

# **Media Guide 2004**

Higher School Certificate and School Certificate



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## **Guidelines for media access to students during Higher School Certificate examinations**

All HSC media inquiries should be directed to:  
Public Affairs and Planning Branch  
Office of the Board of Studies  
Phone: (02) 9367 8250      Mobile: 0418 418 053  
Fax: (02) 9367 8035

In the interests of HSC students, members of the media intending to access schools to obtain television footage, photographs or student interviews during the Higher School Certificate examination period are requested to observe the following procedures:

- Schools have requested that there be no media on school premises prior to the commencement of or during an HSC examination.
- Media seeking access to a government school are required to contact a Department of Education and Training media liaison officer on (02) 9561 8501 at least 24 hours in advance.
- Media seeking access to a non-government school should contact the school principal directly.
- All media should notify the school principal on arrival at school premises.

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## **PART A: The Higher School Certificate at a glance – a journalist’s summary**

### **1 The new HSC: a snapshot**

#### **When did the new HSC commence?**

- The new HSC was introduced in 2000, and the first standards-based HSC examinations were undertaken by Year 12 students in 2001.
- Year 12 students sitting this year’s exams will be the fourth group to complete their HSC under the new arrangements.

#### **Why was the new HSC introduced?**

- In 1995, the NSW Government appointed Professor Barry McGaw to conduct the most extensive review of the HSC in its 30-year history.
- The McGaw Review confirmed key community concerns about the ‘old’ HSC, including that:
  - there were too many courses, which restricted many schools from providing students with equitable access to the HSC curriculum, particularly at advanced levels of study
  - a significant decline was evident in the number of students studying advanced-level courses
  - the assessment and reporting system was based on scaling marks and ranking students rather than reporting the marks earned and describing the standards achieved
  - there was too much focus on maximising university entrance scores at the expense of the educational needs and interests of students.
- In 1997, following extensive consultation with teachers, principals, academics, professional teacher organisations and interested members of the community, the NSW Government accepted recommendations to reform the Higher School Certificate.

#### **What’s the new HSC all about?**

- The new HSC combines the best features of the old HSC with an up-to-date standards-based curriculum and a fairer system of assessing and reporting student achievement against set standards.
- It is designed to challenge students to reach high standards and to be awarded marks that correspond to the standards they achieve.
- All syllabuses are up-to-date and relevant, are designed to meet the highest educational standards and are benchmarked against national and international best practice.
- The new HSC system of reporting gives meaning to marks by providing descriptions of the standards of knowledge and skills students have acquired in each subject.
- Prior to 2001 students only received a set of scores, which indicated how their performance in each subject ranked relative to others in the group.
- There are no easy course options within subjects. To achieve high standards students must meet the demands of challenging courses. Most subjects now have a single course only. In a small number of subjects there are additional extension courses.

- A major aim of the new HSC was to make sure that when students do leave school, they are better qualified to go on to further education or to get jobs.
- Vocational Education and Training (VET) opportunities have been expanded and VET courses have been strengthened. Students can now earn nationally recognised industry qualifications as part of their HSC.
- There are nine industry framework courses, including Business Services, Construction, Entertainment, Hospitality, Information Technology, Metal and Engineering, Primary Industries, Retail and Tourism.
- Students can count their industry course towards a Universities Admission Index (UAI) and university entrance by electing to take an optional HSC examination for the industry.
- Under these HSC arrangements, students can now graduate with an HSC, a nationally recognised industry qualification and a Universities Admission Index.
- Thousands of HSC students this year will also be eligible to receive advanced standing towards TAFE NSW courses. This is possible because in addition to VET framework courses most other HSC courses also have outcomes which have been aligned to TAFE courses and have agreed credit transfer value.
- The HSC/TAFE Credit Transfer program gives HSC students advanced standing towards related TAFE courses for the knowledge and skills they have already achieved through the HSC.
- This program reduces the time needed for eligible HSC students to complete TAFE courses, saving them money and allowing them to enter the workforce more quickly.

### **How does the new HSC give meaning to marks?**

- Students receive a mark for each course based only on their level of achievement of the course standards, instead of being scaled against other students.
- There is no longer a predetermined distribution of marks. Under the previous system, for example, only 1–2 % of students could be awarded a mark over 90 and only 25% of students could be awarded a mark over 70. One in four students were awarded a mark less than 50 irrespective of the standards they achieved.
- There are no longer any artificial barriers or lids placed on student achievement. There is no restriction placed on the marks students can achieve.
- A minimum standard expected has been set for each new HSC course. Students are awarded a mark of 50 or more out of 100 if they reach or exceed the minimum standard.

### **How will the Class of 2004 be assessed?**

- The new HSC retained strong features of the previous system, including the equal contribution of school-based assessments and public examinations to the final mark.
- In all new HSC examinations:
  - instructions and questions are clearer
  - students know the number of marks allocated to each question
  - the demands of the questions are explicit
  - students have a clearer sense of what they need to show in their answers in order to earn high marks
  - different question types allow students to show what they know and can do.
- The Board moderates each school's assessment marks against their examination performance to ensure comparability of assessment marks across schools.



## **How is student performance reported in the new HSC?**

- New HSC students receive detailed performance reports.
- Reports for each course describe their performance against set standards as well as showing their statewide position in the course. Students get a mark for each course based on their own performance, instead of being scaled against other students in the course.
- Student performance is reported against six levels of achievement. These performance levels (or bands) describe what students at each level of achievement typically know and can do in a course.
- Students have the opportunity to achieve a range of credentials and other information. These include:
  - HSC testamur (award certificate)
  - HSC Record of Achievement, summarising school-based assessment and HSC examination marks for each course
  - a new HSC report for each course, describing the standards achieved by the student and showing the student's statewide position in the course
  - nationally recognised industry qualification for students undertaking Vocational Education and Training courses.

## **What are the different purposes of the Higher School Certificate Course Reports and the Universities Admission Index (UAI)?**

The HSC Course Reports and the Universities Admission Index (UAI) have very different purposes.

### **The Higher School Certificate Course Reports**

- The HSC Course Reports provide useful information about the standard of knowledge and skills that each student has achieved in each of his or her courses. The report also provides an indication of the student's position in each course.
- The information in the HSC Course Reports can be used when students are applying for jobs or seeking entry into further education and training courses.
- Successful completion of HSC courses and achievement of course standards at particular band levels can give students credit towards a TAFE qualification and allow them to complete a TAFE course ahead of time.
- In preparing applications for employment students can draw from the descriptions in their Course Reports of the standards they have achieved to show how they meet particular job requirements as well as to highlight their overall knowledge and skills.
- The HSC Course Reports may also provide useful evidence to support a student's readiness for entry to certain university courses, where universities use interviews and portfolios to assess eligibility for enrolment.

### **The Universities Admission Index (UAI)**

- The UAI is not a mark or an average of a student's HSC marks.
- The UAI is a ranking for university selection purposes based on statistical scaling of students' examination marks and moderated school assessment marks. The marks are scaled as if all students have undertaken the same set of courses.
- A middle-ranked UAI is a ranking in the 60s.

- Students should not assume that their UAI rank will correspond with the average of their own HSC course marks. Last year, for example, most middle-placed HSC students who averaged HSC marks in the 70s received middle-ranked UAIs in the 60s.
- In a standards-referenced system of assessment and reporting of HSC achievement there is no reason to expect that the percentages of students who achieve at each standard should be the same across the range of courses.
- It is important to note, however, that if only a relatively small percentage of students achieve Bands 5 and 6 in a particular course they have studied, this has no effect on the calculation of their UAI.
- The reporting of HSC achievement against set standards as defined in the performance bands and the calculation of the UAI are worked out quite differently and have very different purposes.

## 2 Student enrolments under the new HSC

### Have enrolments in advanced-level courses increased?

- In 2004 record numbers of students have taken on the top-level English, Mathematics and History courses, representing overall increases of 69%, 37% and 56% since the first new HSC Class of 2001.
- The 2004 HSC enrolments confirm that the new HSC has succeeded in turning around the previous decline in advanced-level HSC study that was occurring under the old HSC, particularly in the core subject of English.
- Student entries in the demanding 2 unit English (Advanced) course in the 2004 HSC have increased to 27 140 (up by 10% on last year and 34% since 2001), compared to 8370 in the last cohort of the old HSC in 2000.
- There are 6043 entries in English Extension 1 (up by 16% on last year and 57% since 2001), compared to 1541 students in the corresponding 3 unit English course in 2000.
- A total of 2475 students (up by 6% on last year and 69% since 2001) are completing the top-level English Extension 2 course, which features the development of a major work composition. There was no corresponding 4 unit English course under the old HSC.
- Mathematics Extension 2 course entries have increased to 3585 students in 2004 (up by 10% on last year and 37% since 2001).
- There are also 2473 students enrolled in the top-level History Extension course, representing a 2% increase on last year's class and a 56% increase since 2001.
- Enrolments are also up in courses such as Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Ancient History, Economics, Legal Studies, Studies of Religion II, Textiles and Design, Dance, Music and Languages.
- Highlights of the 2004 HSC enrolment figures include:
  - 2475 entries in English Extension 2 – up 6% on last year and 69% since 2001
  - 6043 entries in English Extension 1 – up 16% on last year and 57% since 2001
  - 27 140 entries in English (Advanced) – up 10% on last year and 34% since 2001
  - 3585 entries in Mathematics Extension 2 – up 10% on last year and 37% since 2001
  - 10 189 entries in Mathematics Extension 1 – up 7% on last year and 13% since 2001
  - 2473 entries in History Extension – up 2% on last year and 56% since 2001
  - 9718 entries in Ancient History – up by 10% on last year and 32% since 2001
  - 9521 entries in Modern History – slightly up on last year and 7% since 2001
  - 10 282 entries in Chemistry – up 8% on last year and 12% since 2001
  - 10 257 entries in Physics – up 6% on last year and 13% since 2001
  - 13 105 entries in Biology – up 5% on last year and 4% since 2001
  - 5924 entries in Economics – up 13% on last year and 7% since 2001
  - 8492 entries in Legal Studies – up 8% on last year and 7% since 2001
  - 2341 entries in Studies of Religion II – up 11% on last year and 63% since 2001
  - 1734 entries in Textiles and Design – up 10% on last year and 51% since 2001
  - 664 entries in Dance – up 14% on last year and 86% since 2001
  - 4023 entries in Music 1 – up 7% on last year and 12% since 2001
  - 8837 entries in Languages other than English – up 7% on last year and 16% since 2001

## **How are students better prepared for vocational education and training and work?**

- More than 18 000 students (one in four candidates) from the Class of 2004 is completing Vocational Education and Training courses that earn them nationally recognised industry qualifications as part of their HSC.
- The figures show that of the 66 279 students sitting HSC examinations this year, 18 328 students are currently completing industry-recognised courses.
- The most popular industry curriculum frameworks are Hospitality (7792 entries), Information Technology (4430) and Business Services (2611).
- Other interesting features include:
  - 1836 entries in the Construction VET courses – up 7% on last year
  - 814 entries in the Primary Industries VET courses – up 7%.
- Students enrolled in an industry course must complete compulsory work placement in an industry setting and an industry-trained assessor evaluates their competence.
- Employers benefit by being able to choose HSC graduates who have already completed industry-recognised training and qualifications before they commence work.
- More than 85% of Year 12 students this year completing new Vocational Education and Training courses are sitting at least one optional HSC industry exam, which enables them to count their industry training towards a UAI rank and university entrance.

### 3 The Class of 2004: interesting facts and story lines

#### Introducing the Class of 2004

- There are 66 279 students enrolled as HSC candidates this year, comprising 34 398 female students and 31 881 male students.
- They are enrolled in 82 subjects organised into 157 Board Developed Courses (BDC), including 9 industry-accredited Vocational Education and Training (VET) frameworks.
- The subjects with the largest candidatures are English (the only compulsory subject), followed by Mathematics, Business Studies, Biology, Studies of Religion, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education, Chemistry, Physics, Ancient History, Modern History, Visual Arts, Legal Studies, Hospitality, Information Processes and Technology and Economics.
- Czech, Dutch and Malay are the subjects with the smallest candidature, followed by Lithuanian, Maltese and Ukrainian, Hungarian, and Swedish (in ascending order).
- The Class of 2004 have taken on the top-level English, Mathematics and History courses in record numbers, confirming that the new HSC has succeeded in turning around the previous decline in advanced-level HSC study that was occurring under the old HSC, particularly in the core subject of English.
- Student entries in the most demanding 2 unit English (Advanced) course in the 2004 HSC have increased to 27 140 (up by 10% on last year and 34% since 2001), compared to 8370 in the last cohort of the old HSC in 2000.
- There are 6043 entries in English Extension 1 (up by 16% on last year and 57% since 2001), compared to 1541 students in the corresponding 3 unit English course in 2000.
- A total of 2475 students (up by 6% on last year and 69% since 2001) are completing the top-level English Extension 2 course, which features the development of a major work composition. There was no corresponding 4 unit English course under the old HSC.
- Mathematics Extension 2 course entries have increased to 3585 students in 2004 (up by 10% on last year and 37% since 2001), compared to 2236 students in 2000.
- There are 10 189 entries in Mathematics Extension 1 (up by 7% on last year and 13% since 2001), compared to 9476 students in the corresponding 3 unit Mathematics course in 2000.
- There are also 2473 students enrolled in the top-level History Extension course, representing a 2% increase on last year's class and a 56% increase since 2001.
- Other upward enrolments trends this year include 10 282 entries in Chemistry (up 8% on last year), 10 257 entries in Physics (up 6%), 13 105 entries in Biology (up 5%), 9718 entries in Ancient History (up by 10%), 5924 entries in Economics (up 13%), 8492 entries in Legal Studies (up 8%), 2341 entries in Studies of Religion II (up 11%), 1734 entries in Textiles and Design (up 10%), 664 entries in Dance (up by 14%), 1425 entries in Engineering Studies (up 10%), and 8837 overall entries in Languages other than English (up 7%).
- More than 18 000 students (one in four candidates) are enrolled in one or more of the 9 Vocational Education and Training industry framework courses, earning them nationally recognised industry qualifications as part of their HSC program.
- The most popular industry curriculum frameworks are Hospitality (7792 entries), Information Technology (4430) and Business Services (2611).

- The HSC arrangements allow students to count their industry curriculum framework course towards a Universities Admission Index (UAI) by electing to take an optional HSC examination for the industry. The popularity of the UAI option is demonstrated by the fact that over 85% of these Year 12 students this year have elected to sit the optional HSC industry exam, enabling them to count their industry training towards a UAI score.
- Many languages are studied through the Saturday School of Community Languages, which has over 1800 enrolments this year; through the Open High School and other Distance Education Centres run by the Department of Education and Training; or through approved outside tutors.
- Chinese is the most popular language, with 1564 students this year; this is an increase of 25% on last year. Japanese is the second most popular language, with 1486 students – in 1979 there were only 56 students studying Japanese in NSW.
- Courses in 23 of the languages offered in 2004 were developed according to a common framework, as part of the Collaborative Curriculum and Assessment Framework for Languages (CCAFL). They emphasise the ability to communicate in language in a range of contexts. CCAFL offers students across Australia the flexibility to sit for Year 12 examinations in subjects such as Hindi, Maltese and Ukrainian.

### **Logistical facts and figures**

- The NSW Board of Studies established examination committees comprising over 300 people to set 109 different HSC examination papers.
- The 66 279 HSC students will use HSC examination papers comprising more than 13 million printed pages and will complete their answers in 1.75 million writing booklets.
- More than 5000 people will supervise the HSC examination sessions in some 750 examination centres.
- More than 7000 markers will mark HSC examinations at venues across the state.
- By the time the marking of the HSC examinations is complete, the Office of the Board of Studies will have scanned over 30 million individual marks.
- A team of more than 30 staff members took nearly 6 weeks to pack all written examination papers for all students in each course, resulting in over 50 000 parcels.
- Students' answers to HSC examinations are wrapped in secure parcels and sent to the marking centre. The following wrapping materials are used in this process: 42 000 sheets of brown paper; 51 kilometres of masking tape; 2000 kilograms (2 tonnes) of twine.

## 4 HSC statistics

### Candidates by geographical location<sup>1</sup>

<i>Location</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<b>Metropolitan</b>				
Metropolitan East	5590	5341	10931	16.49%
Metropolitan North	3711	3645	7356	11.10%
Metropolitan South West	4844	4561	9405	14.19%
Metropolitan North West	5758	5553	11311	17.07%
<b>Total</b>	<b>19 903</b>	<b>19 100</b>	<b>39003</b>	<b>58.85%</b>
<b>Country</b>				
Hunter	3716	3337	7053	10.64%
North Coast	2715	2409	5124	7.73%
North West	1183	933	2116	3.19%
Riverina	1633	1493	3126	4.72%
South Coast	3400	3015	6415	9.68%
Western	1728	1489	3217	4.85%
<b>Total</b>	<b>14 375</b>	<b>12 676</b>	<b>27051</b>	<b>40.81%</b>
<b>Other Categories</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>0.34%</b>
<b>Total of all Categories</b>	<b>34 398</b>	<b>31 881</b>	<b>66 279</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

### Candidates by institution type

School students	64 549	97.39%
TAFE students	1 707	2.58%
Self-tuition students	23	0.03%
<b>Total</b>	<b>66 279</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Location according to Board of Studies Liaison Officer (BOSLO) regions. Maps of BOSLO regions are included in Part B. Note that students doing the HSC overseas are included in 'Other Categories'.

### Subjects with the largest candidatures

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Candidates</i>
English	62766
Mathematics	54326
Business Studies	16740
Biology	13105
Studies of Religion	11488
Personal Development, Health & Physical Education	11177
Chemistry	10282
Physics	10257
Ancient History	9718
Modern History	9521
Visual Arts	8571
Legal Studies	8492
Hospitality	7641
Information Processes and Technology	6958
Economics	5924

### Subjects with the smallest candidatures

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Candidates</i>
Czech	1
Dutch	1
Malay	1
Lithuanian	2
Maltese	4
Ukrainian	4
Hungarian	5
Swedish	11
Polish	12
Croatian	13
Classical Greek	14
Hindi	16
Portuguese	17
Tamil	19
Khmer	20



**Student entries in Board Developed Courses by subject, course and gender for the 2004 HSC at 1 September 2004**

<i>Course Name</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Total</i>
Aboriginal Studies	2	172	73	245
Accounting	2	237	183	420
Agriculture	2	572	722	1294
Ancient History	2	6056	3662	9718
Arabic Beginners	2	3	3	6
Arabic Continuers	2	163	113	276
Arabic Extension	1	58	55	113
Armenian Continuers	2	12	10	22
Biology	2	8382	4723	13105
Business Services	1	1		1
Business Services	2	2053	476	2529
Business Services	4	45	15	60
Business Services Examination	2	1633	363	1996
Business Services Extension	1	5	2	7
Business Services Extension	2	11	3	14
Business Studies	2	8102	8638	16740
Chemistry	2	4801	5481	10282
Chinese Background Speakers	2	736	687	1423
Chinese Beginners	2	31	16	47
Chinese Continuers	2	51	43	94
Chinese Extension	1	24	17	41
Citizenship and Society Life Skills	2	227	265	492
Classical Greek Continuers	2	1	13	14
Classical Greek Extension	1	1	12	13
Classical Hebrew Continuers	2	18	21	39
Classical Hebrew Extension	1	14	14	28
Community and Family Studies	2	3747	247	3994
Comparative Literature - Distinction Course	2	3	4	7
Construction	2	24	1808	1832
Construction	4		2	2
Construction Examination	2	18	1363	1381
Construction Specialist Studies	2		2	2
Cosmology - Distinction Course	2	6	16	22
Creative Arts Life Skills	2	243	273	516
Croatian Continuers	2	8	5	13
Czech Continuers	2	1		1
Dance	2	634	30	664

<i>Course Name</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Total</i>
Design and Technology	2	1825	2664	4489
Drama	2	3663	1454	5117
Dutch Continuers	2	1		1
Earth and Environmental Science	2	520	611	1131
Economics	2	2323	3601	5924
Engineering Studies	2	38	1387	1425
English (Advanced)	2	16184	10956	27140
English (Standard)	2	14434	16806	31240
English as a Second Language	2	1519	1617	3136
English Extension 1	1	3965	2078	6043
English Extension 2	1	1700	775	2475
English Life Skills	2	564	663	1227
Entertainment	2	256	189	445
Entertainment	4		3	3
Entertainment Examination	2	195	144	339
Filipino Continuers	2	15	6	21
Food Technology	2	2490	688	3178
French Beginners	2	410	94	504
French Continuers	2	616	220	836
French Extension	1	141	52	193
General Mathematics	2	15369	14223	29592
Geography	2	1976	2490	4466
German Beginners	2	118	45	163
German Continuers	2	284	163	447
German Extension	1	74	39	113
Hindi Continuers	2	10	6	16
History Extension	1	1568	905	2473
Hospitality	2	5476	2148	7624
Hospitality	4	5	4	9
Hospitality Examination	2	4822	1850	6672
Hospitality Extension	1	116	18	134
Hospitality Extension	2	15	10	25
Hungarian Continuers	2	3	2	5
Indonesian Background Speakers	2	50	57	107
Indonesian Beginners	2	32	9	41
Indonesian Continuers	2	78	24	102
Indonesian Extension	1	22	6	28
Industrial Technology	2	285	3356	3641
Information Processes and Technology	2	2006	4952	6958
Information Technology	2	1217	3062	4279
Information Technology	3		1	1

<i>Course Name</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Total</i>
Information Technology	4	19	42	61
Information Technology Examination	2	1028	2750	3778
Information Technology Specialisation Studies	1		27	27
Information Technology Specialisation Studies	2	6	56	62
Italian Beginners	2	304	76	380
Italian Continuers	2	227	90	317
Italian Extension	1	40	15	55
Japanese Background Speakers	2	31	21	52
Japanese Beginners	2	380	221	601
Japanese Continuers	2	547	275	822
Japanese Extension	1	181	92	273
Khmer Continuers	2	14	6	20
Korean Background Speakers	2	77	72	149
Korean Continuers	2	11	2	13
Latin Continuers	2	87	94	181
Latin Extension	1	32	51	83
Legal Studies	2	5298	3194	8492
Lithuanian Continuers	2	1	1	2
Macedonian Continuers	2	22	10	32
Malay Background Speakers	2	1		1
Maltese Continuers	2	2	2	4
Mathematics	2	9359	10736	20095
Mathematics Extension 1	2	4294	5895	10189
Mathematics Extension 2	2	1405	2180	3585
Mathematics Life Skills	2	463	556	1019
Metal and Engineering	1		2	2
Metal and Engineering	2	2	716	718
Metal and Engineering	3		2	2
Metal and Engineering	4		4	4
Metal and Engineering Examination	2	2	560	562
Metal and Engineering Specialist Study	1		2	2
Metal and Engineering Specialist Study	2	1	24	25
Modern Greek Beginners	2	18	7	25
Modern Greek Continuers	2	124	51	175
Modern Greek Extension	1	53	20	73
Modern Hebrew Continuers	2	10	11	21
Modern History	2	5185	4336	9521
Music 1	2	1988	2035	4023
Music 2	2	374	216	590

<i>Course Name</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Total</i>
Music Extension	1	228	137	365
Persian Background Speakers	2	41	23	64
Personal Development, Health & PE Life Skills	2	264	348	612
Personal Development, Health and Physical Education	2	5710	4855	10565
Philosophy - Distinction Course	2	20	29	49
Physics	2	2688	7569	10257
Polish Continuers	2	7	5	12
Portuguese Continuers	2	7	10	17
Primary Industries	1		1	1
Primary Industries	2	279	475	754
Primary Industries	4	2	3	5
Primary Industries Examination	2	228	334	562
Primary Industries Extension	1	3	19	22
Primary Industries Extension	2	1	31	32
Retail Operations	2	1333	629	1962
Retail Operations	4	12	7	19
Retail Operations Examination	2	979	449	1428
Russian Background Speakers	2	11	13	24
Science Life Skills	2	133	177	310
Senior Science	2	1724	2320	4044
Serbian Continuers	2	36	17	53
Society and Culture	2	2688	521	3209
Software Design and Development	2	274	2671	2945
Spanish Beginners	2	123	32	155
Spanish Continuers	2	153	81	234
Spanish Extension	1	58	24	82
Studies of Religion I	1	4814	4333	9147
Studies of Religion II	2	1510	831	2341
Swedish Continuers	2	6	5	11
Tamil Continuers	2	9	10	19
Technology & Applied Studies Life Skills	2	273	351	624
Textiles and Design	2	1708	26	1734
Tourism	2	426	75	501
Tourism	4	2		2
Tourism Examination	2	312	52	364
Turkish Continuers	2	40	32	72
Ukrainian Continuers	2	3	1	4
Vietnamese Continuers	2	63	41	104

<i>Course Name</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Total</i>
Visual Arts	2	5995	2576	8571
Work and the Community Life Skills	2	359	395	754

## 5 The HSC Advice Line 13 11 12

The HSC Advice Line celebrates ten years of service to NSW HSC students this year. The Advice Line is a telephone information service for students preparing for the HSC examinations. It complements the advice of teachers by providing an after-hours and weekend service leading up to and during the examination period. Since its inception in 1995, the Advice Line has received over 270 000 calls.

The 2004 HSC Advice Line will open on Tuesday, 5 October. It will conclude at 10 pm on Wednesday, 10 November 2004.

The service will operate during the following hours:

<b>Monday to Friday</b>	<b>4 pm to 10 pm</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>10 am to 6 pm</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>10 am to 10 pm</b>

The best times to call are 6–7 pm daily, Friday evenings and Saturday and Sunday mornings, as figures from previous years show there are not as many callers at these times.

**The HSC Advice Line telephone number is  
13 11 12  
The cost is only 25 cents,  
no matter where a student is calling from in NSW  
or how long the call lasts.**

The Advice Line supports 25 HSC courses:

Ancient History	Legal Studies
Biology	Mathematics
Business Studies	Mathematics Extension 1
Chemistry	Mathematics Extension 2
Economics	Modern History
English as a Second Language	PDHPE
English Standard	Physics
English Advanced	Senior Science
English Extension 1	Software Design and Development
General Mathematics	Studies of Religion I
Geography	Studies of Religion II
History Extension	Visual Arts
Information Processes and Technology	

The subjects that have attracted the most calls in the past are English, Mathematics, Business Studies, Economics, Chemistry, Biology and Modern History.

## How can the HSC Advice Line assist students?

The HSC Advice Line is staffed by 650 highly experienced teachers. Up to 80 lines are open at any one time for teachers to answer questions, no matter how simple or complex. Some of the questions students commonly ask are:

*How is the exam structured?*

*What does that term or concept mean?*

*Can you explain this topic to me?*

*How do I structure an essay or use quotes and reference material?*

*Do I have the right answer to the question in the specimen exam paper?*

*I need more information on this topic – help!*

*What equipment do I need to take into the exam room?*

*What time does the exam start?*

*What areas will the exam cover?*

*What type of questions will be asked?*

To ensure that students sitting for the 2004 HSC examinations are aware of the Advice Line, a letter detailing the service's functions and hours of operation has been sent to all HSC candidates and to principals of all NSW secondary schools. Every student can obtain a personalised Advice Line timetable through the Students Online service on the Internet.

A separate letter is also sent to students with hearing difficulties to advise them of alternative arrangements.

## **6 Release of HSC results to students**

### **Early release of HSC results to students**

Students will receive their HSC results before Christmas. The HSC results will be available to students via Internet, SMS text message and automated telephone services.

The pre-Christmas release of HSC results enables students to maximise their opportunities to receive career counselling and access other support services as they make their plans for the future.

Students will be sent information on how to use these results services in November.

### **HSC results available on the Internet through Students Online**

In 2003 the Board of Studies trialled a new initiative for students called Students Online. Since 1998, students undertaking the NSW Higher School Certificate have been able to access their results via the Internet. Students Online is an extension of this service. This year, students will again be able to use their student number and a PIN to access their personalised examination timetable, personalised Advice Line schedule, and Assessment Rank Order Notice. There will also be important information available, and links to other useful websites. There is no cost to students to use Students Online, beyond the charges applied by their Internet Service Provider and/or the cost of the call.

Students will be able to access their results via Students Online. In 2003, there were over 41 500 hits to the HSC results website by midday on the day the HSC results were released.

The website for Students Online is [www.studentsonline.nsw.edu.au](http://www.studentsonline.nsw.edu.au), or it can be accessed via the Board's website [www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au).

### **Release of results by SMS text message**

HSC students will again have the option of receiving their results by SMS text message. The service, which was introduced last year, will cost students a flat rate of \$1.10.

Students may pre-register for the SMS results service from mid-November by text messaging their student number and PIN to the service provider on 1977 2346 using their mobile phone. The service provider will then text message the student to confirm that they have successfully registered for the service. Abbreviated HSC results will be sent to the student automatically via SMS text message.

Students who do not pre-register may still elect to receive their results by SMS simply by messaging their student number and PIN to the service. Their results will then be sent to them as an SMS text message.



In 2003, 9758 students pre-registered for the service and were sent their results at 6.00am on the day results were released, while others elected to request and receive SMS results on the day. In total, 14 033 students received their HSC results by SMS last year.

**HSC Results SMS Service number: 1977 2346**

### **Release of results by telephone**

Students may also access their HSC results by using the automated telephone service. The service will cost students \$1.65 per minute. (Mobiles and Payphones will incur extra costs.) Students can access this service by telephoning 1902 220 100 and keying-in their student number and personal identification number (PIN). They will get their HSC results by recorded message. The telephone 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.

The Board of Studies established the phone service in 1997. Last year, over 3000 calls were made by midday on the first day of the Results Line opening and over 7000 calls were received in total.

**HSC Results Line number: 1902 220 100**

### **Release of results by post**

New South Wales students will receive a student results summary containing the results achieved in 2004. The Higher School Certificate Student Results Summary will list, for each HSC course completed in 2004, the:

- examination mark
- assessment mark
- HSC mark (average of the examination mark and assessment mark)
- performance band and the description associated with that band.

With the HSC Student Results Summary, the student will receive an application form for a clerical processing recheck for externally examined courses. 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 official HSC award documents, including the Higher School Certificate testamur, HSC Record of Achievement and HSC Course Reports will arrive by mail in mid-January 2005.

### **HSC Examination Inquiry Centre 13 11 12**

The Board of Studies runs a telephone inquiry centre to support the release of the HSC results. The HSC Inquiry Centre will operate from the day of release of results until the New Year. It will be staffed by Board of Studies Liaison Officers, Board of Studies officers and experienced 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 Inquiry Centre are able to answer questions about HSC results only. Inquiries relating to the UAI, university admissions and post-secondary education should be directed to the Universities Admissions Centre or the Advisory Services for School Leavers.

**HSC Examination Inquiry Centre phone: 13 11 12**

## **7 Release of HSC results information to the media**

The Board of Studies will provide the media with:

- the First Place in Course List, which details the top student in each course who has reached Band 6 standard (or Band E4 in an extension course).
- the HSC Distinguished Achievers List, which details the students who have achieved the highest standard established for the course. For all but extension courses, this means that they have reached Band 6 standard by achieving a mark of 90 or more for a course. This mark is a composite of both the HSC examination mark and the moderated school assessment mark.
- a list of students who have achieved all-round excellence in the Higher School Certificate. These are students who appear on the Distinguished Achievers List for courses totalling a minimum of 10 units.

Lists showing the students who achieve the top places in each course will also be available. The Board of Studies does not have access to students' UAI information from the Universities Admissions Centre. Individual UAI 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.

Media will be provided with a breakdown of entries by course and by school. As for the School Certificate, the Board will also be providing the proportions of students in each band for each course.

## **PART B: The Higher School Certificate and School Certificate in detail**

### **8 The HSC Curriculum**

#### **Types of courses**

The Preliminary and HSC courses offered are either Board Developed or Board Endorsed Courses.

#### **Board Developed Courses**

These are the large number of courses that are set and externally examined by the Board of Studies and include courses in the areas of English, Mathematics, Science, Technology, Creative Arts, PDHPE, Human Society and Its Environment, Languages, and VET Curriculum Frameworks. These courses may contribute to the calculation of a Universities Admission Index (UAI).

#### **Distinction Courses**

Distinction Courses are high-level Board Developed HSC Courses delivered by universities through distance education. Eligible students need to complete one or more HSC courses at the highest level, one or more years ahead of their cohort. The courses consist of 2 units of study, which are additional to the required 10 units of HSC study but can be counted towards the calculation of the UAI. In 2004 three Distinction Courses were offered: Cosmology, Comparative Literature and Philosophy.

#### **Life Skills Courses**

Board Developed Life Skills Courses for students with special education needs can be used in place of other Board Developed Courses to meet the requirements for the award of the Higher School Certificate. Each Life Skills Course comprises a 2 unit Preliminary course and a 2 unit HSC course. These courses are not subject to external examination and do not contribute to the calculation of the UAI.

#### **Board Endorsed Courses**

These include courses that may be developed by schools, colleges of TAFE NSW or universities. Board Endorsed Courses contribute to the HSC but do not contribute to the calculation of the UAI.

Board Endorsed Courses fall into three categories: Content Endorsed, School Developed and University Developed Courses.

- Content Endorsed Courses (CECs) were introduced in 1985. They are developed by the Board of Studies from exemplary school-developed courses for statewide implementation. Content Endorsed Courses available for the 2004 HSC are:

Ceramics	Photography, Video and Digital Imaging
Computing Applications	Sport, Lifestyle and Recreation Studies
Exploring Early Childhood	Visual Design
Marine Studies	Work Studies

- School Developed 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. This flexibility means that schools can use local resources and personnel most effectively to the advantage of students.

Generally, there are two broad requirements for the endorsement of a School Developed BEC. The course must meet:

- an educational need that cannot be met by an existing Board Developed or Content Endorsed Course; and
- 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 Developed vocational BECs.

- University Developed Courses are developed by universities in conjunction with schools to suit the particular needs of high ability students.

## **Units of study**

All courses for the Higher School Certificate are prescribed a unit value. Each unit requires two hours per week of indicative school time spent studying the course and attracts a possible 50 assessment marks and 50 examination marks. This means that the typical 2 unit course requires four hours per week of indicative school study time and attracts a total possible mark of 100 for the school assessment and for the examination.

Most Board Developed Courses are 2 unit courses studied over two years. They comprise the Preliminary course (studied usually during Year 11) followed by the HSC course (usually completed in Year 12). Students must satisfactorily complete the Preliminary course before they are permitted to study the HSC course. HSC courses may be accumulated over a period of up to five years.

One unit Extension courses are also available, requiring extra time in addition to the 2 unit course to reach the highest standards in a subject. This occurs in English, Mathematics, Music, History, some languages and some Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses.

## **2004 HSC subjects**

A comprehensive description of each HSC course is available from the 'New HSC Course Description' files located on the Board's website [www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au).

## **Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses**

VET courses may be Board Developed or Board Endorsed Courses. The opportunities for students to study VET courses as part of the HSC have been enhanced. Nine Board Developed Industry Curriculum Frameworks, each incorporating a range of courses, have been developed. They provide students with the opportunity to gain Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificates and Statements of Attainment. These industry-recognised courses are:

- Business Services
- Construction
- Entertainment
- Hospitality
- Information Technology
- Metal and Engineering
- Primary Industries
- Retail
- Tourism.

These courses all involve mandatory work placement which is assessed as part of HSC requirements. Students can use part-time work in industry towards their workplace requirement. Students may also undertake these courses as part of a traineeship.

These courses provide students with a valuable head start towards future employment and training in an industry while they are still at school. Employers will benefit by being able to choose HSC graduates who have already completed industry-recognised training and qualifications before they commence work.

The new arrangements also allow students enrolled in a 240-hour framework course to have it count towards a Universities Admission Index (UAI) by electing to take an optional HSC examination.

In addition to their credentials issued by the Board of Studies, students receive a Vocational Certificate or Statement of Attainment for school-delivered courses and a transcript of results delivered by Registered Training Organisations.

## **Other vocational courses**

Apart from the curriculum frameworks, other VET courses may be undertaken for the HSC. These courses may be Board Developed or Board Endorsed Courses. TAFE-delivered VET courses are available in a broad range of industry areas.

## **Eligibility for the Higher School Certificate**

To be eligible for the award of the 2004 Higher School Certificate, students must have:

- gained the School Certificate or such other qualifications as the Board of Studies considers satisfactory
- attended a government school, an accredited non-government school, a school outside New South Wales recognised by the Board, or a college of TAFE
- satisfactorily completed courses that comprise the pattern of study required by the Board for an award of the Higher School Certificate (see below)
- sat for and made a serious attempt at the requisite Higher School Certificate examinations.

Students must satisfactorily complete a Preliminary pattern of study comprising at least 12 units and an HSC pattern of study comprising at least 10 units. Both patterns must include at least:

- six units from Board Developed Courses
- two units of a Board Developed Course in English
- three courses of two unit value or greater (either Board Developed or Board Endorsed)
- four subjects.

## **Pathways**

The Higher School Certificate offers students a great deal of flexibility in the way they can approach their study program through the provisions offered by Pathways.

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 schoolwork.

## **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 other 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.

### **HSC/TAFE Credit Transfer**

Through HSC/TAFE Credit Transfer students can obtain advanced standing in many TAFE courses, which means that they may not have to do all the modules in the TAFE course in which they enrol. A website sponsored by the NSW Schools Consortium, which consists of the Board of Studies NSW, the NSW Department of Education and Training, the Catholic Education Commission and the Association of Independent Schools is available for students' information. See [www.det.nsw.edu.au/hsctafe](http://www.det.nsw.edu.au/hsctafe)



## 9 2004 HSC Assessment and Examinations

The HSC mark received by each student for each course is a 50:50 combination of the school-based assessment mark and the external HSC examination mark. The HSC mark, the assessment mark and the examination mark are all reported on the student's record of achievement. The school-based assessment mark summarises the student's performance in assessment tasks set and marked by the school. The external HSC examination mark is gained by the student in the HSC examinations set and marked by the Board of Studies. Together, the examination and assessment marks provide a more consistent and complete picture of a student's achievement.

### School-based assessment for the Higher School Certificate

#### The purpose and scope of school assessment

School 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 course to provide a balanced indication of each student's achievement in relation to the outcomes of the course.

Towards the end of the HSC course, schools submit to the Board a mark based on each student's performance in school-based assessment tasks. To ensure that comparisons of results for the same courses from different schools throughout the state are fair, assessment marks from each school are adjusted to a common scale using the examination marks in the course from that school (see 'Moderation of assessment marks' below).

Assessment marks are required for most courses developed or endorsed by the Board. They are not required for Vocational Education and Training courses.

#### Components and weightings

For each course, the syllabus specifies components and weightings that must be applied in determining school assessment marks. These ensure a common focus for assessment in a course across schools, but also allow schools flexibility in the design and timing of tasks. Schools use 3–5 tasks of different types so that students are given the opportunity to demonstrate achievement in various ways. Most schools use a trial HSC examination as one of the tasks.

For example, the components, weightings, and suggested tasks for the Geography course are:

Component	Weighting	Suggested Tasks
Geographical research	20	Evaluation of the research framework and processes, independent research project
Interpretation and synthesis of geographical stimulus	30	Multiple-choice skills test, short-answer response items such as comprehension exercises, graph analysis, photograph and cartographic interpretation
Geographical writing	40	Video report, matching exercises, letter writing, written reports, discussions, explanations and expositions, extended response, structured essays, stimulus-based response
Fieldwork	10	Writing a questionnaire, data analysis, field observations, pre- and post-fieldwork activities
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	

### **Moderation of assessment marks**

Assessment marks are ‘moderated’, or placed on a common scale, allowing them to be compared with assessments from other schools. The assessment marks awarded to students in each course at a school are changed so that their average (mean) matches the average (mean) of those students’ examination marks. A similar spread of assessments to the examination marks is achieved by setting the top assessment mark from the school equal to the top examination mark and, generally, the lowest assessment mark equal to the lowest examination mark.

After the assessment marks for a course have been moderated, they are aligned to the course performance scale by using the same adjustments used to align the raw examination marks to the performance scale (see section 10 *Reporting student achievement at the HSC*).

Because the raw assessment marks from different schools 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. Throughout the course, schools are required to provide feedback on performance in each assessment task that contributes to the assessment mark.

### **Assessment rank appeals**

After all HSC examinations have been completed, students can obtain, via Students Online, advice from the Board showing their rank order within their school for assessments in each of the courses they studied. If students consider that their placement in any course is 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 16 November 2004. The school will advise the student of the outcome of the review by 22 November 2004. If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of a school review, the student may appeal to the Board.

### **2004 HSC examinations**

In most courses the HSC examination is a written examination, usually of three hours duration. The form of the examination is specified in the syllabus. Examinations consist of a variety of item types including multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions and questions requiring essay responses.

In addition to written examinations, in many courses there are listening examinations, practical examinations (consisting of speaking or performance), and the requirements for submission of projects, which may take a number of forms.

### **The role of Chief Examiner**

The Chief Examiner for each course oversees the development and marking of the examination. The Chief Examiner chairs the examination committee, and is responsible for the development of the examination paper and marking guidelines. In addition, the Chief Examiner has a governance role during marking. At the start of the marking process, he or she is responsible for ensuring that the marking guidelines, marking schemes and benchmark scripts allow for marking that discriminates adequately, rewards quality answers appropriately and accommodates unanticipated approaches to questions.

### **Preparation of HSC examination papers**

In 2004, the Board of Studies examination committees set almost 150 different examination papers. In addition, examination papers for some small-candidature languages were set by other states participating in the Collaborative Curriculum and Assessment Framework for Languages (CCAFL).

### **Producing the examinations**

HSC examinations are set by examination committees working under secure conditions. Each committee is led by the Chief Examiner, and works with assessment experts from the Board's staff. Committees usually comprise four people and, where possible, the committee is made up equally of practising teachers and representatives from tertiary institutions. The preparation of the 2004 HSC examinations began in September 2003. More than 400 people participated in preparing the examinations either as members of examination committees or as assessors.

Each examination committee sets examinations for the course(s) for which it is responsible, following the examination specifications contained in the syllabus and in accordance with the Board's principles for setting examinations in a standards-referenced framework. The examination committees are also responsible for developing marking guidelines for all parts of the examination.

### **Assessors**

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

### **Listening examinations**

English (ESL) and most modern languages have listening examinations where students answer questions relating to recorded texts. In the Music 1 and Music 2 examinations, students respond to recordings of music extracts. Examination committees are responsible for choosing appropriate material to be recorded for each of these examinations.

Professional-quality recordings are made, and cassette tapes are produced (CDs for the Music examinations) to be sent to each examination centre.

### **Courses with practical examinations and submitted works**

In some HSC courses the examinations have practical components such as speaking or performance. Some courses require students to select and pursue an area of interest as part of their study of the course and to submit a project or report for examination.

## **Agriculture**

In Agriculture, students complete a core of learning that represents 70% of the HSC course. For the remainder of the course, students have the option of completing either two electives or a Research Project.

For students who elect to complete a Research Project, the project comprises 30% of the final examination mark. The project enables students to study a particular agricultural issue or problem. The scope of the issue or problem open to students includes those that arise from production, the economic environment, marketing and the social environment.

The material submitted by students for the Research Project consists of a report and process journal. The report communicates the research methodology, data analysis and evaluation of the Research Project. It must consist of at least 3000 and no more than 5000 words and must be supplemented by additional appropriate materials such as graphs, figures, tables, slides and photographs. Students submit a process journal which details the student's progress through the Research Project.

The Research Project is marked at a designated HSC marking centre.

## **Dance**

All students in Dance perform a solo dance which contributes 20% to the total examination mark, and choreograph a solo dance, that contributes a further 20% to the examination mark.

All students undertake a Major Study, which represents 40% of the total examination mark. In the Major Study, students choose from a range of options: Performance, Composition, Appreciation, or Dance and Technology. The Performance and Composition options have practical examinations including a viva voce. Students who choose the Dance and Technology option select either Choreographing the Virtual Body (using computer animation technology), or Film and Video. Presentation of these works is accompanied by a viva voce. The Appreciation option is examined in a written form.

Practical examinations for Dance are held at central venues.

## **Design and Technology**

The HSC course includes the development and realisation of a Major Design Project, which contributes 60% towards the final examination mark. The project consists of a product, system or environment together with a design folio. It involves students in selecting and applying appropriate design, production and evaluation skills to satisfy an identified need or opportunity.

Students research, select and apply the most appropriate materials, tools and processes to complete the Major Design Project. They document each stage of the process in the folio which includes the project proposal and management, project development and realisation, and evaluation.

The Major Design Project is marked by HSC markers who visit schools across the state.

## **Drama**

All students take part in a group performance which contributes 30% to the total examination mark. Students also undertake an individual project, which contributes a further 30%. Individual projects are selected from a range of options: Critical Analysis (Director's Folio or Portfolio of Theatre Criticism or an Applied Research Project), Design (Costume or Lighting or Set, or Promotion and Program), Performance, Scriptwriting, or Video Drama.

## **English Extension 2**

The examination for English Extension 2 comprises a Major Work only. The Major Work consists of a sustained composition and a reflection statement on the intent, process and understanding gained from undertaking the Major Work.

Students choose from a range of forms and mediums in which to develop the composition. Specific word or time limits apply to the composition and to the reflection statement.

The Major Work is marked at a designated HSC marking centre.

## **Industrial Technology**

The HSC course includes the development of a Major Project, which contributes 60% towards the final examination mark. The Major Project consists of a product and folio.

Students choose to study one of the following eight focus areas over both the Preliminary and the HSC courses:

- automotive industries
- building and construction industries
- electronics industries
- graphics industries
- metals and engineering industries
- multimedia industries
- plastics industries
- timber products and furniture industries.

The criteria for marking the Major Project include design and management, and workplace communication and production.

The Major Project is marked by HSC markers who visit schools across the state.

## **Languages**

Apart from the Background Speakers courses, the examination for all modern languages includes a speaking component, the specifications for which vary according to the course. Depending on the course, the speaking component comprises up to 30% of the total examination mark.

For both the Beginners and the Extension speaking examinations, students respond to questions or prompts on the examination paper. For all the Continuers speaking components, the examinations consist of a conversation which, in some cases, includes a discussion of a prepared topic.

All the speaking examinations are recorded and double-marked, either on the day of the examination or at a designated HSC marking centre.

## **Music**

In Music 1, performance may comprise between 10% and 70% of the total examination mark, depending on the student's choice of electives. Performances may be solo or part of an ensemble. The musicology elective is examined by a viva voce. Depending on the electives chosen, composition and/or musicology may contribute up to 60% of the examination mark.

In Music 2, performance may comprise between 20% and 50% of the total examination mark, depending on the student's choice of electives. Performances may be solo or part of an ensemble. In addition, candidates sight-sing a short piece of music. All students submit a composition worth 15% of the examination mark and may submit an additional composition or musicology essay worth 30%. The musicology elective is examined by a submitted essay.

Students in Music may submit scores and recordings of original compositions as part of their examination. They may also be examined on a musicology topic related to their study of the course.

The examination in Music Extension consists solely of performance or submitted works in composition or musicology. In performance, students perform two solo works and one ensemble work. In composition, students submit two original contrasting pieces or movements. In musicology, students submit a 3000-word essay.

## **Society and Culture**

The Personal Interest Project comprises 30% of the total examination mark. The Personal Interest Project is based on a topic related to the fundamental concepts of the course and draws together the interests, research skills and personal experiences of the student. The presented project is 3000 to 6000 words in length and must include an introduction, a log, central material of the research, a conclusion, a resource list and certification.

The Personal Interest Project is marked by HSC markers at a designated HSC marking centre.

## **Textiles and Design**

Students undertake a Major Textiles Project, which comprises 50% of the final examination mark. The project focus is selected from one of the following areas:

- apparel
- furnishings
- costume
- textile arts
- non-apparel.

The selected focus area allows students to explore in detail one area of interest through a creative textile design process that integrates the syllabus content areas of Design, Properties and Performance of Textiles and the Australian Textile, Clothing, Footwear and Allied Industries.

The marking of the Major Textiles Project considers two components: the supporting documentation that includes details relating to design inspiration, visual design development, manufacturing specifications and investigation, experimentation and evaluation; and the textile item(s).

The Major Textiles Project is marked at a designated HSC marking centre.

## **Visual Arts**

Candidates in Visual Arts submit a body of work for examination. This comprises 50% of the final examination mark. Bodies of work are produced in a wide variety of expressive forms including photography, film and video, digital media, graphic design, painting, drawing, sculpture, interactives, ceramics, and designed objects and environments.

The body of work is marked either corporately at a designated HSC marking centre or itinerantly by HSC markers who visit the school.

## **Preparing 'the pack'**

Once the examination papers are printed, compilation of the papers known as 'the pack' begins. This involves packing and labelling sets of examination papers in each course for all students at each examination centre, as well as cassette tapes and CDs for the listening examination.

It takes more than 30 staff members nearly six weeks to pack all the examination papers for all students in each course, which results in more than 50 000 parcels.

## **Supervision of the examinations**

More than 5000 people will supervise the HSC examination sessions in 750 examination centres. These centres are mostly in schools and TAFE NSW institutes that have more than 40 candidates.

In certain exceptional circumstances examination centres will be established outside NSW for students who have international or national sporting, educational or cultural commitments. The centres are usually in Australian embassies or British Council offices. The strictest security is maintained at all times.

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

## **Special examination provisions for students with special needs**

The Board of Studies administers a special examination provisions program each year for the HSC examinations and School Certificate tests. This program is designed to provide practical support to students with special examination needs.

For students with special examination needs, the Board produces a large variety of 'special provisions' examination papers. These include papers that are printed on coloured paper, papers in larger size fonts (up to 72 point) for visually impaired students, Braille papers, papers that are split into sections to allow students to sit them over separate sessions, and papers where questions are specially modified to meet the requirements of particular students. Special provisions papers are produced by staff members, working with the State Braille Unit and other disability consultants. In 2004 approximately 1400 individual papers have been produced, in more than 78 courses.

Where required, students are able to sit their examinations under altered conditions to suit their needs. Arrangements may include the assistance of a writer; provision of an appropriate reader or oral interpreter; rest breaks; use of a keyboard; provision for special furniture and lighting; and establishment of a special examination centre or small group supervision.

Applications for special examination provisions for students with special needs were submitted to the Board of Studies from December 2003. Arrangements needed as a result of accidents or other emergencies may be applied for up to and during 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 lodge an appeal with the Board of Studies.

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 12 November 2004 except in the case of speaking 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, the student is awarded an examination mark equal to their assessment mark or original examination mark, whichever is the higher.

### **Marking the 2004 Higher School Certificate examinations**

#### **Security**

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

Security procedures include restriction of entry to marking centres to authorised personnel only. Security guards are employed to guard each marking centre.

#### **Employment of markers**

More than 7000 markers will mark the exams. They will be assisted by more than 900 clerical staff. The largest centre is the Sydney Showground and Exhibition Centre at Homebush Bay. Other centres in the Sydney metropolitan area will accommodate smaller numbers of markers. Altogether, the Sydney-based marking operation covers 72 subjects. As well as those in Sydney, marking centres will be set up in Bathurst, Coffs Harbour, Gosford, Newcastle, Tamworth, Wagga Wagga and Wollongong.

#### **Marking venues**

The vast majority of HSC papers are marked by groups of markers, marking together in centres established by the Board. Both teachers and students benefit from having a wide range of markers.



Metropolitan Sydney marking in 2004 will take place chiefly at Homebush. There will be four smaller venues in Sydney. The itinerant marking of performances and projects occurred in Term 3.

Country marking centres and day marking will operate again this year to give teachers valuable professional development opportunities, and allow marking to reflect the expertise of teachers throughout the state.

Teachers who mark the HSC examinations are selected on the basis of their teaching experience and subject knowledge.

### **Country marking centres**

In 2004, Bathurst, Coffs Harbour, Gosford, Newcastle, Tamworth, Wagga Wagga and Wollongong will have marking centres.

Components of English (Standard) will be marked at Bathurst, Gosford, Wagga Wagga and Wollongong. The Newcastle centre will mark Biology, Business Studies, Engineering Studies and part of English (Advanced) and the Wollongong centre will mark part of English (Standard) as well as Senior Science. Other components of English (Advanced) will be marked in Coffs Harbour and Tamworth. A component of Agriculture will be marked in Tamworth.

### **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. Schools are provided with relief when teachers participate in day marking. The day marking initiative will continue in 2004 with day marking centres in metropolitan and country areas.

### **Metropolitan Sydney Area**

#### ***Venue***

Sydney Showground, Homebush Bay

#### ***Subject***

Aboriginal Studies

Chemistry

Economics

Food Technology

Modern History (Core)

Personal Development, Health and Physical Education

(Part of the School Certificate English paper will also be day marked in Sydney)

### **Regional Areas**

#### ***Subject***

Agriculture

Biology

Business Studies

Engineering Studies

English (Advanced)

English (Advanced)

English (Advanced)

#### ***Venue***

Tamworth

Newcastle

Newcastle

Newcastle

Tamworth

Coffs Harbour

Newcastle

#### ***Subject***

English (Standard)

English (Standard)

English (Standard)

English (Standard)

Senior Science

#### ***Venue***

Wagga Wagga

Gosford

Bathurst

Wollongong

Wollongong

## **The process of marking**

### ***Trialling and finalisation of marking guidelines***

The main areas for refinement of the HSC marking process are concerned with the trialling and finalisation of marking guidelines.

These are points where:

- marking guidelines are checked against sample student responses
- marking schemes are developed
- benchmark scripts are selected
- practice marking takes place in small groups to ensure agreement about the marks awarded.

At the marking centre the Supervisor of Marking and Chief Examiner brief the senior markers about the marking process and application of the marking guidelines.

The Supervisor of Marking works with the Chief Examiner in the pilot marking and the development of marking schemes and benchmarks.

Senior markers test the marking guidelines and select appropriate benchmarks.

Any adjustments to the marking guidelines identified during pilot marking are made at the marking centre by the Chief Examiner and the Supervisor of Marking in consultation with senior markers.

Additional briefing information is provided for markers with a detailed explanation of the basis for selection of benchmark examples.

Rigorous monitoring occurs between marking centres responsible for marking different sections of the same examination. The new position of Coordinating Supervisor of Marking has been created to ensure that consistent approaches are maintained across the marking centres and across examination papers with a similar format.

### **Established marking procedures**

Once marking guidelines are finalised the marking process commences.

The Board has many established quality assurance procedures in place to ensure that every HSC student is awarded a mark that is consistent with his or her examination performance.

### ***Multiple marking***

Different markers mark each section or question in an examination and develop particular expertise in their part of the examination. Ten or more markers may be involved in marking parts of each student's examination paper.

### ***Check marking***

Throughout marking, an experienced senior marker examines a significant proportion of marked answers and checks the marks awarded by each marker.

***Double marking***

All answers that involve a lengthy written extended response are marked twice. Each marker is unaware of the other mark given. The two marks are averaged to give the final mark. If marks differ significantly, a third independent marking is undertaken and the appropriate mark is awarded.

***Control scripts***

At regular intervals each marker in the marking team marks the same student response for a question. These markings are compared and any difference is explored. This process maintains consistency throughout the marking operation.

***Marker reliability***

The marks awarded by each marker are graphed every day and compared to marks awarded by other markers of the same question. If one graph varies from the others, the reasons are investigated.

## 10 Reporting student achievement at the HSC

### Reporting results in Board Developed Courses

Students' results in Board Developed Courses are reported by an examination mark, a moderated school assessment mark (see p 35), an HSC mark and a performance band. In the new 'standards-based' HSC, the Board of Studies reports student achievement in terms of standards achieved in a particular course. Performance band descriptions have been developed for each course, which describe typical achievement in Bands 2 to 6, where Band 6 is the highest standard, and a performance in Band 1 has not met the minimum standard expected. In Extension courses, there are four bands, Band E1 to Band E4.

The marks gained by students are aligned to the performance bands, with Band 6 comprising marks from 90 to 100, Band 5 from 80 to 89, and so on, so that Band 2 is the range 50–59. Students who have not met the minimum standard expected receive a mark less than 50. Students are awarded marks based on the standard of performance they have demonstrated, not on any pre-determined distribution of marks.

Aligning marks to standards means that a reported mark of, say, 78, in a particular course represents the same standard of achievement from year to year.

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 mark for the course concerned.

### Determination of marks for Board Developed Courses

The procedure used to align HSC marks to the established standards is based on the professional judgement of subject experts, informed by statistical data and student responses. It is a multi-staged procedure that enables the subject experts to review and adjust their earlier decisions.

The standards for each course are captured in the performance band descriptions and in the HSC Standards Packages, which are CD-ROMs that show samples of student work at each of the band cut-offs, illustrating what students at these cut-off points typically know, understand and can do.

The subject experts, known as 'judges', are experienced teachers and markers. They apply their knowledge of the standards to this year's examination to determine the examination mark that corresponds to the standard of performance at each of the band cut-offs. In applying the standards-setting procedure, the judges initially work individually, then meet to review and discuss the decisions they have made. Finally, they view samples of student examination responses near each of the cut-off marks to refine their judgements.

#### *Stage 1*

Working independently, each judge:

- uses the materials in the HSC Standards Packages to develop an 'image' of the knowledge, understanding and skills of students whose achievement would place them on the borderline between Band 5 and Band 6
- records the mark for each examination question (or task) that a borderline Band 5/Band 6 student would receive.

The judges follow the same procedure for the other band borderlines. The recording sheets are collected and the cut-off marks proposed by each of the judges for each question are averaged. These averages are added to produce the first estimate of the examination mark that will represent the borderline between each pair of bands.

### ***Stage 2***

The judges meet to review and discuss the decisions they arrived at individually and their 'images' of the students at the borderlines between bands. They discuss their individual decisions and consider statistical reports. Each judge has the opportunity to modify any of the decisions he or she recorded during the first stage.

The judges' recording sheets are again collected and processed as in Stage 1. This results in a new set of band cut-off marks.

### ***Stage 3***

The judges have the opportunity to further refine their band cut-off marks when reviewing samples of work by students whose marks are equal to each of the proposed band cut-off marks. The judges also review student works above and below the proposed cut-off marks.

The judges' recording sheets are again collected and processed as in Stage 1. This results in a new set of band cut-off marks. These are the values that the judges will recommend to the Board's HSC Consultative Committee.

### ***Reviewing and applying the decisions***

The Consultative Committee meets with the judges before giving its approval to the cut-off marks to be used for the 2004 HSC examinations.

Once this is done the Board's computer is programmed so that the Band 5/Band 6 cut-off mark will be mapped to 90, the Band 4/Band 5 cut-off mark will be mapped to 80, and so on. Marks in between these key values are adjusted in a linear manner.

## **Reporting for Stage 6 Life Skills Courses**

Students who satisfactorily complete a Stage 6 Life Skills Course will receive a Profile of Student Achievement to be issued by the school. The Profile of Student Achievement reports on student performance for each of the syllabus outcomes that the student has been working towards during Stage 6.

## **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 symbols \*\*\* in the space designated for the examination mark.

## **Reporting Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses**

Students who successfully complete any VET course within the HSC will receive:

- recognition of the course and its unit value on their HSC Record of Achievement
- details of examination performance where the course has an optional HSC examination and the student has attempted the examination
- a VET Certificate, or Statement of Attainment within the Australian Qualifications Framework, as appropriate.

## **HSC Credentials**

### **Testamur**

Students who meet all the requirements will be awarded a Higher School Certificate. This certificate shows the student's name and school.

### **Record of Achievement**

Students who satisfactorily complete at least one Preliminary or one HSC course will receive a Record of Achievement. For students who are accumulating or repeating courses, the Record of Achievement will list all courses satisfactorily completed in each year, and the results in those courses.

Courses that were studied but not satisfactorily completed are not reported on the Record of Achievement.

### **HSC Course Reports**

A Course Report will be issued for each Board Developed HSC Course completed. It will show:

- school assessment mark
- examination mark
- HSC mark (the average of the assessment mark and examination mark)
- performance band with a description of what a student typically knows and can do at that level of achievement
- a graph showing where the mark lies in relation to all candidates' marks for the course.

Students who have completed requirements for one or more Board Developed VET Courses will also receive an AQF Certificate or Statement of Attainment listing units of competency that have been satisfactorily completed.

Students who have completed requirements for one or more Board Developed Life Skills Courses will also receive a Profile of Student Achievement from their school.

### **Student's 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)**

### **What is the UAI?**

The Universities Admission Index (UAI) is a rank which reports a student's achievement in relation to that of other students. Universities use the UAI as one of several measures to select school leavers for university study. The Universities Admissions Centre (UAC) releases the UAI.

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

### **Who calculates the UAI and how is it calculated?**

The universities determine the requirements for the UAI. It is calculated by the universities' Technical Committee on Scaling. The UAI is released by UAC. The Board provides HSC marks for individual students to the Chair of the Technical Committee on Scaling, for the purpose of calculating students' UAIs.

To be eligible for a UAI students must satisfactorily complete at least 10 units (including at least two units of English) of Board Developed Courses for which there are formal examinations conducted by the Board of Studies. The Board Developed Courses must include at least three courses of two units or greater and at least four subjects.

The UAI will be based on an aggregate of scaled marks in 10 units of Board Developed Courses comprising the best two units of English and the best eight units from the remaining units. No more than two units of Category B courses will be included.

The UAI may include units accumulated by a candidate over a period of up to five years. If a course is repeated, only the last satisfactory attempt is used in the calculation of the UAI.

The scaling process used to calculate the UAI enables marks obtained in different courses to be added together for tertiary entrance purposes. The scaling procedure modifies the mean, the standard deviation and the maximum mark in a course, using as a criterion the overall demonstrated academic attainment of the course candidature. 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.

The UAIs are confidential and released by the committee to the UAC, which then provides them to:

- students who have requested a UAI
- universities to which the students have applied.

Under the agreement with the Board, UAIs are not provided to either the Board or individual schools.

## 11 Websites

### **The Board of Studies website [www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au)**

Since the Office of the Board of Studies launched its website on the World Wide Web in September 1995, millions of teachers, students and parents have accessed the Board's website for information about the School Certificate, the Higher School Certificate (including past examination papers and reports) and other Board publications. Many regard the website as their 'filing cabinet online', as it contains many important documents to which they refer frequently.

- More than 100 000 pages are viewed every day throughout the year. Web ranking organisation Hitwise places the Board's website at fourth or fifth most popular State Government website of all sites accessed by Australians.
- The average volume of files downloaded each day is 3 gigabytes, rising to nearly 6.5 gigabytes a day in the lead-up to the HSC. Throughout the year, about 86 people are using the website every hour.
- Students doing the HSC can access a calendar of important dates leading up to the examinations, as well as the HSC examination timetable. They can also download or view copies of syllabuses, support materials, past HSC examination papers and HSC examiners' reports on the past HSC papers.
- Students and teachers can view Board of Studies publications such as Board Bulletin, which offers important news and updates about Board activities and decisions.
- About 70 emails a day are received on the Board's website with orders for Board products, inquiries 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. The process for the web publication of documents has been refined so that a document may appear on the website within an hour of the final version being authorised for publication.
- A list of links to school websites throughout Australia is maintained, now numbering in the thousands. School websites and email contacts are listed at the request of the school only.
- Many access the website through links with the Department of Education and Training and Charles Sturt University NSW HSC Online website (<http://hsc.csu.edu.au>) and other link pages where the Board site is listed, such as the Macquarie University Library link pages.



**NSW HSC Online**  
**<http://hsc.csu.edu.au>**

The NSW HSC Online website gives students sitting for the HSC access to a wealth of HSC resources and support, no matter where they live.

NSW HSC Online's materials have been developed by highly experienced HSC teachers and examiners. Each subject area has sections for tutorials, exams and resources, and provides detailed information on core and elective topics.

The NSW HSC Online also includes study and exam techniques, information for teachers about online teaching techniques and research, links to schools, and a segment called 'Beyond the HSC', where students can find information on post-HSC options and careers.

In 2001 the website was completely redesigned to support the changed HSC. In response to requests by teachers and students, a section has been added to support the parents of HSC students.

It makes help available to students in most major HSC subjects, including Aboriginal Studies, Agriculture, Ancient History, Arabic, Biology, Business Services, Business Studies, Chemistry, Chinese, Community & Family Studies, Construction, Dance, Design and Technology, Drama, Earth & Environmental Science, Economics, Engineering Studies, English, Entertainment, Food Technology, French, Geography, German, Hospitality, Indonesian, Industrial Technology, Information Processes & Technology, Information Technology, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Legal Studies, Mathematics, Metal & Engineering, Modern Greek, Modern History, Music, PDHPE, Physics, Primary Industries, Retail, Senior Science, Society and Culture, Software Design & Development, Spanish, Textiles & Design, Tourism and Visual Arts. The site is constantly being updated and expanded.

The NSW HSC Online 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 Professional Teachers' Council.

## 12 Showcase of outstanding HSC performances and works

The HSC students of 2004 will participate in a range of exhibitions and performances of outstanding works.

### ARTEXPRESS

ARTEXPRESS is an exhibition of outstanding 'bodies of work' produced by students for the 2004 HSC examination in Visual Arts. The exhibition is shown in city, metropolitan and regional centres. The bodies of work will be in a range of media including photography, video, digital media, painting, drawing, sculpture, textiles and fibre, ceramics, collection of works, design, graphics, digital animation, and documented forms.

The full program is as follows:

#### Metropolitan Venues 2005

<b>David Jones</b>	<b>24 January – 6 February (to be confirmed)</b>
<b>Art Gallery NSW</b>	<b>29 January – 28 March</b>
<b>Hazelhurst Art Gallery</b>	<b>11 February – 27 March</b>
<b>College of Fine Arts</b>	<b>14 February – 25 March (to be confirmed)</b>

#### Regional Tour 2005

<b>Newcastle Region Gallery</b>	<b>26 Feb – 17 April</b>
<b>Griffith</b>	<b>12 April – 22 May</b>
<b>Bathurst</b>	<b>27 May – 3 July</b>
<b>Lismore</b>	<b>10 July – 14 August</b>
<b>Armidale</b>	<b>26 Aug – 30 Sept</b>
<b>Goulburn</b>	<b>16 Oct – 13 Nov</b>

**Note: These dates are correct at time of printing.**

For further information, please contact the ARTEXPRESS Coordinator, The Arts Unit, NSW Department of Education and Training, on (02) 9318 0517 or 0408 967 712.

### ENCORE

ENCORE is an annual concert of outstanding music performances and compositions from HSC Music students. The concert was first held in 1989, and since 1993 ENCORE has been presented in the Concert Hall of the Sydney Opera House. ENCORE will take place on 21 February 2005, celebrating its 15th anniversary. This year there will be both a matinee and an evening concert due to the huge demand for tickets.

In ENCORE, students present original compositions and performances in a range of styles and genres that include vocal/choral music, chamber music, orchestral music, art music, jazz, popular music and music for theatre. These are exemplary pieces of work resulting from students' study of the HSC Music courses in Music 1, Music 2 and Music Extension. The concert will include solo, small and large ensemble pieces.

## DesignTECH

DesignTECH is an exhibition of outstanding Major Design Projects by HSC Design and Technology students. The exhibition includes the students' folios which provide valuable insights into their design and production processes.

Projects are selected for DesignTECH on the basis of innovative design, quality production techniques and technological applications.

DesignTECH will be exhibited in Sydney at the Powerhouse Museum from **4 December 2004 – 6 March 2005**.

The exhibition will tour as follows:

### **Regional Tour 2005** – Proposed dates to be confirmed

Wagga Wagga	9 March – 15 March
Newcastle	18 March – 3 April
Mudgee	6 April – 19 April
Wollongong	22 April – 8 May (launch 27 April)
Armidale	11 May – 16 May
Ballina	19 May – 24 May

## OnSTAGE

Exemplary Drama students from the 2004 HSC will have an opportunity to present individual and/or group performances at OnSTAGE. Scripts, video dramas and design projects are also exhibited along with applied research projects.

OnSTAGE comprises two different performance programs as well as an exhibition of individual projects. The OnSTAGE season will be from **5 to 12 February 2005** at the York Theatre, Seymour Theatre Centre, Chippendale NSW.

Writers OnSTAGE/OnSCREEN is a rehearsed reading of exemplary scripts from the script-writing individual project. Student drama video projects will also be shown during Writers OnSTAGE/OnSCREEN. Writers OnSTAGE/OnSCREEN will take place daily from **8 to 11 February 2005** in the Everest Theatre, Seymour Theatre Centre.

For further information on DesignTECH, ENCORE and OnSTAGE, please contact the Exhibitions Coordinator, Office of the Board of Studies on (02) 9367 8309.

## **13 2004 School Certificate**

### **New South Wales School Certificate**

The Board of Studies NSW issues the School Certificate to eligible students at the completion of Year 10. Students are assessed for the School Certificate on the basis of a combination of school-based assessment and external statewide tests. Students receive School Certificate award documents which show students' final results from school-based assessment and the external School Certificate tests. The School Certificate provides students, parents, employers and the general community with information on students' achievement at the end of the compulsory years of schooling.

### **Recent key reforms to the School Certificate**

Following an extensive review of the NSW Higher School Certificate by Professor Barry McGaw in the mid to late 1990s, the 'new' School Certificate was introduced in 1998. It was designed to add greater meaning and purpose to Year 10 study by promoting greater continuity between Years 10 and 11, by ensuring that students are completing meaningful work until the end of the year and by raising standards and student expectations.

The curriculum was strengthened with the introduction of new Years 7–10 History and Geography syllabuses that included mandatory new studies in Australian History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship in Years 9 and 10.

New external statewide School Certificate tests in English-literacy, Mathematics, Science and Australian History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship were introduced at the end of Year 10. These tests complement the school-based assessment of students in these subject areas by assessing and reporting foundation knowledge and skills against set statewide standards. A total of 83 837 students will sit the statewide School Certificate Tests in 2004.

### **Eligibility for the School Certificate**

To be eligible for the School Certificate in 2004 students must:

- attend a government school or a registered and accredited non-government school in NSW, or a school outside NSW recognised by the Board of Studies
- have satisfactorily completed a Board-approved program of study
- have made a serious attempt at the School Certificate Tests in English-literacy, Mathematics, Science and Australian History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship
- have completed Year 10.

Students are required to attend school until the final day of Year 10, as determined by the school system or by the principal in the case of non-systemic schools.

## **Key learning areas**

To receive the School Certificate, students must study the following five key learning areas (KLAs) each year in Years 7–10:

English

Mathematics

Science

Human Society and Its Environment

Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

During Years 7–10, students are also required to study courses in the key learning areas of Technological and Applied Studies, Creative Arts and Languages.

Students may also be credentialled for the satisfactory completion of additional (or elective) Board Developed Courses or Board Endorsed Courses undertaken during Years 9 and 10.

## **Assessment of students**

### **School-based assessment**

Schools award grades (A–E) to their students in all courses, based on their performance during the year.

Teachers assess student achievement in relation to the full range of outcomes for the course and use the Board's Course Performance Descriptors to determine the appropriate grade for each student. The use of these descriptors in assigning grades to students is designed to ensure comparability in the grades awarded by different schools.

### **School Certificate tests**

The external statewide School Certificate tests in English-literacy, Mathematics and Science and for Australian History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship are designed to assess students' foundation knowledge and skills in key areas of the curriculum. Student achievement in the tests is referenced against set statewide standards for each test. For each test, students receive a mark aligned to a performance band, together with a description of the knowledge and skills typically achieved by students placed in that band.

The School Certificate tests in English-literacy and Science will be held on Monday 8 November 2004, and in Mathematics and Australian History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship on Tuesday 9 November, 2004.

## **Reporting of results**

Students receive a School Certificate folio of results comprising:

School Certificate testamur

Record of Achievement Part A

Record of Achievement Part B

a Test Report for each of the tests in English-literacy, Mathematics and Science and for Australian History, Civics and Citizenship, and Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship.

Students who satisfactorily complete a School Certificate Life Skills course in a key learning area receive a Student Profile, which lists the outcomes achieved by the student in that course.

### **Testamur**

The School Certificate testamur states that the student has met all Board requirements.

### **Record of Achievement Part A**

This document records all courses completed in Years 9 and 10, along with the hours of study and the grades awarded by the school, as well as the satisfactory completion of the mandatory courses.

Schools award grades (A–E) to their students in all Stage 5 courses, using course performance descriptors developed by the Board of Studies. The descriptors are descriptions of typical student achievement. The descriptors are grouped into five different levels, ranging from ‘excellent’ to ‘elementary’.

Grade A	Excellent achievement. Extensive knowledge and understanding of the course content and high level of competence.
Grade B	High level of achievement. Thorough knowledge, understanding and competence.
Grade C	Substantial achievement. Sound knowledge and competence.
Grade D	Satisfactory achievement. Acceptable knowledge and understanding and basic level of competence in the processes and skills of the course.
Grade E	Elementary achievement. Elementary knowledge and understanding and limited competence in the processes and skills of the course.

Detailed course performance descriptors for each course are available on the Board’s website at [www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/schoolcertificate/sc\\_cpd.html](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/schoolcertificate/sc_cpd.html). In each course, schools match the student’s overall achievement in the course to the course performance descriptor that is most appropriate. The grade that corresponds to that descriptor is then awarded to the student.

The Board monitors the award of grades to ensure comparability in the grades awarded by different schools.

### **Record of Achievement Part B**

This shows the results achieved by the student in the School Certificate Tests in English-literacy, Mathematics, Science and Australian History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship. For each test, it shows:

- the mark awarded (out of a possible 100)
- the band achieved (from Band 1 to Band 6).

For the Australian History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship test, the result is reported as a mark out of 100 and a band for each of the two components: Australian History, Civics and Citizenship, and Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship.

## Test Reports

Students also receive a report for each test, providing more detail of their performance. The report shows a scale from 0 to 100, divided into six bands, where:

- Band 6 corresponds to the marks from 90 to 100
- Band 5 corresponds to the marks from 80 to 89
- Band 4 corresponds to the marks from 70 to 79
- Band 3 corresponds to the marks from 60 to 69
- Band 2 corresponds to the marks from 50 to 59
- Band 1 corresponds to the marks from 0 to 49

The test report shows the student's test mark on a vertical scale. A graph drawn along the scale shows the distribution of marks awarded to all the students who have sat the test. This indicates the position of the student within the total candidature of the test.

For Bands 2 to 6, there is a paragraph that describes the knowledge and skills typically demonstrated by a student whose results fall within that band.

For the Australian History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship test, students receive a separate test report for each of the two components of the test.

### The trial Computing Skills Test

From 2006, a Computing Skills test will be added to the requirements for the award of the School Certificate. It is anticipated that in 2006, most schools will offer the test in online format, but a pen-and-paper test will be available for schools that request it. The Board has been trialling testing of computing skills since 2001.

This year over 60 000 Year 10 students have been entered in the trial test. Of these over 25 000 will do the test online. The trial test will be conducted immediately following the School Certificate tests. Schools can allow their students to do the online test at any time during the school day from Wednesday 10 November to Monday 15 November. The pen-and-paper test will be available only on Monday 15 November.

The 2004 trial test consists of 100 questions, grouped into the following five computing skill areas:

- 1 perform basic computer operations
- 2 demonstrate basic word-processing skills to create, work with and modify text documents
- 3 demonstrate basic spreadsheet and database skills to create, work with and modify files
- 4 demonstrate basic graphics and multimedia skills to create, work with and modify graphics and multimedia-based files
- 5 demonstrate internet/intranet communication and research skills (including email).

Students will have 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours to complete the test.

The online test requires internet access to validate students, and to send their responses back to the Office of the Board of Studies. Prior to the test dates, trialling schools will be able to download a test tool from the secure area of *Schools Online* and use it to check that the test will run on the school's computers.

Early in Term 4 schools will be advised of the specific dates that schools trialling the online test can download the online test, instructions for the test and student PINs from the Board's website. The test will run on the school's local server from which multiple students can access it, or it can be installed on individual computers that will be used for the trial.

Students will be required to enter their Student Number and PIN when they log on to do the online test. During the test, students can scroll through 20 questions at a time, attempt the questions in any order, and review all questions to make sure they have all been attempted before they submit their answers. The display includes a timer that enables students to monitor their use of time during the test, and provides a warning 5 minutes before the 1½ hour time limit is up.

## 2004 School Certificate statistics<sup>2</sup>

### Geographical Location

<i>Location</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<b>Metropolitan</b>				
Metropolitan East	5 019	5 317	10336	12.33%
Metropolitan North	3 651	3 811	7462	8.90%
Metropolitan South West	6 192	6 446	12638	15.07%
Metropolitan North West	6 860	7 097	13957	16.65%
<b>Total</b>	<b>21 722</b>	<b>22 671</b>	<b>44393</b>	<b>52.95%</b>
<b>Country</b>				
Hunter	5 006	5 226	10232	12.20%
North Coast	3 767	3 930	7697	9.18%
North West	1 564	1 580	3144	3.75%
Riverina	2 280	2 379	4659	5.56%
South Coast	4 519	4 512	9031	10.77%
Western	2 260	2 391	4651	5.55%
<b>Total</b>	<b>19 396</b>	<b>20 018</b>	<b>39414</b>	<b>47.01%</b>
<b>Other Categories</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0.04%</b>
<b>Total of all Categories</b>	<b>41 130</b>	<b>42 707</b>	<b>83 837</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

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<sup>2</sup> Location according to Board of Studies Liaison Officer (BOSLO) regions. Maps of BOSLO regions are located at the end of Part B.



## 14 The Board of Studies NSW

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

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.

### Board Members

#### President of the Board

Professor Gordon Stanley

#### Ex-officio Members

Nominees of the Director-General, NSW Department of Education and Training, and the Managing Director, TAFE NSW.

Mr Robin Shreeve

Ms Leslie Loble

Dr Alan Laughlin

#### Appointed Members

Nominee of the New South Wales Vice-Chancellors' Committee:

Professor Anthony Baker

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

Mr Mark Wilson (representing parents of primary school children)

Ms Deborah Lloyd (representing parents of secondary school children)

Nominee of the Catholic Education Commission of New South Wales:

Dr Brian Croke

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

Mr Phillip Heath

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

Mr Larry Grumley

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 Caroline Benedet

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 Janet Chan (representing primary schools)
- Ms Suzette Young (representing secondary schools)

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):

- Ms Theresia Zadkovich (primary school teacher)
- Dr Mary Fogarty (secondary school teacher)

Person with knowledge and expertise in early childhood education:

- Associate Professor Sue Dockett

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

- Mr David Ella

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:

- Br Kelvin Canavan AM
- Ms Susan Gazis
- Dr Meredith Martin
- Mr John Gelling
- Ms Jennifer Neary
- (One position vacant)

## **Responsibilities of the Board**

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

- developing and endorsing courses of study
- 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 and course reports
- conducting statistical analyses
- facilitating and coordinating the HSC Advice Line
- planning and conducting 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.

The staff of the Office of the Board of Studies also provides similar support to the committees of the Board that deal with the School Certificate.

## **Board of Studies Liaison Officers**

The Office of 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 inquiries 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 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 Centre 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).

The Board of Studies Liaison Officers are:

***Metropolitan North***

Mr Paul Carnemolla  
9367 8356

***Metropolitan South West***

Ms Jenny Bryant  
9806 0932

***Hunter***

Ms Philippa Young  
4924 9976

***North West***

Mr Wilfried Keller  
6755 5043

***Riverina***

Mr David Lisle  
6937 3889

***Metropolitan East***

Mr Scott Thomson  
9314 7987

***Metropolitan North West***

Ms Vivien Brewer  
9806 0931

***North Coast***

Ms Edwina McCoy  
6659 3274

***Western***

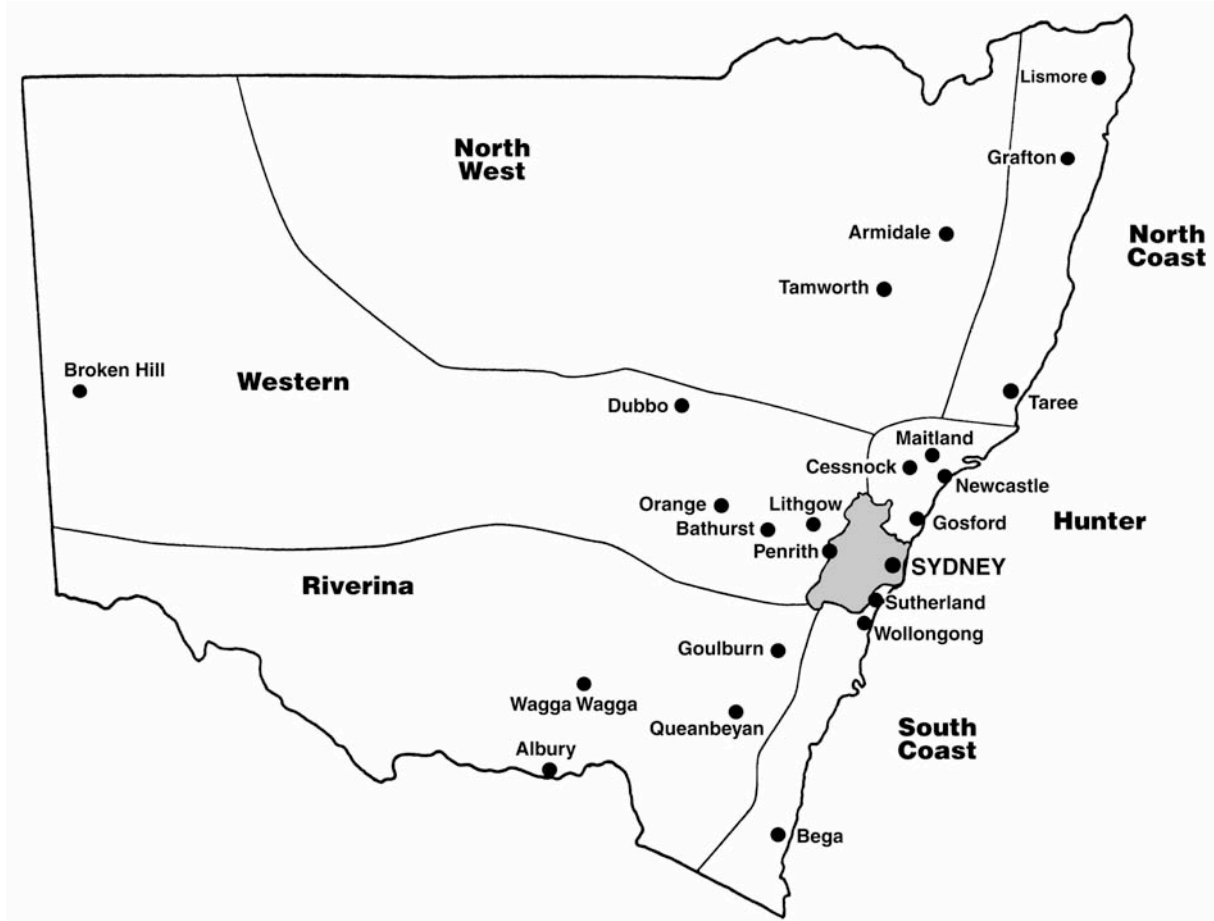
Ms Kathleen Prudence  
6334 8048

***South Coast***

Mr John Gildea  
4224 9940

## 15 Board of Studies Liaison Officer (BOSLO) area maps

### New South Wales



## Area Maps – Sydney Metropolitan

