contact details and school results to the NSW Department of Education to allow the Department to conduct research and surveys related to its functions. The sharing of information for this purpose is authorised by section 16 of the *Education Standards Authority Act 2013* (NSW). You will not be identified in any publications resulting from the research or survey. Please note that participation in surveys is optional.

Your school or TAFE and your school sector (eg the Department of Education or Catholic Schools NSW), if applicable, can also access information about your results.

7.3 Recognising your achievement

We publish HSC merit lists on our website and give these lists to some media outlets. These lists show the name, school and course of all students who, for example, achieve an HSC mark in the top band in any course. We do not give any other students’ names or results to the media.

We also give student details to several organisations to award prizes or scholarships or to recognise high achievement in other ways.

You can ask us to keep your details confidential by requesting a privacy flag for your records. If you do, your name will not be published in our merit lists or given to the media or any organisation that awards prizes for HSC achievement. See our [privacy policy](#).

If you need more information on HSC privacy issues, please email privacy@nesa.nsw.edu.au. To request a privacy flag, please email Student Records at records@nesa.nsw.edu.au.

My checklist

Early in Year 12

- Read this guide.
- Check that I am eligible for the HSC (if appropriate).
- Make sure that my personal details and courses, including entry for any optional exams in English Studies, Mathematics Standard 1 or VET, are correct on my Confirmation of Entry.
- Record my NESA student number.
- Request an ATAR if I plan to apply to university.
- Read the Student Declaration on my Confirmation of Entry, then sign and return it to my school.
- Go to [Students Online](#) to

- Go to [Students Online](#) to:
 - activate my account if I have not yet done so
 - update my PIN
 - check my postal address, personal email address and mobile number.
- Read and become familiar with course and assessment requirements.
- Talk to my school if I think I need disability provisions.

Term 2

- Get my personal HSC exam timetable from [Students Online](#).
- Check that all my exams appear, including performance and optional exams.
- Check my exam centre location(s).

Term 3

- Confirm my dates for project submissions, performance exams and oral exams.
- Submit projects on the due dates.
- Attend performance and oral exams.
- If I applied for disability provisions and have not received my decision letter, talk to my school.

Term 4

- Check my exam timetable and the exam equipment I need.
- Attend and make a serious attempt at every exam.
- Submit an illness/misadventure application, if required.
- Check my assessment ranks in [Students Online](#) after the last exam.
- Check that my [Students Online](#) account Personal Details section:
 - uses my personal email address, not my school email address, and change to personal email address, if required
 - has my correct home address for the HSC testamur to be posted to and correct the address, if required.
- Note my NESA student number and NESA PIN, so I can get my results online.

Download a PDF
version of this guide

Students **completing their HSC in 2024** can download the [2024 Rules and Procedures Guide \(PDF, 28 pages, 270KB\)](#)