

# THE HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

MAKING CHOICES – THE HSC EXPLAINED – BOOK 1

2020

# STAGE 6 – YEAR 11 & 12 CURRICULUM INFORMATION

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**DISCLAIMER: Information current at time of printing**

This booklet is designed to help students and their caregivers/supervisors enrolling in Stage 6 to:

- (a) Understand the curriculum structure in Stage 6.
- (b) Understand the requirements for the Higher School Certificate as set by NESA (NSW Education Standards Authority) and the Department of Education.
- (c) Make subject selections suitable to a student's needs and abilities.

**This booklet needs to be read in conjunction  
with the HSC Course Descriptions (Book 2)**

The School of Distance Education management ask that The High School Certificate Making Choices Book 1 and The Higher School Certificate Course Description Book 2 be filed by Home Supervisors. Reference to this curriculum information will be necessary when students complete Year 11 and begin Year 12. Students may need to modify courses at this time

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# Common Terms and Meanings

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## **NESA**

National Education Standards Authority

## **ATAR**

Australian Tertiary Admission Rank

## **UAC**

University Admissions Centre (NSW, ACT).

## **BOARD DEVELOPED COURSES (BDC)**

Written by NESA, contributes to ATAR.

## **BOARD ENDORSED COURSES (BEC)**

There are two main types of Board Endorsed Courses, Content Endorsed Courses and School Designed Courses.

## **CONTENT ENDORSED COURSES (CEC)**

Content Endorsed Courses have syllabuses endorsed by NESA to cater for areas of special interest not covered in the Board Developed Courses. Applied Mathematics is an example of a CEC. Most HSC courses delivered by TAFE are Content Endorsed Courses. Some Board Endorsed Courses are one-year courses.

## **SCHOOL DESIGNED COURSES (SDBEC)**

A School Developed Board Endorsed Course (SDBEC) is any course not developed by NESA that is submitted to NESA for endorsement in Stage 5 or in Stage 6

## **VET**

Vocational Education and Training

## **RTO**

Registered Training Organisation

## **RoSA**

Record of School Achievement



# What Types of Courses can I Select?

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There are different types of courses that you can select in Years 11 and 12.

## Board Developed Courses

These courses are developed by NESA. NESA provides the following information for each course:

- A syllabus containing the course objectives, structure, content and outcomes, as well as specific course requirements
- Assessment and reporting documentation
- Sample examination papers and marking guidelines
- Performance band descriptions and the common grade scale (except for Vocational Education and Training Courses)

All students entered for the HSC who are studying these courses follow the NESA requirements. Most of these courses are examined externally at the end of the HSC course and can count towards the calculation of the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

## Board Endorsed Courses

There are two main types of Board Endorsed Courses – Content Endorsed Courses and School Designed Courses.

- Content Endorsed Courses (CEC) have syllabuses endorsed by NESA to cater for areas of special interest not covered in the Board Developed Courses.
- Schools may also design special courses to meet student needs (SDBEC). These courses must be approved by NESA. Once approval is granted, schools offer selected courses to senior students as part of the Higher School Certificate.

Some Board Endorsed Courses are one-year courses.

There is no external examination for any Content Endorsed Course or School Designed Course, and these courses do not count toward an ATAR.

All subjects studied for the HSC will appear on the HSC Record of Achievement.

## Category A & B Subjects

Board Developed Courses that have a formal examination are classified as Category A or B courses.

### Category A

These courses have more academic rigor, depth of knowledge and understanding and also contribute to assumed knowledge for tertiary studies.

### Category B

These courses are fewer in number and are less academically rigorous. English Studies and Mathematics Standard 1 are Category B courses. You are allowed to include up to 2 units of Category B courses in the calculation of the ATAR.



## Life Skills Courses as Part of a Special Program Of Study

Stage 6 (Years 11 and 12) Life Skills courses will be available for students following a Special Program of Study for the Higher School Certificate.

Students accessing a Special Program of Study in Stage 6 will, usually have completed Life Skills courses within a Special Program of Study in Stage 5 (Years 9 and 10). Further, participation in a Special Program of Study will be based upon an individual transition-planning process, which will occur for both Year 11 and Year 12

Life Skills courses will have Board Developed status and can be used in place of other Board Developed Courses to meet requirements for the award of the Higher School Certificate. Each Life Skills course comprises a 2 unit Year 11 course and a 2 unit Year 12 course.

**Please call the school if you believe you fit the requirements to study Life Skills.**



# HSC Minimum Standard

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## What are the HSC Minimum Standards?

NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) has implemented the HSC minimum standards to help ensure that students have the key literacy and numeracy skills for life after school. Students in New South Wales will need to demonstrate a minimum standard of literacy and numeracy to receive the HSC testamur from 2020. The HSC minimum standards are set at level 3 of the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF). These skills are essential for everyday tasks and learning after school such as writing a letter for a job application or understanding a mobile phone plan. The standards are assessed through online tests which are 45 minutes long and include a multiple choice reading test, a multiple choice numeracy test and a short writing test based on choice between a visual or written prompt. Students who do not meet the HSC minimum standards can still:

- Sit the HSC exams
- Receive an ATAR for University applications
- Receive a RoSA
- Receive a HSC minimum standard report

Students do not need to achieve the minimum standard to choose a subject they will study in stage 5 or 6.

**Practise tests** are available for students to sit to help them become familiar with the online test structure and for schools to help determine student readiness to meet the minimum standards.

Students will have two opportunities per year to sit the minimum standards online tests in each area of Reading, Numeracy and Writing, in Year 10, 11 and 12. Students will also have up to 5 years from the time they start the HSC courses to sit the minimum standards online tests. The tests must be administered by schools via a lockdown browser.

**Disability provisions and exemptions:** Students with additional learning needs may be eligible for extra provisions for the minimum standards online tests or be exempt from meeting the HSC minimum standards in order to receive their HSC. Students taking four or more Life Skills courses can be exempt from meeting the HSC minimum standard. Students studying Life Skills English will be exempt from the Reading and Writing minimum standards test. Students studying Life Skills mathematics will be exempt from the Numeracy minimum standard test.

Further Information NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA)

<https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/hsc/hsc-minimum-standards>





# What are Units?

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All courses offered for the Higher School Certificate have a unit value. Subjects may have a value of 1 unit or 2 units. Most courses are 2 unit.

Each unit involves class time of approximately 2 hours per week (60 hours per year). In the HSC, each unit has a value of 50 marks. Hence, a 2 unit course has a value of 100 marks.

2 units                           ⇒   4 hours per week (120 hours per year)  
  ⇒   100 marks

The following is a guideline to help you understand the pattern of courses.

**2 Unit Course**                   ⇒   This is the basic structure for all courses. It has a value of 100 marks.

**Extension Course**           ⇒   Extension study is available in a number of subjects.  
  
  Extension courses build on the content of the 2 unit course and carry an additional value of 1 unit. Requiring students to work beyond the standard of the 2 unit course.  
  
  ⇒   English and Mathematics Extension Courses are available at Year 11 and Year 12 levels. Students must study the Year 11 extension course in these subjects before proceeding to the Year 12 extension courses (Extension 1 and Extension 2). The Extension 2 course requires students to work beyond the standard of the Extension 1 course.  
  
  ⇒   Year 12 extension courses in subjects other than English and Mathematics are offered and examined in Year 12 only.

**1 Unit Course**               ⇒   1 unit equals approximately 2 hours of class time each week or 60 hours per year.  
  
  ⇒   There are a number of 1 unit Board Endorsed Courses. These courses do not count in the ATAR.



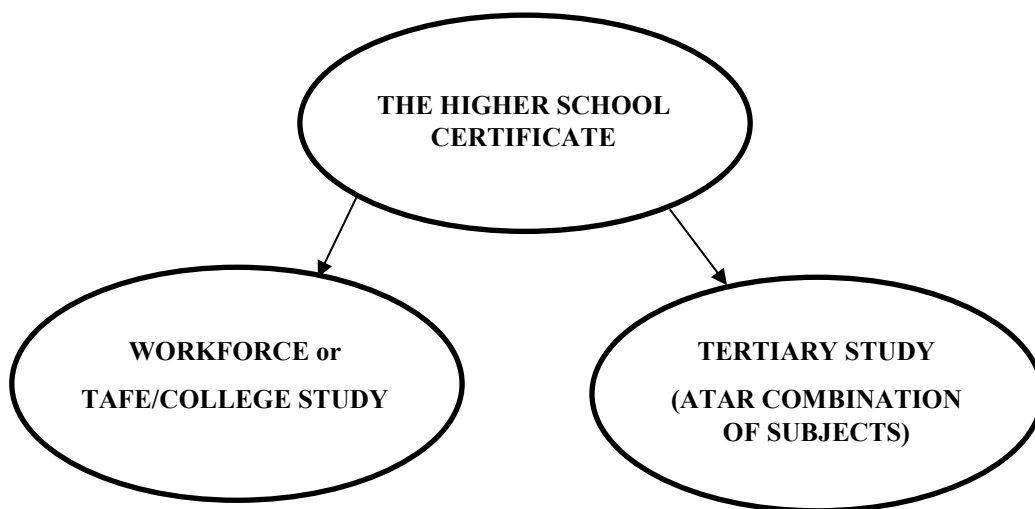
# Guidelines for the Selection of Subjects

## Why Subject Choice is Important

In making a decision about the type of subjects a student wishes to study in the senior years, there are many considerations that need to be addressed. The first step in making this process simpler is for the student, and their parent, to look beyond Year 12 and to examine the type of career that they wish to consider and the associated training that may be necessary.

At the end of Year 12, the student will either apply for entry at a University, or follow a vocation/career that places them in the workforce while completing further training, usually through a Registered Training Organisation such as TAFE.

This basically sets two types of directions towards the HSC that students can consider



## Points to Seriously Consider Before Choosing Subjects

- Students studying for the Higher School Certificate with the aim of gaining employment and/or entry into a course developed by an RTO may make their selection of courses from a range of Board Developed, or Board Endorsed Courses.
- You must study a minimum of 12 units in the Year 11 course and a minimum of 10 units in the Year 12 course. Both the Year 11 course and the Year 12 course must include the following:
  - at least 6 units from Board Developed Courses including at least 2 units of a Board Developed Course in English which must be studied for 2 years
  - at least three courses of 2 units value or greater
  - at least four subjects (including English)
  - a maximum of 6 units of science in Year 11 and a maximum of 7 units of science in Year 12.
- Students studying for the Higher School Certificate with the aim of gaining entry to a University must choose at least 10 units from Board Developed Courses.
- Not every Higher School Certificate student is capable of gaining entry to university and not every student studying for the Higher School Certificate wants to go on to university.



- Entry to non university institutions, for example a College or TAFE, is not based on a student's Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) as it is for university. Each RTO course has a minimum educational level requirement (eg Year 10 or Year 12) and some courses have individual selection processes, but the gaining of a certain ATAR is **NOT** part of that process. Students undertaking further study through an RTO after Year 12 may, on successful completion of that course, be able to apply to university for credit for their studies towards a university degree.
- Students planning to enter the workforce directly after they leave Year 12, need to consider planning a course of study aimed at impressing a prospective employer. This often means being able to demonstrate consistent effort and success in a student's Higher School Certificate studies generally, rather than displaying poor results in courses taken at inappropriate levels.

## Who Can Help With Subject Choice?

- Faculty Head Teachers  
Can advise on levels, course content and course requirements in terms of exams, assessments and practical work.
- Deputy Principal
- Head Teachers Secondary Studies
- Teachers will provide advice on pattern of study, information on school developed courses and general curriculum enquiries.
- If parents need more information, they can contact the school and arrange an appointment with a relevant Head Teacher.



# Requirements for the Award of The Higher School Certificate

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If you wish to be awarded the HSC:

- You must study a minimum of 12 units in the Year 11 course.
- You must study a minimum of 10 units in the Year 12 course.
- Both the Year 11 and the Year 12 course must include the following:
  - at least 6 units from Board Developed Courses including at least 2 units of a Board Developed Course in English which must be studied for 2 years
  - at least three courses of 2 units value or greater
  - at least four subjects (including English)
  - a maximum of 6 units of science in Year 11 and a maximum of 7 units of science in Year 12
  - meet the HSC minimum standards in numeracy and literacy

Special course requirements relate to some subjects.

Read information in Course Descriptions (Book 2).

- Enrolment in Year 11 and Year 12 is contingent upon the completion of “HSC – All my own work”. This should be completed during Year 10.

**Note:** It is a Department of Education requirement that Stage 6 students must complete the mandatory 25 hour Crossroads (Life Ready) course.



## Choice 1 – Tertiary Study (University)

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To obtain tertiary entry, combine subjects that allow the student to qualify for an ATAR, as well as study courses that focus upon a future profession.

- Particular school subjects are often recommended for studying certain courses. These subjects are called “assumed knowledge”.
- Students need to check with the Institution and/or the universities they intend studying with to check for
  - Assumed Knowledge for University entry
  - Courses available at University and TAFE
- UAC has a great deal of information on university and assumed knowledge on their website [www.uac.edu.au](http://www.uac.edu.au).

### If an ATAR Score is Required

- You must successfully complete a minimum of 12 units in Year 11
- Complete courses that meet the pattern of study required by NESA for the award of the Higher School Certificate.
- Complete practical, oral or project works required for specific courses and the assessment requirements for each course.
- You must study a minimum of 10 units in the Year 12 course. This can include 2 units of a Category B course.
- at least three Board Developed Courses of 2 units value or greater (ie 6 units)
- at least four subjects
- Board Endorsed Courses should not be studied as part of the minimum 10 units but can be taken as extra units.
- Only one Category B subject will be counted as a course if an ATAR is required. Category B subjects include: VET, English Studies, or Mathematics Standard 1.

### If an ATAR Score is Not Required

- You must study a minimum of 12 units in the Year 11 course.
- A minimum of 10 units in the Year 12 course.
- 6 units required for Year 11 must be chosen from Board Developed Courses (BDC) (which include 2 units of English) and VET courses (VET).
- The remaining 6 units can be chosen from Board Developed Courses (BDC), and Board Endorsed Courses (BEC).



## Choice 2 – Workforce

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This direction considers the combination of subjects that gives the student experience in work related situations as well as courses that allow credit transfer to Registered Training organisation. Generally, an ATAR is not gained by the student with such combinations.

- The subjects you choose in Stage 6 may help you determine the career direction you take.
- Consider taking subjects may give you accreditation towards a Vocational Certificate, or even credit transfer from school courses towards a vocational course. (VET courses offer accreditation that may transfer to other RTO's).
- Choose:
  - 2 Units of English
  - 2 Units of Mathematics (highly recommended)

### Pathways Option

An option for students enrolling in the following categories:

**Medical, Vocationally Talented, Young Parent, Additional Learning and Support Needs.**

The HSC Certificate can be achieved following a Pathways option. Students can take up to five years to complete Stage 6.

The Head Teacher Secondary Studies or Deputy Principal will advise students and Supervisors of the best pattern of study to follow, if greater time is required to achieve a HSC credential.

You **MUST** contact the school if you require information on the Pathways option.

### School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBATs)

School based apprenticeships and traineeships allow senior high school students to commence an apprenticeship or complete a traineeship while at school. School based apprentices work part-time and undertake the first stage of their apprenticeship training before the end of the HSC year. School based trainees work part-time and complete their traineeship by the end of their HSC year.

Both the on-the-job and off-the-job training undertaken by school based apprentices/trainees can contribute to their HSC. School based apprentices should commence full-time employment as a 2nd year apprentice from January after their HSC, providing that they have successfully completed both their on-the-job and off-the-job training program during their senior high school years.

For further information visit <http://www.sbatinnsw.info/>



# HSC Board Developed Courses

(available to distance education students)

Book 2 provides information on all courses offered for HSC

(See course notes following this table for explanation of symbols)

Subject	Courses (2 Unit)	Year 11 Extension Courses (1 Unit)	Year 12 Courses (1 Unit)
Aboriginal Studies	Aboriginal Studies		
Agriculture	Agriculture		
Ancient History	Ancient History		
Biology	Biology		
Business Studies	Business Studies		
Chemistry	Chemistry		
Community and Family Studies	Community & Family Studies		
Dance	Dance		
Design and Technology	Design and Technology		
Earth and Environmental Science	Earth & Environmental Science		
Economics	Economics		
Engineering Studies	Engineering Studies		
English <sup>1</sup>	English Standard English Advanced English Studies English EAL/D	English Extension	English Extension 1 English Extension 2
Food Technology	Food Technology		
Geography	Geography		
Industrial Technology	Graphics Multimedia		
Information Processes and Technology	Information Processes & Technology		
Investigating Science	Investigating Science		
Languages	<b>Please see next table</b>		
Legal Studies	Legal Studies		
Mathematics <sup>1</sup>	Mathematics Standard 1 <sup>2</sup>	Mathematics Extension 1	Mathematics Extension 1 Mathematics Extension 2



Subject	Courses (2 Unit)	Year 11 Extension Courses (1 Unit)	Year 12 Courses (1 Unit)
	Mathematics Standard 2 <sup>2</sup> Mathematics		
Modern History	Modern History		
Music <sup>3</sup>	Music 1 Music 2		Music Extension
PD/Health/PE	PD/Health/PE		
Physics	Physics		
Society and Culture	Society and Culture		
Software Design & Development	Software Design & Development		
Studies of Religion	Studies of Religion 1 Studies of Religion 2		
Textiles and Design	Textiles & Design		
Visual Arts	Visual Arts		
<b>Languages</b>			
French <sup>1</sup>	French Beginners French Continuers		
German <sup>1</sup>	German Beginners German Continuers		
Italian <sup>1</sup>	Italian Beginners Italian Continuers		
Japanese <sup>1</sup>	Japanese Beginners Japanese Continuers		

## Year 12 Course Notes

These notes and footnotes (1–3) refer to the list of courses

1. You may select one course only from each of these subject groups.
2. In Year 12 students choose between Mathematics Standard 1 and Mathematics Standard 2.
3. You must study Music Course 2 if you wish to study Year 12 Extension Music.
4. Additional information about courses and the HSC is available on the

NSW Education Standards Authority Website: <http://www.educationalstandards.nsw.edu.au>

A number of subjects include a requirement for the development of project work for either internal or external assessment. For example, Visual Arts, Drama, Design and Technology, Textiles & Design, Industrial Technology and Society and Culture. Projects developed for assessment in one subject are not to be used either in full or in part for assessment in any other subject.





## Board Endorsed Courses

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### Content Endorsed Courses

Computing Applications – cannot be studied with any other computing course

Exploring Early Childhood

Financial Management

Lifestyle Studies

Photography, Video and Digital Imaging

Sport Lifestyle & Recreation

Visual Design

Work Studies

Exclusions applying to Content Endorsed Courses are listed in the course descriptions in Part 2 of this booklet with the relevant Board Endorsed Course description.



## What do you get at the end?

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Eligible students who leave school before receiving their Higher School Certificate (HSC) will receive the NSW Record of School Achievement (RoSA).

The RoSA is a **cumulative credential** in that it allows students to accumulate their academic results until they leave school.

Higher School Certificate (Year 12) credentials issued to eligible students upon completing their HSC include

- Higher School Certificate testamur
- Higher School Certificate Record of Achievement



# HSC Assessment and Reporting

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- The syllabuses, along with assessment and examination information and a performance scale that will be used to describe your level of achievement and give a clear idea of the standards that are expected is available from the NESA website.
- School-based assessment tasks will contribute to 50% of your HSC mark. Your school assessment mark will be based on your performance in assessment tasks you have undertaken during the course.
- The other 50% will come from the HSC examination.
- Your HSC mark for 2 unit courses will be reported on a scale of 0 to 100. A mark of 50 will represent the minimum standard expected. If you achieve the minimum standard expected in a course, you will receive a mark of 50. There will be five performance bands above 50 that correspond to different levels of achievement in knowledge, skills and understanding. The band from 90 – 100 will correspond to the highest level of achievement.

## Completion of a course

### Satisfactory Completion of a Course

For subjects to be recorded on a RoSA, you must satisfactorily complete the course. NESA indicates that satisfactory completion of a course indicates:

- You have met all or some of the course outcomes.
- You have made a genuine attempt at assessment tasks.
- You have worked with sustained diligence.

In addition to this:

- You have adhered to the Assessment procedures as outlined in the school's Assessment Policy.
- You have participated in experiences, which are required by the syllabus, eg assignments, tests and examinations, major works, practical projects, effective participation in course work.
- You have prepared yourself sufficiently to enable you to make a serious attempt at the external HSC examination.

If you do not satisfactorily complete a course, you will receive no result for that course. You will be given a written warning in sufficient time to allow you to correct any problems identified (eg, application or course completion). A minimum of 12 units is required to be eligible for a Year 11 Record of School Achievement and 10 units are required to be eligible for Year 12.

