

The Higher School Certificate

MEDIA GUIDE

1998

All Media Enquiries to:

Media and Public Relations Branch
Office of the Board of Studies
117 Clarence Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Phone (02) 9367 8250

Mobile 0418 418 053

Fax (02) 9367 8479

© Board of Studies 1998

Published by
Board of Studies NSW
GPO Box 5300
Sydney NSW 2001

October 1998

ISBN: 0 7313 4109 0

Contents

1998 Higher School Certificate Statistics and Story Leads	7
The Higher School Certificate: breaking records	7
The class of '98	8
Release of HSC results information to the media	10
Technology: interfacing students, teachers and the HSC	10
HSC results available on the Internet	10
Release of results by telephone	11
The World Wide Web	11
HSC On-line	12
HSC Examination CD-ROM	13
The HSC Advice Line	14
HSC Examination Inquiry Centre	15
A more flexible Higher School Certificate	15
Pathways	15
The HSC and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	16
The Higher School Certificate on show	16
ARTEXPRESS	16
ENCORE	17
DesignTech	17
OnSTAGE	17
Where and what HSC students are studying in 1998	18
Candidates by geographical location	18
Subjects with the largest candidatures	19
Subjects with the smallest candidatures	19
Entries in Board Developed Courses by subject, course, and gender as at 1 September 1998	20
Reforms for a new HSC	26
The structure of the new Higher School Certificate	26
Assessing and reporting the new HSC	29
Higher School Certificate Examination and Assessment	31
Eligibility for the Higher School Certificate	32
The Higher School Certificate assessment scheme	33
The purpose and scope of assessments	33
Components and weightings	33
Moderation of assessments	34
Unsatisfactory assessments	34
School reviews and appeals to the Board	34
Producing the examinations	35
Setting the examinations	35
Assessors	35
Aural/oral and practical examinations	35
Preparing 'the pack'	35
Conducting the examinations	36
Supervision of the examinations	36
Examination provisions for students with special needs	36
Illness/Misadventure appeals	36

Higher School Certificate Examination and Assessment (continued)	
Courses with practical examinations and submitted works	37
Marking of the Higher School Certificate examinations	38
Security	38
Employment of markers	39
Marking	39
Reliability control measures	39
Country marking centres	39
Day marking	40
Results	40
Reporting of results in Board Developed Courses	41
Scaled examination marks for Board Developed Courses	41
Reporting of results in Board Endorsed Courses	41
Dual-accredited vocational HSC courses	42
Result Notice	42
The Universities Admission Index (UAI)	42
The Higher School Certificate Curriculum	45
The Higher School Certificate study program	46
Types of courses	46
Board Developed Courses	46
Board Endorsed Courses	46
Dual-accredited vocational HSC courses	48
Distinction Courses	49
Units of study	49
NAFLaSSL	50
Prescribed texts and works	50
The Board of Studies NSW	51
Board members	52
Staff of the Office of the Board of Studies	54
Board of Studies Liaison Officers	55

1998 Higher School Certificate Statistics and Story Leads

1998 Higher School Certificate Statistics and Story Leads

The Higher School Certificate: breaking records

This year a record 65,667* students around the world will sit for the New South Wales Higher School Certificate examinations — an increase of 2,629 on last year's figure of 63,038. The first HSC examination took place in 1967 and since then more than one million people have been awarded this internationally recognised credential.

Higher School Certificate Entries 1988 to 1998



* Please note: All statistics in this guide refer to the enrolled candidature of 1 September 1998.

Over the years the HSC has changed and developed to meet the needs of NSW students. This year will see the introduction of the Universities Admission Index (UAI), replacing the Tertiary Entrance Rank (TER). The UAI ranks students in relation to other HSC students for tertiary entrance purposes on a scale of 0–100 (see page 42).

1998's HSC offers 75** subjects organised into 165 courses.

Distinction Courses — high-level courses offered through universities by distance education — were undertaken by 76 students in 1998. Distinction courses were introduced in 1994. Three courses are available: Comparative Literature, Cosmology and Philosophy.

The change in the student demographic has also led to an increase in the number of students choosing vocational educational courses, with 4,931 students choosing to study such courses in 1998.

The introduction of the Pathways program in 1993 enabled students to take a more flexible approach to their HSC studies, giving Year 12 students up to five years to complete their HSC courses. This year 6,771 Year 12 students chose to use the Pathways model (see page 15) in pursuing the Higher School Certificate.

The class of '98

- 65,667 students are enrolled as HSC candidates this year.
- The subjects with the largest candidatures are English, Mathematics, General Studies, Biology, Business Studies and Computing Studies (in descending order), while the subjects with the smallest candidatures are Lithuanian, Estonian, Slovenian, Latvian, Hungarian, Dutch and Czech (in ascending order).

HSC postcards from across the world

- Three students are doing the HSC on Royal Australian Navy ships: a female student on HMAS Mermaid based in Cairns, a male student on HMAS Torrens based in Rockingham, WA and another male student currently sailing from California to WA.
- There is one male student, a soldier, sitting the examination at the Alice Springs Army Base.
- There are 200 overseas students sitting the HSC in 1998. Most are Australian exchange students studying overseas, while some are nationals from other countries where there are Board-recognised independent schools providing the NSW HSC.
- Other students sitting the HSC overseas include: a student taking her HSC examination on the Ivory Coast in West Africa, where her parents are missionaries; a Dubbo High School student sitting the HSC in New Mexico USA where he is on a basketball scholarship; a student studying at the National Ballet School in London who will sit the NSW HSC examinations in England; another who will sit the examination in Harare in Zimbabwe; a student in Saudi Arabia; and one student in the USA who will be taking her Russian Oral examination by telephone.

** Each Science course is treated as a separate subject; all three Distinction Courses are treated as one subject.

- Over 40 students who had previously been studying in Australia are doing the HSC examinations in Japan in order to be available for the Japanese University Entrance Examinations, which are timetabled around the same time as the HSC examinations in NSW.

Five students are doing HSC examinations in South Korea so they can also sit the South Korean University Entrance Examination, which have similar timetabling requirements.

Most of these students are Japanese and South Korean nationals who have been studying in NSW while their parents have been posted to Australia. The students are returning to Japan and South Korea to study at university.

- There are also students sitting for the HSC in the Sultanate of Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Pakistan, Turkey, Vanuatu, USA, Indonesia, the Czech Republic, Germany, England, Canada, Uruguay, Papua New Guinea and Fiji.

The HSC for young and old

- There is an 11-year-old student from Kingswood doing the HSC in Contemporary English, 2 Unit Mathematics and 2 Unit Physics.
- A 13-year-old from Raby is doing 2 Unit Chemistry, 2 Unit Physics, 2 Unit Economics and 3 Unit Economics.
- There are also three 14 year olds doing HSC subjects: a girl and boy, both doing 2 Unit Music (AMEB) and both from the far north coast of NSW; and a boy from south-western NSW doing 2 and 3 Unit Mathematics.
- The oldest HSC candidate this year is an 83-year-old student from Sydney's North Shore who is studying 2 Unit Legal Studies.
- There are two 76-year-old students — one from far-west NSW doing 2 Unit Rural Studies through TAFE and another from the Central Coast doing 2 Unit Mathematics and 1 Unit General Studies.

Please contact the Media and Public Relations Branch on (02) 9367 8250 if you would like more information regarding these students.

Exams in all shapes and sizes

- Four students sitting the HSC this year will have specially produced braille examination papers. The papers are an equivalent transcription of the standard examination papers but use a variety of techniques, including diagrams that are formed by using dry spaghetti, to make the raised lines and angles needed.
- Twenty-nine students sitting this year's HSC will have examination papers that are printed in colours different from the standard papers. These papers have been specially designed to enable students to read the examination questions easily, as some students find it difficult to read text printed on paper of a certain colour.
- There will be approximately 420 large-print examination papers produced for students with visual impairment. The papers' type size ranges from 18pt to 36pt and most of them are printed on A3-sized paper.
- Approximately 15 hearing-impaired or deaf students sitting the listening paper examination in Contemporary English — which is aimed at testing student comprehension — will watch an AUSLAN, signed English or subtitled video instead of listening to the usual audio tape.

The HSC in languages

There are 38 languages on offer in the 1998 HSC. Languages are studied in both government and non-government schools, TAFE, and through approved outside tutors.

Many languages are studied through the Saturday School of Community Languages, which had 1,494 students enrolled this year, or the Open High School and other Distance Education Centres run by the Department of Education and Training.

Japanese is the most popular language, although languages that have been popular in the past, such as French, German and Italian, continue to have appeal. The most recent languages introduced to the HSC are Hindi, Persian, Portuguese and, in 1998, Filipino (Tagalog).

In 1979 there were only 56 students studying Japanese in New South Wales: this year there are nearly 1,700 students studying the language.

Twenty-seven languages are supported under the National Assessment Framework for Languages at Senior Secondary Level (NAFLaSSL). All are developed according to a common structure emphasising the ability to communicate in varied contexts, flexibility to accommodate all students in all areas of Australia, and emphasis on cultural awareness.

Release of HSC results information to the media

The Board of Studies will provide the media with the HSC Course Merit List — a list that details the students who have achieved a mark of 90% or more for each course. This mark is a composite of both the examination mark and the moderated school assessment mark.

The Board of Studies does not have access to students' UAI information from the Universities Admissions Centre. As recommended in the NSW Government's White Paper, *Securing Their Future*, individual results are confidential and will not be provided to parties other than the student, the Universities Admissions Centre and the universities to which the student has applied.

Technology: interfacing students, teachers and the HSC

HSC results available on the Internet

For the first time, students will be able to access their HSC results over the Internet. Taking advantage of the latest technology, the Board of Studies will establish a special HSC results web page on its Internet site. By using their student number and their personal identification number (PIN), students will be able to read their HSC results information on screen. The PIN, which will be the same for both the HSC results web page and the HSC results phone line, will ensure the security of the information.

Students will be able to access their results on the Internet from 6 am Saturday, 2 January 1998, coinciding with the start of the HSC results phone line.

There will be no additional cost to those students who use this service, beyond the charges applied to their Internet Service Provider and/or the cost of the call.

The new service is just one of the ways the Board of Studies is using technology to deliver the HSC results to students faster, giving them more time to consider their future options.

HSC results web page: www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au

Release of results by telephone

New South Wales students are able to access their 1998 HSC results three days before they will arrive by post, by using an automated telephone service.

From 6 am on Saturday, 2 January 1999 until the end of January 1999, students can ring 1902 220 100, key in their student number and Personal Identification Number (PIN) and get their results by recorded message. The students' PINs will be sent to them in mid-November in a letter from the Board of Studies.

The service will run 24 hours a day and it is estimated that each call will take approximately two minutes, although students will have the option of having their results repeated.

Students will still receive their results by mail, through Australia Post, on 5 January 1999.

The Board of Studies established the phone service last year to give students as much time as possible to make decisions concerning tertiary studies and employment choices.

The Board will also run an HSC Inquiry Centre to support the phone service. The centre will run from Saturday, 2 January, 1999.

HSC results by telephone number: 1902 220 100

The World Wide Web

Since the Board of Studies launched its website on the World Wide Web in September 1995, the site has opened direct communication channels for 100,000 teachers and one million students. The website has had more than 400,000 'hits' per month. This is an extraordinarily high rate for an Australian non-entertainment site.

Most of the hits were from Australia, with the bulk of the remainder being from the US, Singapore, New Zealand, Canada, UK, Japan, Malaysia, Spain, South Africa, Sweden, Germany, The Netherlands, Thailand, Hong Kong, and Indonesia (in descending order). With more and more schools accessing the Internet, students and teachers can link up to the Board's site to find out important information relating to syllabuses, the School Certificate, the Higher School Certificate and Board publications.

Students doing the Higher School Certificate are able to access a calendar of important dates leading up to the examinations, as well as the Higher School Certificate examination timetable.

Students and teachers are also able to access Board of Studies publications such as *Board Bulletin*, which offers important news and updates about Board requirements; *On Board*, a magazine for students in Years 10, 11 and 12 that is written and designed by students in Years

10, 11 and 12; and 'Primary Matters', a monthly column for K–6 teachers; plus past HSC examination papers and HSC examination reports.

The average visitor to the Board website views 7 pages. In the months following the launch of the English K–6 Syllabus in April 1998, more than 800 copies a week were being downloaded by parents, teachers and the interested public.

In the week beginning 7 September 1998, users downloaded 1506 copies of the *Computing Studies Glossary of Terms* (2nd edn) and 877 copies of the 1997 HSC 2 Unit English paper 1. Other documents were similarly popular. Many copies of the specimen School Certificate papers were viewed, as were the complete collection of School Certificate and HSC review materials such as press releases, newsletters and reports.

The site offers a sample of Board products, including access to extracts from some of the educational CD-ROMs produced by the Board of Studies. About 40 e-mails a day are received on the Board website with orders for Board products, enquiries about the availability of particular documents and requests for general information. These are directed to the appropriate Board officer for attention. The Board of Studies updates its site daily, adding new announcements, syllabuses and support documents and other useful information. The processes for the web publication of documents have been upgraded so that now the document may appear on the website within hours of it being authorised for publication.

A list of links to schools throughout Australia is maintained, as are lists of links to subject-related websites across the world.

Accessing the Board of Studies website

68% of the users come to the website from their own bookmarking of the Board's website.

14% come to the website from key-word searches in a search engine.

13% come to the website through the Board's linking with the Charles Sturt University HSC On-line website (<http://hsc.csu.edu.au>).

5% come to the website through the hundreds of other link pages where the Board site is listed (such as the Macquarie University Library Links Pages).

The website address is <http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au>

HSC On-line

The *HSC On-line* website helps students sitting for the HSC by giving them access to a wealth of HSC resources and support, no matter where they live in New South Wales.

The New South Wales Minister for Education and Training, John Aquilina, commented: 'In this most important of exams, I'm glad to see that through technological innovations we are able to provide students with equity of access to information and resources no matter where in the state, or indeed in the world, they might be studying for the NSW HSC.'

HSC On-line's materials have been developed by highly experienced HSC teachers and examiners, and many of the site's resources have been drawn from the best available world-wide resources.

The site includes a newsgroup to enable students to exchange ideas and practices as well as information about career and further study options. It also has links to school websites in New South Wales and around Australia.

The following subjects are covered by the site: Aboriginal Studies, Agriculture, Ancient History, Computing Studies, Cosmology, Drama, English, Geography, Japanese, Mathematics, Modern History, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Design and Technology, French, Music, PDHPE, Society and Culture, Studies of Religion and Visual Arts. Other subjects, such as Dance, Economics, Food Technology, German, Hospitality, Indonesian, Legal Studies and Physics, will be covered by the site in the near future.

Mr Aquilina said: 'Given our government's strong emphasis on the importance of technology education, students' ability to use their technical skills to enhance learning and secure better employment and further education opportunities is completely in step with our goals to provide avenues for young people to move into the 21st century.'

The *HSC On-line* project is a joint venture between the Department of Education and Training and Charles Sturt University. It is supported by the Board of Studies NSW and the Joint Council of NSW Professional Teachers Associations and is sponsored by Access Australia.

HSC On-line: <http://hsc.csu.edu.au>

HSC Examination CD-ROM

The CD-ROM contains Higher School Certificate examination papers and selected examination reports from 1995, 1996 and 1997. Schools are provided with all the HSC examination papers on CD-ROM using Adobe Acrobat software (except those languages with non-Romanic scripts, subjects with small candidatures or music or language tapes).

Acrobat allows access across Macintosh and Windows computers and is provided to schools at no charge. This initiative was developed in 1996 in response to schools' requests to provide past papers early in the new year.

Schools have responded very positively to the HSC Examination CD-ROM and as a result the 1998 examination papers will also be provided on CD-ROM.

The HSC Advice Line

The HSC Advice Line first opened in October 1995 to offer HSC students last-minute advice and information from highly qualified teachers, prior to the examinations.

In its first year of operation, 23,849 students called the HSC Advice Line. Last year 39,150 students called. Calls were approximately nine minutes in duration. It has received very positive feedback from students since its inception.

The Advice Line is designed to give support and advice to students at times when students cannot access their own teachers — on weekends and after school hours throughout the examination period. It opens on Monday 12 October 1998, two weeks before the examinations begin, and concludes on Monday 23 November.

No matter where a student is calling from in New South Wales, the cost is that of a local call.

The phone-in service is staffed by more than 750 teachers who are chosen on the basis of their experience and expertise in their subject areas.

The service will offer advice for the following large candidature subjects:

Ancient History (2/3)	Geology
Biology	Legal Studies (2/3)
Business Studies (2/3)	Mathematics (all courses)
Chemistry	Modern History (all courses)
Computing Studies (2/3)	PDHPE
Economics (2/3)	Physics
English (all courses)	Science (all courses)
General Studies	Studies of Religion
Geography (2/3)	Visual Arts (2/3)

The Advice Line will operate up until, and including, the night prior to the final examinations in each of the above subjects.

The hours of operation will be Monday to Friday 4 pm–10 pm, Saturday 10 am–6 pm and Sunday 10 am–10 pm. **The Advice Line telephone number is 13 11 12.**

Students with hearing difficulties

Students with hearing difficulties have access to the HSC Advice Line through a teletypewriter facility. Students wishing to use this facility are encouraged to make initial contact with the Advice Line operators through family and friends.

HSC Examination Inquiry Centre

The Board of Studies will run an Inquiry Centre to support the release of the HSC Examination Results.

This year students will be able to get their results by phone or on the Internet from Saturday, 2 January 1999, as well as by post on Tuesday, 5 January 1999 (see page 11). The HSC Examination Inquiry Centre will open from 9 am on Saturday, 2 January 1999. It will be staffed by Board Liaison Officers, Board of Studies officers and personnel from government and non-government schools.

The HSC Examination Inquiry Centre provides an opportunity for students to discuss any queries regarding their Higher School Certificate results.

Personnel at the HSC Examination Inquiry Centre are able to answer questions by telephone about results only. Inquiries relating to university admissions and post-secondary education should be directed to the Universities Admissions Centre or the Advisory Centres for Students and School Leavers.

Inquiry Centre Phone: 13 11 12

A more flexible Higher School Certificate

Pathways

Today's Higher School Certificate offers students more flexibility than ever before in the way they can approach their study program through the provisions offered by Pathways.

Prior to the introduction of Pathways, senior students could only take one year to do Year 11 studies (Preliminary courses), and one year to do Year 12 studies (HSC courses). Furthermore, if a student was not satisfied with their HSC results there was no provision to repeat an individual course or courses. To improve their Universities Admission Index (UAI) the student had to repeat their entire Year 12 program of study.

All this changed when Pathways was introduced for students in 1993. There are now 6,771 students using the Pathways model.

Under Pathways provisions, students are able to take extra time to complete their Higher School Certificate, move through their program more quickly, or repeat one or more courses.

Students may 'accumulate' their studies over a longer period of time by taking up to five years to complete the HSC study pattern, and unlimited time to complete their Preliminary pattern.

Another option is to 'accelerate' HSC courses. Students who are gifted or talented in a particular area can undertake HSC courses ahead of their peers.

After completing their Higher School Certificate, students can also use the Pathways provisions to repeat one or more courses in an attempt to improve their Universities Admission Index (UAI).

Because they may take up to five years to complete their Higher School Certificate, students now have the option to combine part-time work or TAFE study with school work.

The HSC and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

The Board of Studies uses the term 'Recognition of Prior Learning' (RPL) as a generic term for the two mechanisms (Credit Transfer and Advanced Standing) by which the Board may recognise formal or informal study and/or relevant life experience as contributing to the award of the Higher School Certificate.

RPL arrangements are provided for individual students and are granted as follows:

- Credit Transfer for study successfully completed at a TAFE or another recognised post-secondary institution;
- Advanced Standing, whereby students may be exempt from certain study requirements of a particular Board course if they are able to demonstrate that they have already achieved the relevant outcomes.

The Higher School Certificate on show

There are a range of forthcoming exhibitions and performances of outstanding works from HSC students of 1998.

ARTEXPRESS

ARTEXPRESS is a touring exhibition of outstanding works of art from the 1998 HSC examination in Visual Arts. The works in this exhibition will be presented in a range of media including photographs, films and computer-generated images, paintings, drawings, sculpture, wearables and jewellery, textiles and fibre, ceramics, collections of works, design, graphics, and integrated visual/verbal studies.

The program for ARTEXPRESS in 1999 is as follows:

Sydney	Art Gallery of New South Wales	28 January – 21 March 1999
	State Library of New South Wales	28 January – 27 February 1999
	David Jones city store	18 January 1999 (provisional)
	College of Fine Arts	28 January – 21 March 1999
Newcastle	Newcastle Regional Art Gallery	26 March – 2 May 1999
Lismore	Lismore Regional Art Gallery	14 May – 13 June 1999
Goulburn	Goulburn Regional Art Gallery	21 June – 24 July 1999
Albury	Albury Regional Art Centre	6 August – 5 September 1999
Orange	Orange Regional Gallery	17 September – 24 October 1999
Inverell	Inverell Art Gallery	5 November – 5 December 1999
Campbelltown	Campbelltown City Art Gallery	10 December – 30 January 2000

For further information, please contact Ms Jan Hackett, Exhibitions Officer/ARTEXPRESS, Department of Education and Training on (02) 9764 3842.

ENCORE

ENCORE is an annual concert of outstanding music performances and compositions from HSC Music students. The inaugural concert was held in 1989, and since 1993 ENCORE has been presented in the Concert Hall of the Sydney Opera House. ENCORE 98 will take place on Friday, 5 March 1999.

In ENCORE 98, students will present original works and performances in a range of styles and genres that represent their study of the performance and compositions of HSC Board Music courses (in 2/3 Unit and 2 Unit Course 1) and also performances from AMEB Music (2/3 Unit).

DesignTech

DesignTech 98 is an exhibition of outstanding Major Design Projects by HSC Design and Technology students. DesignTech 98 offers an insight into how Major Design Projects are designed and produced.

Projects are selected for DesignTech on the basis of their demonstrated creativity and innovation, production techniques, project design and marketing aspects.

DesignTech 98 will be exhibited in Sydney at the Powerhouse Museum from 7 December 1998 to 28 March 1999.

The exhibition will tour Wollongong, Newcastle and Coffs Harbour with further regional venues to be announced.

OnSTAGE

Exemplary 1998 HSC Drama students will have an opportunity to perform their Group Presentations and Individual Projects in Performance and present their design, script writing, video and critical analysis projects at OnSTAGE 98.

OnSTAGE comprises a series of group-devised and individual performances as well as an exhibition of script writing, set, costume, lighting and publicity design projects, which reflect the hard work, talent and dedication of students and their teachers.

Writers OnStage is a one-show-only, rehearsed reading of two exemplary scripts from the script writing individual project.

The OnSTAGE season will be from Monday, 8 February 1999 to Saturday 13 March 1999 at the York Theatre, Seymour Theatre Centre, Chippendale NSW.

For further information on DesignTech, ENCORE and OnSTAGE, please contact Ms Julie Eather, Exhibitions Coordinator, Board of Studies on (02) 9367 8309.

Where and what HSC students are studying in 1998

Candidates by geographical location

Category of candidates	Candidate number	Proportion of total		
Metropolitan	38,854	59.16 %		
Country	26,613	40.52 %		
Interstate and overseas	200	0.32 %		
School students	62,605	95.33 %		
TAFE students	3002	4.58 %		
Self-tuition students	60	0.09 %		
Total	65667	100%		
Geographical Location	Female	Male	Total	Percentage
Metropolitan Categories				
Metropolitan East	5565	4999	10,564	16.09 %
Metropolitan North	3678	3813	7491	11.41 %
Metropolitan South West	5169	4785	9954	15.16 %
Metropolitan North West	5600	5185	10,785	16.42 %
Total	20,012	18,782	38,794	59.08 %
Country Categories				
Hunter	3626	3038	6664	10.15 %
North Coast	2464	2178	4642	7.07 %
North West	1344	1040	2384	3.63 %
Riverina	1779	1488	3267	4.98 %
South Coast	3321	2890	6211	9.46 %
Western	1790	1655	3445	5.25 %
Total	14,324	12,289	26,613	40.53 %
Overseas Categories				
All overseas	107	93	200	0.30 %
Total	107	93	200	0.30 %
Other Categories				
All other	35	25	60	0.09 %
Total	35	25	60	0.09 %
Total of all categories	34,478	31,189	65,667	100.00%

(NB: Candidates by geographical location and gender as at 1 September 1998.)

Subjects with the largest candidatures

Subject	Candidates
English	58,486
Mathematics	57,762
General Studies	15,514
Biology	14,153
Business Studies	14,856
Computing Studies	13,975
Chemistry	10,433
Modern History	10,338
Physics	9481
Visual Arts	9418
PDHPE	9075
Geography	8737
Studies of Religion	8023
Legal Studies	7710

Subjects with the smallest candidatures

Subject	Candidates
Slovenian	1
Lithuanian	1
Estonian	1
Latvian	3
Hungarian	3
Dutch	4
Czech	5
Ukranian	6
Swedish	7
Hindi	8

Entries in Board Developed Courses by subject, course and gender for the 1998 HSC at 1 September 1998

Entries by Course and Subjects

Course Name	Units	Male	Female	Total
Aboriginal Studies	2	152	366	518
Accounting	2	189	196	385
Agriculture	2	949	542	1491
Agriculture	3	189	132	321
Ancient History	2	1304	2114	3418
Ancient History	3	497	1000	1497
Ancient History (Personalities & Times)	2	1110	1612	2722
Applied Studies	1	599	504	1103
Arabic	2	13	16	29
Arabic	3	63	54	117
Arabic (General)	2	85	146	231
Arabic Z	2	6	5	11
Armenian	2	12	23	35
Biology	2	5430	9723	15153
Business Studies	2	6195	5536	11731
Business Studies	3	1566	1559	3125
Chemistry	2	5566	4867	10433
Chinese	2	13	12	25
Chinese	3	13	11	24
Chinese (BS)	2	126	98	224
Chinese (BS)	3	161	219	380
Chinese Z	2	8	1	9

Course Name	Units	Male	Female	Total
Classical Ballet	2	0	32	32
Classical Ballet	3	1	9	10
Classical Greek	2	6	0	6
Classical Greek	3	8	0	8
Comparative Literature-Distinction Course	2	2	9	11
Computing Studies	2	4434	2500	6934
Computing Studies	3	1442	294	1736
Computing Studies (General)	2	2638	2667	5305
Contemporary English	2	11332	8274	19606
Cosmology - Distinction Course	2	15	6	21
Croatian	2	24	21	45
Czech	2	1	4	5
Dance	2	11	248	259
Design and Technology	2	2650	1098	3748
Design and Technology	3	308	230	538
Drama	2	843	2535	3378
Dutch	2	3	1	4
Economics	2	2752	1912	4664
Economics	3	874	659	1533
Electronics Technology	2	156	0	156
Engineering Science	2	1121	75	1196
Engineering Science	3	187	12	199
English	2	2153	4278	6431
English	3	451	1133	1584
English (General)	2	13696	17169	30865
Estonian	2	0	1	1

Course Name	Units	Male	Female	Total
Filipino (Tagalog)	2	5	11	16
Food Technology	2	694	2397	3091
Food Technology	3	57	426	483
French	2	81	167	248
French	3	61	96	157
French (General)	2	116	475	591
French Z	2	65	414	479
General Science	2	1170	860	2030
General Studies	1	7463	8051	15514
Geography	2	3598	2908	6506
Geography	3	1077	1154	2231
Geology	2	134	133	267
German	2	67	118	185
German	3	55	78	133
German (General)	2	81	185	266
German Z	2	41	124	165
Hebrew	2	2	10	12
Hebrew	3	9	7	16
Hebrew (General)	2	28	18	46
Hindi	2	2	6	8
Hungarian	2	1	2	3
Indonesian	2	38	109	147
Indonesian	3	20	30	50
Indonesian (BS)	2	33	12	45
Indonesian (BS)	3	7	20	27
Indonesian Z	2	14	121	135
Industrial Technology	2	1929	85	2014

Course Name	Units	Male	Female	Total
Industry Studies – Hospitality	2	471	1161	1632
Industry Studies – Metal and Engineering	2	333	0	333
Industry Studies – Retail	2	233	259	492
Italian	2	110	202	312
Italian	3	32	67	99
Italian Z	2	32	151	183
Japanese	2	209	607	816
Japanese	3	88	214	302
Japanese (BS)	2	53	45	98
Japanese Z	2	146	309	455
Khmer	2	0	0	0
Korean	2	7	7	14
Korean	3	0	0	0
Korean (BS)	2	13	15	28
Korean (BS)	3	82	70	152
Korean Z	2	0	0	0
Latin	2	50	31	81
Latin	3	36	40	76
Latvian	2	0	3	3
Legal Studies	2	2432	3993	6425
Legal Studies	3	449	836	1285
Life Management Studies	2	498	2439	2937
Life Management Studies	3	55	767	822
Lithuanian	2	0	1	1
Macedonian	2	36	39	75

Course Name	Units	Male	Female	Total
Malay (BS)	2	11	17	28
Malay (BS)	3	3	5	8
Maltese	2	0	0	0
Mathematics	2	7967	8249	16216
Mathematics	3	4423	3519	7942
Mathematics	4	1425	740	2165
Mathematics in Practice	2	2519	3366	5885
Mathematics in Society	2	11249	14305	25554
Modern Greek	2	62	74	136
Modern Greek	3	69	117	186
Modern Greek Z	2	4	11	15
Modern History	2	2500	3338	5838
Modern History	3	704	1008	1712
Modern History (People and Events)	2	1287	1501	2788
Music (AMEB)	2	43	96	139
Music (AMEB)	3	29	47	76
Music(Board)	2	89	159	248
Music(Board)	3	143	209	352
Music(Board) Course 1	2	1533	1610	3143
Persian	2	48	40	88
Personal Development, Health & Physical Education	2	4350	4725	9075
Philosophy – Distinction Course	2	24	20	44
Physics	2	6885	2596	9481
Polish	2	10	15	25
Portuguese	2	13	4	17
Rural Technology	2	75	1	76

Course Name	Units	Male	Female	Total
Russian	2	5	2	7
Russian	3	17	23	40
Russian Z	2	0	4	4
Science	3	114	93	207
Science	4	293	226	519
Science for Life	2	1957	1688	3645
Serbian	2	27	26	53
Sheep Husbandry and Wool Technology	2	25	1	26
Slovenian	2	0	1	1
Society and Culture	2	399	1807	2206
Society and Culture	3	59	457	516
Spanish	2	58	113	171
Spanish	3	39	73	112
Spanish Z	2	32	56	88
Studies of Religion	1	3292	4036	7328
Studies of Religion	2	184	511	695
Swedish	2	1	6	7
Textiles and Design	2	3	528	531
Textiles and Design	3	1	194	195
Thai Z	2	1	9	10
Tourism Sector Services	2	91	616	707
Turkish	2	16	24	40
Turkish	3	27	44	71
Ukrainian	2	1	5	6
Vietnamese	2	78	145	223
Visual Arts	2	2180	3570	5750
Visual Arts	3	1126	2542	3668

Reforms for a new HSC

The structure of the new Higher School Certificate

On the recommendation of the Board of Studies, the Minister for Education and Training, John Aquilina MP, has endorsed a 2 unit curriculum structure for the new Higher School Certificate, to commence with Year 11, 2000.

This structure, which has emerged from three years of research and consultation, enables more students to have greater access to more demanding standards. It will also lead to HSC candidates having the opportunity to study courses that prepare them for further education and training, employment and full and active participation as citizens.

Under the new arrangements, students will be able to choose in-depth, specialised study programs or broader patterns of study according to their plans and skills. For each course, students will know whether it leads most directly to university study, to accredited TAFE courses or to particular career opportunities.

The new curriculum structure is an important step towards the development of a better and fairer HSC. However, it is by no means the end of the process. There is still considerable work to be done.

The Board, in consultation with teachers, academics and key education groups, will now redesign all relevant Stage 6 (Years 11 and 12) syllabuses in line with the new course arrangements, the findings from the evaluation process and changes to assessment outlined in *Securing Their Future*.*

In most cases, this will involve reorganising existing content into the new course structures. For the vast majority of subjects, the content of courses will remain familiar and will have much in common with existing courses.

Extensive consultation will be an integral part of the development of syllabuses and support documents in preparation for the implementation of the new Higher School Certificate courses in 2000 and examination in 2001.

The new course arrangements

The evaluation of the HSC affirmed the 2 unit structure as the basic building block of the HSC curriculum, with subjects being offered in 2 unit components. Study in the majority of subjects will involve a 2 unit Preliminary course and a 2 unit HSC course.

These courses will encompass at least the standards being achieved by students in current 2 and 3 unit courses. Because courses will include a higher standard throughout Years 11 and 12, students will have longer exposure to the most challenging work than is now the case.

In English, Mathematics, Music, Ancient History, Modern History, specified Languages and Vocational Education and Training courses, there will be opportunities to undertake extended study. In English and Mathematics, a number of courses will be provided to accommodate a range of interests and abilities.

* *Securing Their Future: The NSW Government's reforms for the Higher School Certificate* (1997) is the NSW Government's HSC White Paper developed on the basis of the McGaw review into the NSW HSC, *Shaping Their Future* (March, 1997).

There will also be opportunities for students to study undergraduate university courses in several subjects.

English

The HSC English curriculum is being strengthened. For the first time, students will have the opportunity to study 4 units of English in the HSC year. There will be an opportunity to focus on literature in all English courses.

Students will be able to study either Standard or Advanced English, which will be reported on a single scale. Students taking the Advanced course will also have the option of devoting more time to the area by selecting an extended study course that includes both language and literature. Extended study will enable students to engage in specialised study with increased independence.

For students who need to enhance their performance in English, Fundamentals of English will be offered as a 2 unit Preliminary course. This course will assist students to reach the level of literacy in English required for the Higher School Certificate year. It will be taken in conjunction with the Standard English course.

An English as a Second Language course is being developed for students who need assistance and meet the entry requirements. If undertaken in Year 12, it will meet the Higher School Certificate requirements for the study of English.

Science

An Applied Science 2 unit course will be offered along with 2 unit courses in Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Earth and Environmental Science.

Mathematics

New HSC course arrangements will be consistent with the current Mathematics 2 Unit Related, 3 Unit and 4 Unit courses.

The Mathematics in Society and Mathematics in Practice courses will be replaced by a new non-calculus-based Mathematics course, which will include current learning opportunities.

Music

Students will be able to study one of two Music courses. An extended study course in Music will provide the time required for the achievement of high-level standards in performance, composition and musicology.

History

There will be 2 unit courses in Ancient History and Modern History. An extended study course in History will offer opportunity for further study in both Modern and Ancient History.

Languages

Languages will have a course structure that caters for beginning speakers, background speakers and continuing study students. Motivated students interested in extra study in order to reach higher levels of proficiency will be able to pursue extended study in languages currently taught in a wide cross-section of government and non-government schools.

Computing Studies

Two courses will be provided — Computing Studies, and Information Processes and Technology.

Vocational Education and Training

The opportunities for students to study Vocational Education and Training courses, as part of the HSC, will be enhanced. Eight industry frameworks are currently being developed, with further areas to be developed in 1999.

Within each framework, students will be able to choose courses of 2 units (120 hours) or 4 units (240 hours) over the two years, as well as extension courses of 60 or 120 hours.

As well as counting towards the HSC, VET courses will provide industry credentials under the Australian Qualifications Framework.

Currently, HSC courses are being developed in industry areas that have been identified as offering employment and further training opportunities. These are:

Retail

Tourism and Hospitality

Business Services and Administration

Metal and Engineering

Primary Industries

Information Technology

Construction

Telecommunications.

Content Endorsed Courses

Content Endorsed Courses for the HSC and school-developed courses endorsed by the Board have been retained to ensure that schools can continue to create flexible programs of study.

Subjects being phased out of the HSC program

As recommended in *Securing Their Future*, Applied Studies and General Studies will be phased out, due to substantial overlap with other courses.

Most outcomes of the existing Sheep Husbandry and Wool Technology and Rural Technology courses will be covered in the new VET Primary Industries Framework, with articulation to further training courses.

Classical Ballet will be incorporated into the Dance 2 unit course.

New courses

Any proposals for additional future courses will need to meet the criteria set down in the White Paper.

Professional development

The changes are being supported by a comprehensive training and development program to ensure that teachers fully understand the new courses and the new basis of assessment and reporting. This will be designed to ensure that all schools are able to implement the new arrangements as smoothly as possible.

Assessing and reporting the new HSC

The reforms to the HSC will introduce significant changes to the assessing and reporting of students' results.

The new examinations will be marked and reported against set standards that describe the various levels of knowledge, skills and understanding students can achieve.

Marks will range from 0–100, where 50 will represent the minimum standard expected in each subject. This is a change from the current norm-referenced approach of scaling marks to a predetermined distribution.

As well as a mark out of 100, students' examination performance will place them into one of six bands. Each band will give a description of the attainments typically demonstrated by students. The Board of Studies and HSC examiners are currently studying past examination papers and student performance to develop the descriptions of typical student achievement within each band.

The new assessment and reporting procedures will continue to be developed and refined as the HSC syllabuses are revised. As draft syllabuses are sent to schools they will be accompanied by examination specifications and sample examination questions to ensure teachers and students have a clear idea of what to expect.

**Higher School Certificate
Examination and Assessment**

Higher School Certificate

Examination and Assessment

The Board of Studies NSW organised 70 examination committees to set 345 different examination papers for 131 courses between September 1997 and 1 July 1998. In addition, examination papers for some small candidature languages were set by other States participating in the National Assessment Framework for Languages at Senior Secondary Level (NAFLaSSL).

It took more than 40 staff members nearly 7 weeks to pack all the written examination papers for all students in each course, which resulted in over half-a-million parcels.

More than 4,000 people will supervise the HSC examination sessions in 700 examination centres. These centres are mostly in schools and NSW TAFE institutes that have more than 40 candidates.

Other examination centres will be set up in all States and Territories in Australia, as well as on a number of islands and ships off the coast of Australia. Internationally, examination centres will be set up at the place at which a candidate is located at the time of the HSC examinations (see section 'The class of '98' on page 8). The centre may be located at a school, another institution or the Australian Embassy based in the relevant region.

Eligibility for the Higher School Certificate

To be eligible for the Higher School Certificate, students must follow a course of study comprising a minimum of 11 units at a government or registered and accredited non-government school, an institute of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) or a school outside New South Wales that is recognised by the Board.

Students may enter for courses they have studied at another school or an institute of TAFE in addition to those studied at their own school. For example, 1,494 students have entered for the HSC examination in Languages studied at the Department of Education and Training's Saturday School of Community Languages. A student may also enter for an 'outside' subject that has been studied with a private tutor, if this is approved by the school principal.

The Higher School Certificate assessment scheme

Students will have a scaled examination mark and a moderated assessment mark reported separately on the Record of Achievement. The examination mark is based on examination performance and the assessment mark is based on tasks undertaken during the HSC course.

The purpose and scope of assessments

Assessments are designed to measure a wider range of achievements than can be measured by the external examination, and they use a number of measures over the HSC year to provide an accurate measure of each student's achievement for the course. Together, the examination and assessment marks provide a more accurate and complete picture of a student's achievement.

Towards the end of the HSC course, schools provide a mark based on a student's performance in set assessment tasks. To ensure that comparisons of results for the same courses from different schools throughout the state are fair, assessments from each school are adjusted to a common scale of marks using the exam marks in the course from the school.

Assessments are required for most courses set or endorsed by the Board. They are not required for dual-accredited vocational courses with student logs, such as Industry Studies.

Moderated assessments are reported on the Record of Achievement and are available for use in Illness/Misadventure appeals. Assessments provided by tutors are not reported but may be used in Illness/Misadventure appeals.

Components and weightings

To assess students' achievements, courses are divided into components that represent the skills and knowledge objectives of the course. The components are weighted and the school devises individual assessment tasks to measure a student's performance consistent with these components.

For example, the weightings of the components of the Modern History 2 Unit course are:

Component	Weighting (%)
1. Core: World War One	30
2. Twentieth Century National Study	40
EITHER	
3a. Nineteenth Century National Study	
OR	
3b. Modern World Study	30
Total	<u>100</u>

Moderation of assessments

The assessment marks awarded to students in each course are adjusted to match the average (mean) of those students' scaled examination marks (SEM). A similar spread of assessments to the exam marks is achieved by setting the top assessment to the top SEM and, where possible, the lowest assessment to the lowest SEM. This places the assessment marks on a common scale, allowing them to be compared with assessments from other schools.

Because the raw assessment marks cannot be compared fairly, schools are not allowed to reveal these to students. However, the Board informs students of their ranking within the school for each course after the final examination. Schools are required to provide feedback on performance in each assessment task that contributes to assessment throughout the course.

Unsatisfactory assessments

Students are expected to undertake all assessment tasks set. If a task is missed, the school may require the student to undertake an alternative task. Decisions to allow students to do alternative tasks, as well as decisions to award a zero mark, are based on guidelines issued by the Board of Studies and conveyed to students in each school's assessment policy.

If a student does not attempt assessment tasks that together are worth more than 50% of available marks in any course, the principal certifies that the course has not been satisfactorily completed. Unless a student subsequently appeals successfully to the Board, neither an assessment mark nor an examination mark is granted, whether or not the student attends the examination.

School reviews and appeals to the Board

After all students at a school have finished their examinations, students receive advice from the Board showing their position within their school in the rank order for assessments in each course they studied. If students consider their placement in any course incorrect, they may apply to the school for a review.

There is no provision for a review of the actual marks awarded for assessment tasks. The only matters a school may consider are whether:

- the weightings specified by the school in its assessment program conform with the Board's requirements;
- the procedures used by the school for determining the final assessment mark conform with its published assessment program;
- there are computational or other clerical errors in determining the assessment mark.

The final date for applications for a school review of assessments is 30 November 1998.

The school will advise the student of the outcome of the review by 4 December 1998. If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of a school review, appeal to the Board is possible.

Producing the examinations

Setting the examinations

HSC examinations are set by examination committees that usually comprise six people, including practising teachers and representatives from tertiary institutions. This year 70 committees prepared 345 different examination papers for 131 courses set in NSW.

In addition, examination papers for some small candidature languages are set by other States participating in the National Assessment Framework for Languages at Senior Secondary Level (NAFLaSSL) scheme.

Special versions of examinations are prepared for students with special needs.

Assessors

After examinations are set, each paper is assessed by practising teachers not teaching the subject that year and a representative of the syllabus advisory committee. The assessor checks whether the paper is a fair and valid examination of the relevant course and attempts the actual paper to ensure its fairness to students. It is also assessed by a specialist to ensure that students with special needs are not disadvantaged.

Aural/oral and practical examinations

For each examination in most modern languages, cassette tapes are produced to test a student's aural skills. Sample tapes are prepared by examination committees and checked by assessors.

Each aural examination is then produced in a high-quality form using two readers who are native speakers of the language.

Compact discs are prepared for the Music aural exams.

Cassette tapes are produced for the Contemporary English Listening Paper. Special video tapes in sign language are prepared for hearing-impaired students studying Contemporary English.

Examinations in Industry Studies include a practical and written examination paper in Retail, Hospitality, and Metal and Engineering. A video is produced for the Retail Practical Examination.

Preparing 'the pack'

Once examination cassettes, disks and video tapes are produced and examination papers printed, compilation of 'the pack' begins. This involves packing and labelling enough cassette tapes, CDs, videos and sets of papers in each course for all students at each examination centre.

Conducting the examinations

Supervision of the examinations

The task of running each examination centre is the responsibility of a Presiding Officer (PO). The Presiding Officer is responsible for supervision throughout the examination period and is assisted by a number of supervisors.

Examination provisions for students with special needs

Special examination provisions are made for Higher School Certificate students who experience difficulty receiving examination questions or communicating acquired knowledge in an examination at a level that allows those students to complete the examination on an equal basis with all Higher School Certificate students.

Arrangements include provision of large print, coloured, and braille papers; the assistance of a writer; provision of an appropriate reader or oral interpreter; rest breaks; use of a typewriter or keyboard; provision for special furniture and lighting; and establishment of a special examination centre or separate supervision.

Applications for special examination provisions for students with disabilities were submitted to the Board of Studies from September 1997. Arrangements needed as a result of accidents or other emergencies may be applied for up to and including the examination period.

Illness/Misadventure appeals

Students who are prevented from attending an examination, or whose performance has been affected by illness or misadventure immediately before or during the examination, may apply to the Board of Studies for consideration and a possible variation to their results.

Students must notify the Presiding Officer at every examination session in which they consider their performance may have been affected. The student is responsible for lodging an appeal with the Board of Studies by 27 November 1998 except in the case of oral/aural or practical examinations, where the appeal must be lodged within one week of the date of examination. Appeals must be supported by appropriate documentary evidence.

If an appeal is upheld, in most cases a student's achievement may be measured by the use of the moderated school assessment mark for that subject. In general, appeals are not considered for courses for which no assessment is available.

Courses with practical examinations and submitted works

Some HSC subjects involve forms of examination other than written examination papers. For example, all modern languages have an oral/aural component.

Submitted artworks

Candidates in Visual Arts submit an artwork, or series of artworks, for examination that contributes 50% of the final mark for the 2 unit course, the other 50% being derived from a written examination. Artworks are produced in a wide variety of media including painting, film and video, sculpture, drawing, photography, jewellery, design and graphics. Students taking a 3 unit course may choose to submit an additional submitted artwork or an integrated visual/verbal study or undertake another written examination.

Music performance

All students of Music (Board) courses are examined in music performance. Depending on the student's choice of electives, this may contribute between 10% and 70% to the 2 Unit Course 1 total examination mark. In Music 2/3 Unit, performance is worth between 20% and 50% and in Music 3 Unit, students may specialise totally in performance. Candidates may present solo and/or ensemble performances using instruments or voice.

Classical Ballet, Dance, and Drama

Practical examinations for Classical Ballet 2/3 Unit and Dance 2 Unit were held at central metropolitan venues in August/September 1998. Performance in Classical Ballet 2 Unit contributes between 15% and 55% of the total examination mark, depending on the student's choice of electives. Performance in Dance 2 Unit contributes between 20% and 60% of the total examination mark, depending on the student's choice of electives.

Group performances and group presentations of an original devised piece of theatre in Drama 2 Unit were examined in schools throughout the metropolitan and country areas in September 1998. The group presentation is worth 35% of the total examination mark.

Design and Technology

A subject that particularly reflects the contemporary flavour of the 1998 Higher School Certificate is Design and Technology. Introduced for Year 12 students as an HSC course in 1994, Design and Technology has broadened the school approach to technology education. It can include study of areas such as computer graphics, aquaculture, textiles, desktop publishing, building and construction, manufacturing and entertainment.

Design and Technology is one of the major subjects that offers students the chance to provide a submitted work as part of their Higher School Certificate.

Industry Studies

Candidates in Industry Studies present in one of three strands — Hospitality, Metal and Engineering, or Retail. Retail students present for a practical exam based on responses to a video. Metal and Engineering and Hospitality students undertake and are examined on a practical task in the presence of two independent HSC markers.

Industrial Technology

Students entered for the course have completed practical components in either Wood, Metal, Industrial Drawing, Automotive, Electronics, Plastics or Ceramics. The practical projects are marked by itinerant markers visiting schools across the state in September.

Projects and reports

Twelve courses require candidates to submit a project or report for examination. Students select and pursue an area of interest closely related to the basic concepts of the course. For example, Design and Technology 2 Unit candidates carry out a Major Design Project, which will result in a product, a system or an environment, and a folio documenting all aspects of the project. Music (Board) students may submit scores and tapes of their original compositions and arrangements and/or an extended essay on topic(s) from the syllabus, while the Society and Culture candidates complete a Personal Interest Project based on a topic related to the fundamental concepts of the course.

Languages

In 27 language subjects, New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia and Victoria cooperate to provide one common examination for students of these languages living anywhere in Australia. This means, for example, that a student of Hindi living in Broome will do the same examination as a student living in Sydney. Each student will receive recognition for their results from their own State or Territory certification authority. This is known as the NAFLaSSL (National Assessment Framework for Languages at Senior Secondary Level) Project.

Marking of the Higher School Certificate examinations

Security

A high level of security is maintained throughout the whole of the Higher School Certificate operation.

Security procedures include allowing entry to marking centres for authorised personnel only. Security guards are employed to guard each marking centre at all times, day and night.

Employment of markers

Approximately 7,000 markers will mark the exams at 20 venues. They will be assisted by 700 clerical staff. The traditional marking centre at the RAS Showground has transferred to the new Sydney Showground and Exhibition complex at Homebush Bay. Other centres in the Sydney metropolitan area will accommodate smaller numbers of markers. All together, the Sydney-based marking operation covers approximately 73 subjects. As well as those in Sydney, marking centres will be set up in Newcastle, Wollongong, Wagga Wagga, Bathurst, Coffs Harbour and Armidale (see Country marking centres below).

Marking

A Supervisor of Marking is appointed to coordinate the marking of each subject. Supervisors of Marking ensure that markers are fully briefed at the beginning of the marking session.

The majority of HSC papers are marked by groups of markers, marking together in centres established by the Board of Studies.

Reliability control measures

Generally, questions that require free-response answers (eg essays) will be double marked. For example, all questions in subjects such as English and General Studies will be marked by two examiners. In the case of significant discrepancy between the marks awarded by these two examiners, additional independent marking is undertaken. Since different examiners are assigned to mark the various questions in the papers, in some subjects up to 10 different examiners are likely to mark a student's paper.

Questions or parts of papers where students are given detailed guidance as to the structure and nature of the answer required, and where the range of responses can be specified, will be marked by one examiner supported by a range of additional checks.

Where single marking is used, additional checking procedures are employed throughout the marking process. Where appropriate, these will include daily statistical checks.

Country marking centres

This year, a new marking centre will operate in Armidale for Contemporary English 2 Unit (Listening).

Bathurst, Wagga Wagga, Newcastle, Wollongong and Coffs Harbour will have marking centres again this year. The Reading question from English 2/3 Unit will be marked at Wagga Wagga. The Newcastle centre markers will mark General English 2 Unit (Topic Areas), Biology, Engineering Science, Mathematics and Business Studies, and the Wollongong centre will mark Reading and Writing from Contemporary English 2 Unit as well as General Science. The Coffs Harbour centre will mark General English 2 Unit (Reading) and the Bathurst centre will mark English 2/3 Unit (Shakespeare) and Agriculture 2 Unit.

Day marking

The introduction of day marking has given teachers who would not normally have ready access to evening marking the opportunity to gain significant professional development in their subject.

The day marking initiative will continue in 1998 with the establishment of day marking centres in the following metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas:

Metropolitan Sydney Area

Subject	Venue
Economics	Sydney Showground, Homebush Bay
Modern History 2/3 Unit	Sydney Showground, Homebush Bay
Modern History People and Events	Glenfield Park
Personal Development, Health and Physical Education	Sydney Showground, Homebush Bay
Physics	Sydney Showground, Homebush Bay

Regional Areas

Subject	Venue
Agriculture 2/3 Unit Sections 1 & 2	Bathurst
English 2 Unit Contemporary Listening	Armidale
English 2 Unit General Reading	Coffs Harbour
English 2/3 Unit Reading	Wagga Wagga
English 2/3 Unit Shakespeare	Bathurst

Results

Students will be able to access their 1998 Higher School Certificate results on Saturday, 2 January 1999 via the Internet and an automated phone service (see page 11). Students will still receive their results by mail, through Australia Post, on Tuesday, 5 January 1999.

All students who satisfactorily complete at least one HSC course will receive a Record of Achievement listing courses and results.

Those who have not followed the required HSC study program will receive a Higher School Certificate Record of Achievement but not a Higher School Certificate. Self-tuition students will receive only a Result Notice, which lists their results in each examination.

On the back of the HSC Record of Achievement is an explanation of the way in which the Board determines the marks and percentile bands for each course.

All students will receive an application form for a clerical processing recheck. There is no provision for re-marking of papers, but a clerical recheck ensures that all answers have been marked, and that marks have been correctly allocated and computed.

The Universities Admissions Centre will send students separate advice of their Universities Admission Index (UAI) at the same time as the Board sends out students' HSC results. The UAI is confidential and will only be known by the student, UAC and the universities to which the student applied.

Reporting of results in Board Developed Courses

Students' results in the various Board courses are reported by a scaled examination mark, a moderated school assessment mark and a percentile band that shows each student's relative position in that course.

Students who are absent from an examination for which they are entered, and who do not have an Illness/Misadventure appeal upheld, will receive neither an examination mark nor a moderated assessment for the paper concerned.

Scaled examination marks for Board Developed Courses

In all 2 unit courses the scaled examination mark is out of 100, with the median mark for all students set at 60. The pattern of marks in large candidature 2 unit courses (except English 2 Unit Related) will be such that:

- 1–2% of candidates will be awarded marks of 90 or more;
- approximately 25% of candidates will be awarded marks of 70 or more;
- no less than 50% of candidates will be awarded marks of 60 or more;
- no less than 75% of candidates will be awarded marks of 50 or more;
- no more than 5% of candidates will be awarded marks of less than 30.

Variations of this pattern of marks will occur for students doing 1 unit, 3 unit and 4 unit courses. These variations will be explained in detail in the literature accompanying the Certificate or Result Notice.

In this context there is no 'pass mark'. The current HSC is not designed to indicate the concept of passing or failing.

Reporting of results in Board Endorsed Courses

These courses are not examined by the Board and results are reported in terms of assessment marks submitted by schools and colleges. These marks are not moderated and cannot be compared with marks awarded in similar courses at other schools or for Board Developed Courses. Board Endorsed Courses have the symbol *** in the space designated for the examination mark.

Joint Secondary Schools/TAFE courses that are Board Endorsed Courses will also be reported as being either satisfactorily or unsatisfactorily completed.

Dual-accredited vocational HSC courses

In Industry Studies 2 Unit and vocational Content Endorsed Courses, a student log provides specific information on modules successfully completed for the course.

Students who successfully complete the Industry Studies 2 Unit course or a 240-hour vocational Content Endorsed Course will receive a Certificate issued by the Board of Studies under authorisation from the Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB). Students who successfully complete modules that total less than 240 hours will receive Statement(s) of Attainment issued by the Board of Studies under authorisation from VETAB.

Result Notice

Result Notices are issued to students who are not enrolled at an accredited school or a school recognised by the Board. Such students cannot receive either a Record of Achievement or a Higher School Certificate testamur. The Result Notice is a cumulative record, which will list the courses satisfactorily completed and the results achieved.

The Universities Admission Index (UAI)

The UAI is calculated from the scaled aggregate of the marks in the best ten units of Board-developed HSC courses, subject to the following restrictions:

- at least one unit of English must be included;
- at least one unit from each Key Learning Area Group (KLA Group 1 – Science/Mathematics/Technological and Applied Studies; KLA Group 2 – Languages Other Than English/Human Society and Its Environment/Creative Arts/Personal Development, Health and Physical Education) must be included;
- at most, two units of Category B courses may be included in the calculation of the UAI.

The UAI may include units accumulated by a candidate over a period of up to five years. Board Endorsed Courses do not count towards the UAI.

The Universities Admission Index, calculated by universities, is a number reported on a scale of 0 to 100 with intervals of 0.05.

The scaling process used to calculate the UAI enables marks obtained in different courses to be added together for tertiary entrance purposes. It is not valid to add the marks from the Board's Record of Achievement in an attempt to approximate a UAI, as doing so takes no account of the comparative difference between candidates in different courses.

It should also be stressed that the UAI is a rank or position, not a mark.

The UAI shows where a student stands in relation to his/her cohort in the state. Students on the top rank will receive a UAI of 100.

Students will only receive a UAI if they have requested it on their HSC entry form. Their HSC results are forwarded to the Universities Admissions Centre, which will then send students their UAI results at around the same time as the Board of Studies sends out HSC results.

Students will receive advice of their UAI from the Universities Admissions Centre (UAC) in a separate envelope from their HSC examination results.

A student's UAI is confidential and will only be known by the student, UAC and the universities to which the student applies.

The Higher School Certificate Curriculum

The Higher School Certificate Curriculum

The Higher School Certificate study program

To qualify for the 1998 Higher School Certificate, students must study a pattern of Preliminary and HSC courses. Both patterns must comprise at least 11 units of study including:

- at least two units of English
- at least one unit from Key Learning Area Group 1 (Science/Mathematics/Technological and Applied Studies [TAS])
- at least one unit from Key Learning Area Group 2 (Languages Other Than English [LOTE]/Human Society and Its Environment [HSIE]/Personal Development, Health and Physical Education [PDHPE]/Creative Arts)
- at least 6 units of Board Developed Courses.

Students may undertake a combination of Board Developed and Board Endorsed Courses to make up the 11 required units for both the Preliminary and Higher School Certificate patterns. However, at least six of these units must be Board Developed Courses for the students to be eligible for the award of the Higher School Certificate.

Types of courses

The Preliminary and HSC courses fall into a number of categories.

Board Developed Courses

These are courses that are set and externally examined by the Board of Studies, eg English, Mathematics, Biology, Computing Studies and Visual Arts. These courses may contribute to the calculation of a Universities Admission Index (UAI).

Board Endorsed Courses

These include courses that may be developed by schools or colleges of TAFE.

Board Endorsed Courses contribute to the HSC program of study but do not contribute to the calculation of the UAI.

Board Endorsed Courses fall into two categories:

Content Endorsed Courses

Content Endorsed Courses (CECs) were introduced in 1985. They are developed by the Board of Studies from exemplary school-designed courses for statewide implementation.

Currently there are 17 non-vocational CECs:

Drama and Theatre	Religion Studies
Practical Writing Skills	Skills for Living
Ceramics	Horticulture
Computing Applications	History for Leisure
Environmental Studies	Studies in Dance
Exploring Early Childhood	Mass Media Studies
Marine Studies	Sport, Lifestyle and Recreation Studies
Photography	Work Studies
Visual Design	

School-designed Board Endorsed Courses

Board Endorsed Courses are designed by schools to meet the particular needs of their students and to extend the range of courses offered. These courses must be endorsed by the Board of Studies for inclusion in an HSC program of study. The flexibility that this gives to schools means that local resources and personnel can be used most effectively to the advantage of students.

A variety of school-designed Board Endorsed Courses is available for HSC candidates in 1998. Popular areas of study include:

Studies of Religion	Human Movement
Sports Science	Special Education

Generally, there are two broad requirements for the endorsement of a school-designed BEC:

- (i) the course must offer subject matter for study that does not duplicate an existing Board Developed or Content Endorsed Course;
- (ii) the course must meet the Board's requirements for the course aim and objectives, content and assessment of student achievement. These courses must be as challenging as Board Developed Courses of equivalent unit value and duration. Schools must complete a course evaluation as a condition of endorsement. Non-vocational BECs are endorsed for a maximum of four years.

There are also additional requirements for school-designed vocational BECs.

Dual-accredited vocational HSC courses

These courses may be Board Developed, Content Endorsed or school-designed Board Endorsed Courses. They contribute to the Higher School Certificate and can be either 1 or 2 units. The courses have the following features:

- they are dual-accredited; that is, accredited by the Board of Studies for HSC purposes and the Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) for industry purposes;
- they are written and assessed in competency-based terms;
- they are arranged in a modular structure and are based on national training curriculum where available;
- successful completion of modules allows advanced standing into TAFE and a range of traineeships and apprenticeships;
- students can be taught in a variety of settings, including schools, TAFE, private training organisations and industry;
- in addition to their Higher School Certificate and Records of Achievements, students receive a Vocational Certificate or Statement of Attainment for school-delivered courses and a TAFE transcript of results for JSSTAFE courses.

School-delivered vocational courses

Industry Studies is the only Board Developed, school-delivered vocational course. Students choose one of three strands; Metals and Engineering, Hospitality or Retail. Industry Studies is externally examined and may contribute to the calculation of the UAI.

The dual-accredited vocational Content Endorsed Courses (CECs) available for delivery by schools are:

- Hospitality
- Retail
- Office Skills
- Rural Industries
- Building and Construction
- Furnishing
- Electronics.

Industry Studies and the vocational Content Endorsed Courses include a mandatory workplace learning component.

Vocational Content Endorsed Courses and vocational Board Endorsed Courses contribute to the HSC but not to the UAI.

TAFE delivered (JSSTAFE) dual-accredited vocational courses

There are a wide range of JSSTAFE courses. JSSTAFE courses may be Board Developed, Content Endorsed or Board Endorsed. There are three Board Developed JSSTAFEs:

- Accounting
- Electronics Technology
- Tourism Sector Services.

Only one of these courses may count towards the UAI.

There are a wide range of Content Endorsed JSSTAFE Courses. The most popular areas include Office Studies, Hospitality, Automotive, and Building and Construction.

Distinction Courses

Distinction Courses are high-level HSC courses delivered by universities through distance education. The courses consist of 2 units of study, which are additional to the required 11 units of HSC study but can be counted towards the calculation of the UAI. In 1998 three Distinction Courses were offered — Cosmology, Comparative Literature and Philosophy.

Units of study

Most subject areas have a number of courses that are divided into units of study. The number of units is based on the amount of indicative school time spent studying the course.

Most Board Developed Courses are 2 unit, two-year courses and most have a 3 unit additional HSC course of study. Mathematics and Science both have a 4 unit additional course. Others, such as General Studies and Applied Studies, can only be studied as 1 unit courses.

Each unit requires approximately 60 hours of classroom study per year. Therefore, a student taking Science 4 Unit for Preliminary and HSC courses could expect to study that course for approximately 240 hours each year.

The higher unit values allow students with special aptitude for, or interest in, a particular course to study the content more deeply and pursue more of the available options.

There are three kinds of 2 unit Board Developed Courses:

- 2 unit courses that lead to a 3 unit course in the subject
- 2 unit courses that do **not** lead to a 3 unit course in the subject
- 2 unit Z courses in Languages Other Than English, designed for students who begin study of the language for the Higher School Certificate.

3 unit courses incorporate all of a 2 unit course and, in the required additional timetabled school study, provide a deeper and more extensive treatment of the subject. Students in 3 unit courses sit for the examination for the 2 unit course (and any other submitted work required) and then will prepare for an additional examination and/or submitted works.

3 and 4 unit courses in Mathematics and Science

Mathematics 3 Unit is a course of study that incorporates all of the 2 unit course and would generally require 180 hours of timetabled school time in each of the Preliminary and Higher School Certificate courses.

Science 3 Unit is interdisciplinary and contains some Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Geology. It requires 180 hours of timetabled school time in each of the Preliminary and Higher School Certificate components.

Mathematics 4 Unit incorporates all of the 3 unit course and would require approximately 180 hours of timetabled school time for the Preliminary component followed by 240 hours for the Higher School Certificate component.

Science 4 Unit requires 240 hours of timetabled school time for each of the Preliminary and Higher School Certificate courses.

NAFLaSSL

The National Assessment Framework for Languages at Senior Secondary Level (NAFLaSSL) is a joint venture by the States to provide a common syllabus and assessment scheme for 27 of the small candidature languages. Each participating State assumes responsibility for certain languages and writes the syllabuses, and sets and marks the examination papers that are used in all States.

Prescribed texts and works

For many subjects in the 1998 HSC there are prescribed texts, topics, projects and works that students will have studied specifically for the examination. These texts and topics were determined at least two years in advance of their inclusion to ensure that schools were able to plan ahead. 1998 HSC course prescriptions and other important information are set out in detail in the eight *Key Learning Area Handbooks*.

The Board of Studies NSW

The Board of Studies NSW, established by the *Education Reform Act 1990*, is responsible for the Higher School Certificate and the School Certificate, curriculum development, and registration and accreditation of non-government schools.

Board members

The membership of the Board includes a full-time President and three ex-officio members, with the remaining 19 members being appointed by the Minister for Education and Training as nominees of particular organisations or persons with identified knowledge or expertise.

The current President of the Board of Studies, Professor Gordon Stanley, was appointed on 23 March 1998.

Board Members

Representing

Professor Gordon Stanley
President

Dr Jim McMorrow
Ms Jozefa Sobski
Mr Trevor Wootten

Three persons nominated by the
Director-General of Education and
Training

Professor Robert Castle

Nominee of the New South Wales
Vice-Chancellors' Committee

Mr Ian Morris
(representing parents of primary
school children)

Nominees of the Council of the
Federation of Parents and Citizens
Associations of New South Wales

and

Ms Dianne Butland
(representing parents of
secondary school children)

Dr Brian Croke

Nominee of the Catholic Education
Commission of New South Wales

Mrs Jolyn Karaolis

Nominee of the Association of
Independent Schools, the
Headmasters' Conference and the
Association of Heads of
Independent Girls Schools

Ms Sandra White

Non-government school teacher
being a nominee of the NSW
Independent Education Union

Ms Caroline Benedet

Parent of a child attending a non-government school, being a nominee of the Council of Catholic School Parents and the New South Wales Parents Council

Ms Adele Mazoudier
(representing primary schools)
and
Ms Judith King
(representing secondary schools)

Principals of government schools, one being a nominee of the New South Wales Council of Primary School Principals and the other being a nominee of the New South Wales Council of Secondary School Principals

Ms Kathy Deacon
(primary school teacher)
and
Ms Mary Fogarty
(secondary school teacher)

Nominees of the New South Wales Teachers Federation, one being a government primary school teacher (other than a principal) and the other being a government secondary school teacher (other than a principal)

Dr Sue Dockett

Person with knowledge and expertise in early childhood education

Mr Charles Davison

Aboriginal person with knowledge and expertise in the education of Aboriginal people

Dr Anne Benjamin
Ms Dorothy Hoddinott
Dr Gregory Hotchkis OAM
Mr Stepan Kerkyasharian AM
Dame Leonie Kramer AC
Ms Dagmar Schmidmaier

Six other persons having, in the Minister's opinion, qualifications or experience that enables them to make a valuable contribution to primary or secondary education in New South Wales

In relation to the Higher School Certificate, the Board is responsible for:

- developing and endorsing courses of study;
- making arrangements for conducting examinations and student assessments;
- regulating the conduct of examinations and assessments, and the recording of students' achievements in them;
- granting the Higher School Certificate;
- providing the Preliminary and HSC Records of Achievement and/or Result Notices;
- providing advice and assistance to students, employers and the public regarding the nature and content of secondary courses, assessment and examination procedures, and the reporting of students' achievements in them.

The Board has a number of standing committees that make recommendations to the Board concerning syllabus and examination requirements.

Staff of the Office of the Board of Studies

The staff of the Office of the Board of Studies involved with the Higher School Certificate provide administrative, technical and professional support in the following areas:

- designing Higher School Certificate courses;
- preparing Higher School Certificate examination papers;
- planning, conducting, marking and processing Higher School Certificate examinations;
- processing student assessments;
- issuing the certificate, Records of Achievement and/or Result Notices;
- conducting statistical analyses;
- facilitating and coordinating the HSC Advice Line;
- setting up the Higher School Certificate Examination Inquiry Centre;
- advising schools of Board policy and procedures directly and through Board Liaison Officers;
- communicating information about the Higher School Certificate to school students, parents and the community;
- developing high-profile exhibitions to demonstrate students' achievements and excellence at HSC level.

Staff of the Office of the Board of Studies also provide similar support to the committees of the Board that deal with the School Certificate.

Board of Studies Liaison Officers

The Board of Studies has ten Board Liaison Officers (BOSLOs) located across the State.

A Board of Studies Liaison Officer is:

- the Board's representative who works closely with government and non-government schools;
- the immediate contact person within a region for any enquiries from interested parties on Board-related matters;
- a communications link between the Board and schools;
- available to assist schools in design, implementation and evaluation of their assessment programs;
- the coordinator of Board Endorsed Courses and Joint Secondary Schools/TAFE programs within the region;
- a member of the Higher School Certificate Illness/Misadventure Appeals Review Panel;
- involved in the Higher School Certificate Examination Inquiry Centres to assist students with interpretation of their Higher School Certificate results.

The Board of Studies Liaison Officer may assist with:

- statistics on course entries for the region;
- factual information concerning the Higher School Certificate such as the Higher School Certificate examination timetables, HSC eligibility and course requirements;
- school liaison (in consultation with government and non-government school systems).

Board of Studies Liaison Officers are:

Metropolitan North
Ms Sandy Langford
(02) 9367 8356

Metropolitan West
Mr Brett Harper
(02) 9683 9637

Hunter
Ms Jennifer Moody
(02) 4924 9967

North West
Ms Beverley Hobson
(02) 6768 5843

Riverina
Mr Michael Lee
(02) 6921 0989

Metropolitan East
Ms Denise Harris
(02) 9568 8218

Metropolitan North West
Mr David Cashman (acting)
(02) 9683 9642

North Coast
Ms Robyn Hawkshaw
(02) 6659 3274

Western
Mr Greg Simpson
(02) 6333 4299

South Coast
Mr Col Anderson
(02) 4226 8607