

Board Bulletin



BOARD OF STUDIES NSW

December 1997 – Vol 6 No 10

Higher School Certificate marking goes North, South and West

The expansion of the Higher School Certificate marking process to include three new country marking centres this year gave unprecedented numbers of teachers in regional NSW the opportunity to participate in the marking of HSC examination papers.

The idea behind the new centres in Wagga Wagga, Bathurst and Lismore was to provide more country teachers with the chance to take part in HSC marking and the valuable professional development it offers.

'Marking HSC papers allows a greater understanding of the Higher School Certificate process,' the Minister for Education and Training, John Aquilina, said.

'Teachers will take this knowledge back to their schools where their colleagues and students will benefit from their experience.'


By marking HSC papers from across NSW, teachers are given greater exposure to the standard of exam answers at a state level. Students from regional and rural NSW will reap the benefits as teachers put the



Markers at the new Bathurst HSC marking centre.

experience they have gained into practice in their day-to-day teaching.

In Lismore, more than 100 teachers helped mark the English 2 Unit General (Reading) paper, about 40 teachers marked Contemporary English 2 Unit (Listening) in Bathurst and about 40 teachers marked English 2/3 Unit (Reading) at Wagga Wagga.

Marking of HSC exam papers was also conducted in Wollongong, Newcastle and Sydney. 



Update on English K-6

Consultation Update

Consultation on the first three draft documents for English K-6 (the English K-6 Syllabus, Modules and Work Samples: Writing) is now well under way.


The second set of documents, which have now been released to schools, contain:

- modules for explanation, description, exposition and discussion;
- work samples for Reading and Talking and Listening for each stage.

Schools can provide specific comments on this second set of documents by using the fax-back sheet that accompanies these documents. These documents will also be the subject of focus group meetings.

A parents' package and a principal's package are also being developed in consultation with parents and principals. Filming for the CD-ROM package on work samples is also currently under way.

Acknowledging our Writers

The names of the core project team for English K-6 were listed in a previous edition of *Board Bulletin*. Other writers who have been involved in the revision and development of the draft syllabus and support documents include: Dr Joan Rothery, Susan Feez, Maureen Hallahan, Michelle Dudley, Ruth French, Jan Donaldson, Meree Reynolds, Cherie Morris, Kim Cutting, Debra Hudson, Liz Newell and Melissa Nyholm. 

HSC and SC Important Dates

Year 10

- 11 Dec** Earliest date for issue of School Certificates, Records of Achievement and Student Profiles to students.
- 16 Dec** Latest date for student appeals against grades to be lodged with school principal.
- 18 Dec** Latest date for school review of grades.
Principals' notification to students of results of review.
- 19 Dec** Latest date for principals' notification to the Board of results of review of grades; submission of related forms.
- 22 Dec – 30 Jan 1998** Term 4 Vacation

Year 11

- 22 Dec – 30 Jan 1998** Term 4 Vacation

Year 12

- 1 Dec** Latest date for students' HSC assessment ranking reviews/appeals to be lodged with principal.
- 2 Dec** Latest date for submission of HSC Illness/Misadventure appeals.
- 4 Dec** Latest date for school conduct of assessment ranking reviews.
- 5 Dec** Principals' notification to candidates of results of review of appeals against assessment rankings.
Latest date for principals' notification to the Board (fax sufficient) of results of review of students' appeals against assessment rankings; submission of related forms.
- 8 Dec** Latest date for students whose assessment ranking reviews have been unsuccessful to notify principal of their wish to pursue the appeal.
- 9 Dec** Students' appeals to the Board against school reviews of assessment due at the Board — notification accepted by fax or letter.
- 22 Dec – 30 Jan 1998** Term 4 Vacation
- 6 Jan 98** HSC results delivered to students and principals.
Notification of Board's decisions on appeals for assessment rankings, 'U' determinations and Illness/Misadventure.
- 16 Jan 98** Candidates' applications for clerical rechecks of HSC results.
- 6 Feb 98** Principals' anomalous HSC result inquiries.

IMPORTANT NOTE

1997 HSC examination papers

1997 HSC examination papers will not be available until copyright clearances have been obtained.

The 1997 HSC examination CD-ROM will be available in Term 1, 1998.

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CHECK YOUR MAILBOX

- ❖ Visual Arts 11–12 Syllabus (updated and reprinted)
- ❖ HSC Statistics 1996
- ❖ Creative Arts Stage 6 KLA Handbook
- ❖ On Board Term 4, 1997
- ❖ Draft English K–6 Modules
- ❖ Draft English K–6 Work Samples (Reading, Talking and Listening)
- ❖ 1998 HSC Rules and Procedures
- ❖ 1998 English Prescribed Texts Poster



Documents currently being developed

- ❖ Primary Curriculum Overview
- ❖ Assessing and Reporting Using Stage Outcomes Part 2
- ❖ HSC/TAFE Credit Transfer Guide

The *Board Bulletin* is a regular publication by the Board of Studies NSW. Principals are requested to circulate it among teachers and members of the School Council, P & C and parents. One copy should be filed for reference. Schools may only photocopy this publication for use by teachers, students and parents. Contributions or suggestions for articles are welcome.

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President's Message



For many people things are beginning to slow down, but December is one of our busiest times at the Board. With the Higher School Certificate examinations finished on 24 November, marking is being completed and students' results finalised to ensure that when 6 January arrives the 63,000 students who sat this year's HSC examinations will receive their Higher School Certificate in the mail.

The Board of Studies is also in the final stages of the curriculum investigation into the implications of the 2 unit structure for courses in the Higher School Certificate, as outlined in the Government's HSC White Paper, Securing Their Future. Details of this process are included in the Board's newsletter.

While there is a hive of activity at the Board surrounding secondary schooling, the Board is also progressing with its program for primary schools. Consultation on the English K-6 Syllabus is coming to a close and the revised syllabus will be in schools next year.

Subject to Board of Studies approval of the amended Writing Brief, work will also start on the HSIE K-6 Syllabus.

The Minister's Young Designers Awards exhibition is currently on display at the Powerhouse Museum. This exhibition recognises the work of talented Years 7 and 8 Design and Technology students and is certainly worth a look. DesignTech, an exhibition of outstanding major design projects by 1997 HSC Design and Technology students, will also be on display at the Powerhouse Museum from the end of December.

OnSTAGE and ENCORE will showcase the work of HSC Drama and Music students. Held in February, these performances have become star attractions on the education calendar.

As the year nears completion, I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the members and staff of the Board to wish teachers, students and parents the very best for the season, and to thank everyone who has assisted the Board with its work.



Warren A Grimshaw

Evaluation of the Dance Years 7-10 Syllabus

At the end of 1996 a survey was distributed to 113 schools offering the Dance 7-10 course. Its purpose was to provide Dance teachers with an opportunity to comment on the existing Dance Years 7-10 Syllabus and to identify areas highly regarded or in need of review. Responses were received from 34 schools, representing a response rate of 35 percent.

Teachers considered the main strengths of the syllabus to be its accessibility to a wide range of students, allowing a diversity of Dance styles to be studied through Performance, Composition and Appreciation. The skills and knowledge gained through the study of this syllabus were considered a strong foundation for the study of Dance in Years 11 and 12.

Teachers identified the main weaknesses of the syllabus as a lack of interrelatedness between the components of Performance, Composition and Appreciation and stressed that there was a need for safe dance practice to be integrated within the structure of the syllabus. Resources, support material and current information on assessment were identified as major areas of need.

It is intended that the findings of this survey will provide guiding principles for a review of this syllabus in future years.

A report on the evaluation of the Dance Years 7-10 Syllabus has been sent to all respondents and is available to all schools upon request.

Contact: Publications Branch by fax on (02) 9262 6270.

Dance and Classical Ballet 1997 HSC exemplary works

Call Back features exemplary performances and compositions from the 1997 Higher School Certificate in Dance. Classical Ballet exemplary works will be featured for the first time in one performance. The programs are designed to assist teachers, students and independent artists to better understand the performance and composition components of the Dance 2 Unit Syllabus and the Classical Ballet 2/3 Unit Syllabus.

All tickets are \$10 and seats are strictly limited.

Venue: Studio Theatre, Newman Street, Newtown

Dates: **Call Back**

Saturday 13 December at 5.00 pm and 8.00 pm

Sunday 14 December at 2.00 pm, 5.00 pm and 8.00 pm

Classical Ballet exemplary works

Sunday 14 December at 12.00 pm

Bookings are to be made on a booking form that will be sent to schools currently offering Dance (Years 7-12) or Classical Ballet. Booking forms can also be obtained by contacting Mr Craig Teece, Riverside Girls High School, on (02) 9816 4264, or Ms Gail Barclay on (02) 9630 0905 (h) or (02) 9686 6611 (w).




Primary Matters

Primary Syllabus Development Schedule

The following chart provides information about progress on the development of K–6 syllabus documents in relation to the agreed target completion dates. These completion dates have been scheduled to ensure that appropriate consultation takes place with teachers prior to the release of syllabuses in the Key Learning Areas and to ensure that the syllabuses are released in an orderly fashion with due consideration for teacher workload.

While the Board will have the syllabus documents available as indicated, decisions about implementation dates will be left to school systems or schools.

Key Learning Area	Curriculum Project	Target completion date	Progress	Anticipated distribution date of final documents to schools
Mathematics	Development of stage outcomes for the existing 1989 Mathematics K-6 Syllabus	July 1997	The Draft Outcomes released for consultation in 1997 were endorsed by the Board on November 4	In schools for use from the commencement of 1998
English	Revision of the Syllabus and Support Document	March 1998	Draft Syllabus and Support Documents currently in schools for consultation	March 1998
Human Society and Its Environment	Development of the HSIE K-6 Syllabus and Support Documents	July 1998	Writing Brief for the syllabus amended following consultation in 1997	In schools for use from the commencement of 1999
Personal Development, Health and Physical Education	Development of PDHPE K-6 Syllabus and Support Documents based on current draft (in schools)	1999/2000	Project team to be appointed in December to develop final syllabus and support documents from the current draft	September 1999
Creative Arts	Development of Creative Arts K-6 Syllabus and Support Documents	1999/2000	A small sample of schools is currently involved in an informal trial of draft units of work for the draft support document	1999/2000

In addition to the above KLA syllabus documents, the Board will be releasing Languages syllabuses for Korean, Chinese and Italian over the next twelve months. 

HSIE K–6 Syllabus Writing Brief Consultation Report

The Board would like to thank all those who participated in the HSIE K–6 Syllabus Writing Brief consultation during August and September. In particular, thank you to the 900 schools, individuals and organisations who took time to complete and return the survey, the 28 focus group schools who participated in meetings, and the academic reference group that participated in a teleconference.

The responses were generally positive, with specific suggestions forming a very constructive basis for the revision of the Writing Brief, which will guide the development of a draft syllabus early next year.

The findings were collated early in October and the results included in a report presented to the Board. The Board noted the advice and the revision of the Writing Brief will now proceed.

Where conflicting advice was received, endeavours have been made to coordinate the advice on the strength of submissions, while taking into account the overall acceptance of the existing content and direction of the Writing Brief.

Key advice included:

- ✍ Locate, in the syllabus, the stage outcomes next to the knowledge and understandings.
- ✍ Review the difficulty of the proposed outcomes, particularly in Early Stage 1 and Stage 3.

- ✍ Include more skills and values and attitudes indicators to reflect their presence in the outcomes.
- ✍ Develop a core of content for each stage.
- ✍ Ensure that the units of work support this core of content.
- ✍ Ensure that intercultural understandings, including studies of Asia, are strengthened in the content.
- ✍ Review and strengthen the inclusion of Aboriginal perspectives in the core subject matter of the Syllabus Writing Brief, including a contemporary perspective.
- ✍ Review and strengthen the inclusion of General Religious and Moral Education in the content of the Syllabus Writing Brief.
- ✍ Ensure that Current Affairs are strengthened in the content.
- ✍ Ensure that repetition of subject matter across the stages and the strands is minimised.
- ✍ Review the location of the values and attitudes section and the skills section in the document.
- ✍ Review the organisation of the skills including the headings.

The consultation has provided a strong basis for the next stage of syllabus development. 

Expressions of Interest for Project Team Human Society and Its Environment K-6

The Board of Studies has recently completed consultation on the HSIE K–6 Syllabus Writing Brief and is now seeking expressions of interest for a Project Team to develop the draft syllabus in 1998.

Expressions of Interest for Project Team History Stages 4 and 5

The Board of Studies is seeking expressions of interest for a Project Team to develop the syllabus in History for Stages 4 and 5, early in 1998.

Expressions of Interest for Project Team Geography Stages 4 and 5

The Board of Studies is seeking expressions of interest for a Project Team to develop the syllabus in Geography for Stages 4 and 5, early in 1998.

An application form for each of the project teams may be obtained from the Office of the Board of Studies and submitted along with information on the applicant's:

- ✍ demonstrated knowledge of the subject area;
- ✍ understanding of, and ability to, include an Aboriginal perspective;
- ✍ demonstrated understanding of, and ability to, write curriculum material that is inclusive;
- ✍ recent teaching experience;
- ✍ prior experience in curriculum materials writing at a school, regional or state level.

Application forms from: Marcus Kearns
(02) 9367 8379

Enquiries to: Virginia Frost (02) 9367 8150




Closing date: 22 December 1997

Support for Science and Technology K–6

Science and Technology K–6 Syllabus Evaluation

A limited evaluation of the Science and Technology K–6 Syllabus was carried out in 1996. As a result of this evaluation, the Board of Studies has endorsed a number of actions to meet the needs of NSW primary school teachers and students.

These include:

-  collection and publication of work samples;
-  provision of advice through the Board’s website on specific areas identified in the evaluation including resource management and exemplary programs;
-  completion of the Teaching Kits series.

Work Samples CD-ROM Project

A work samples CD-ROM project is being undertaken by officers of the Board of Studies working with a number of schools across Stages 1–3, during 1997 and 1998. The CD-ROM will include units of work with work samples illustrating aspects of student achievement.

“The CD-ROM will include units of work with work samples illustrating aspects of student achievement.”

Teaching and learning issues such as skill development in the Designing and Making process and links with other Key Learning Areas will also be addressed. A number of teachers from schools across NSW have been approached and invited to

participate in this project. A Briefing Day will be held with identified teachers in late November to discuss the key issues that need to be addressed as well as plans to collect and annotate work samples. The CD-ROM is scheduled for completion in late 1998.

During 1998 the Board’s website will feature a series of articles by teachers that will focus on strategies used in Science and Technology K–6 teaching and learning activities.

Inquiries regarding these projects should be directed to Mandy Shaw, phone (02) 9367 8267 or e-mail shaw@boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au.

Science and Technology K–6 Units of Work

Other support for the Science and Technology Key Learning Area includes an initiative by the Department of School Education. In Term 3, 1997, Department Officers coordinated and supported ten schools in their implementation of Science and Technology K–6 Units of Work Part 2. As part of the project, teachers have documented teaching and learning activities and implementation strategies, and collected samples of students’ work as well as contributed their comments and reflections. These work samples will form the basis of a Department of School Education Science and Technology K–6 website.

It is also envisaged that there will be provision for ongoing teacher discussion and responses through the Internet. The Department of School Education’s Science and Technology K–6 website is anticipated to be in operation in 1998.

The Catholic Education Commission has developed a Science and Technology K–6 and Science 7–10 discussion forum attached to the Catholic Education Commission website. This site can be reached on

<http://www.cecnsw.catholic.edu.au/curriculum>

On Board magazine seeks student editorial committee

***On Board*, the Board of Studies magazine for Years 10, 11 and 12 students, is looking for budding journalists, photographers, designers and artists to form a nine-strong editorial committee for the magazine.**



*Members of this year's student editorial committee.
Photo: Alex Sutherland*

The committee will write, design and illustrate the magazine four times in 1998 and students should be able to commit four full days from the school year to this project. Applications are welcomed from students in all schools in New South Wales.

Teachers are asked to nominate suitable students from their school. Nominees must be in Year 10, 11 or 12 at the beginning of the 1998 school year. Students should write a one page application, explaining their interest and experience in journalism, photography, illustration and/or graphic design. The application should include the student's name, home and school address and contact numbers. Students should also include some examples of their work (no more than three) to support their application. Please advise students to send copies rather than original work, as we

cannot return work to students. The application must be signed by the principal of the school.

The submissions will be assessed by a panel comprising representatives of Australian Teachers of Media NSW and Board officers. Successful applicants will be contacted through their schools.

Further information can be obtained by the contacting the managing editor of *On Board*, Jo Mackay, on (02) 9367 8248. An application form is available from the Board but it is not essential.

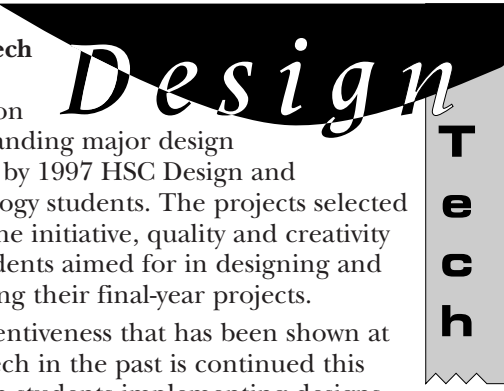
The closing date for submissions is 19 December 1997. All submissions should be returned to Jo Mackay, Office of the Board of Studies, 117 Clarence Street, Sydney 2000, faxed to (02) 9367 8479, or e-mailed to:

mckay@boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au

Students' talent on display

The artistic talents of 1997 Year 12 students are set to be displayed in a series of exhibitions around the state. DesignTech, ENCORE and OnSTAGE will present the achievements of HSC students from a variety of courses. The exhibitions incorporate final exam presentations, showcasing student works from the Design and Technology, Music, and Drama courses. The scope and reach of these exhibits and performances has seen them become, along with ARTEXPRESS, an intrinsic part of the Year 12 students' end-of-year achievements, celebrating their talent and hard work.

DesignTech is an exhibition of outstanding major design projects by 1997 HSC Design and Technology students. The projects selected reflect the initiative, quality and creativity that students aimed for in designing and producing their final-year projects. The inventiveness that has been shown at *DesignTech* in the past is continued this year with students implementing designs that are both innovative and beneficial to the community.



DesignTech will be shown in Sydney before moving on to six regional centres.

Powerhouse Museum Exhibition

20 December 1997 to 17 February 1998

Regional tours

Newcastle	Charlestown Square 21 February to 2 March 1998
Coffs Harbour	Park Beach Plaza 5–11 March 1998
Tamworth	Tamworth Shopping World 13–19 March 1998
Orange	Orange City Centre date to be confirmed
Wagga Wagga	Venue and date to be confirmed
Wollongong	Westfield Warrawong date to be confirmed

DesignTech Student Seminars at the Powerhouse Museum

10–12 February 1998

Refer to booking page in *Board Bulletin* Vol 6 No 9.

Musical achievements can be seen and heard at ENCORE, an exhibition of music performed and composed by students for the 1997 HSC Music examination. With a wide range of musical genres explored, ENCORE is a rich tapestry of sound that encompasses the course's Performance and Composition components, particularly composing, musicology and aural discrimination.



An annual event since 1989, the exhibition has become well known for its variety of musical arrangements, with instruments as diverse as the didgeridoo and the electric guitar played.

ENCORE will be presented in the Concert Hall of the Sydney Opera House for one performance only.

Sydney Opera House: 22 February 1998 at 6 pm

Tickets on sale now at Sydney Opera House.

Adults \$20, Students \$15

Phone: (02) 9250 7777

Fax: (02) 9251 3943

e-mail: bookings@soh.nsw.gov.au

OnSTAGE 1997 HSC Drama students perform a selection of exemplary works in OnSTAGE.

The outstanding group presentations focus on students' abilities to create an original theatrical piece. Exemplars of individual projects in performance are also included in the program and Projects in Design and Critical Analysis comprise the exhibition in the foyer.

OnSTAGE helps to develop the students' performance skills, while displaying the enormous talent they possess.

OnSTAGE will be performed at the Seymour Theatre Centre in February to March next year.

Seymour Theatre Centre

Cleveland Street, Chippendale NSW

25–28 February 1998 at 1:30 pm and 7:30 pm

1 March 1998 at 1 pm and 7 pm

Tickets on sale now at: Seymour Theatre Centre

Box Office. Adults \$20, Students \$15

Phone: (02) 9364 9400

DesignTech, ENCORE and OnSTAGE are proudly presented by the Board of Studies NSW and the Department of School Education.

Enquiries: (02) 9367 8309





Creative Teachers Apply Innovative Technologies

The Learning and Technology Forum conducted by the Board of Studies on 1 November revealed the many ways in which teachers are employing technology in their classrooms. The discussions ranged from do-it-yourself network cabling, making and using multimedia and cooperative learning, to the problems of using the Internet and doing examinations on laptop computers.

The full-day forum, held at the University of Western Sydney, followed the Board's first Learning and Technology Forum held at the University of NSW in June. More than 200 people took a day from their weekend to listen and contribute to shaping the future of technology and learning in New South Wales classrooms.

The forum presenters focused on issues related to technology that the Board of Studies needs to take into account in developing curriculum and in delivering its services to schools. They also provided examples of school initiatives in the use of technology to aid learning.

Two sample school strategies were investigated. Lindsay Freeman, Mimi van den Berg and Tracy Considine of Alford's Point Primary presented an outline of their whole-school blueprint to incorporate technology into their classrooms. Their main tactics involved buying second-hand Macintosh 575s to provide as many hands-on computers in each classroom as possible, installing intranet cabling, limiting the software products they use, and encouraging students to use HyperStudio multimedia authoring software wherever appropriate in their learning activities.

Diana Stewart, Computer Coordinator at Pymble Ladies College, explained how they have also made a whole-school technology decision, with students carrying notebook computers and plugging into a mature, powerful and fully supported network system. She explained some of the lessons they have learnt, and shared some of the pitfalls and management problems encountered.

Lyndon Sharp, Head of the Board's Interactive Design Group, demonstrated a colourful range of interesting new ways in which the Internet, CD-ROMs, sounds, videos and images can be used to enhance student learning.


Malcolm Salier, Chief Executive Officer of the Tasmanian Secondary Assessment Board, had recently returned from visiting schools in the USA

where he studied examples of innovative curriculum projects using technology to enhance student learning. Malcolm shared some observations about planning for the implementation of statewide programs to deliver technology in the classroom.

Jennifer Aduckiewicz explained the Values in Information Technology and Learning (VITAL) project, which is being undertaken as a cooperative project across school sectors. This project is aimed at ensuring values are addressed in planning for the increase in the use of technology in education.


Toni Downes, Associate Dean, Faculty of Education UWS, completed the presentations with her thought-provoking presentation on the impact of technology on what and how students learn. She has explored the ways children learn through the use of computers at home, including game-playing. Her research shows that children adopt sophisticated problem-solving techniques and behaviours that are often ignored or remain untapped in classrooms.

The breakout session before lunch provided an opportunity for principals, teachers, computer coordinators and network managers to explore issues and share opinions in small groups, while the full panel session at the end of the day provided further opportunity for the audience and presenters to highlight the key issues raised throughout the forum.

Many issues were raised that will have a strong impact on the Board of Studies curriculum development. These are currently being analysed. Key papers from the forum will be placed on the Board's website. 

MYDA exhibition on display at the Powerhouse Museum

The Minister's Young Designers Awards (MYDA) exhibition is currently on display at the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney.

Design and Technology students in Years 7 and 8 are asked to look at the world around them, to investigate products, systems and environments and to design a successful solution in an area of interest to them. The result is a fascinating exhibition of 23 outstanding projects well worth a visit. 

Board Bulletin

Extra copies available

Schools may request additional copies of the *Board Bulletin* if the standard quantity is not enough.

Secondary schools may request 20 copies instead of the standard 12, and primary schools may request 12 instead of the standard 4 copies.

Principals should complete the coupon and return to the address below.

Please post this coupon to:

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Office of the Board of Studies
GPO Box 5300
Sydney NSW 2001

or fax to:

Publications Branch
(02) 9262 6270

Please increase the number of copies of the *Board Bulletin* sent to this school:

Primary school – 12 copies

Secondary school – 20 copies

School number:.....

School name:

Address:

Principal's name:

Principal's signature:



PRODUCT NEWS

Watch for our new products in 1998

The first editions of *Board Bulletin* in 1998 will announce a range of new products from the Board of Studies. These will include exciting new titles in a PDHPE K-6 Teaching Kit, as well as three new titles to supplement the English K-6 Teaching Kit.

A new School Certificate English resource will be available early in the new year.

A new range of HSC Sample Answers will be available — selected subjects from the 1997 HSC examinations, including a selection of the best of HSC Writing Tasks for English 2UG/2UR; Geography; Contemporary English; Society and Culture; Business Studies; Computing Studies and PDHPE.

We will also provide further information on an Aboriginal Visual Arts Teaching Kit for Years 7-12. It will include four books, covering not only New South Wales artists, but national biographies, the marketing and copyright issues involved, as well as teacher's notes (separate sets of slides will also be available).


Thanks to everyone for their support of Board products during 1997. It is wonderful to see so much interest in our resources and to know more and more teachers are aware of their benefits. Have a peaceful and relaxing break and I look forward to providing you with the Board's usual care and service during 1998.

Helen Griffin
Marketing Officer
Office of the Board of Studies
Phone: (02) 9367 8331 Fax: (02) 9262 6270
e-mail: griffin@boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au
Internet address: <http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au>

HSC Advice Line takes record number of calls

The HSC Advice Line received a record 39,150 calls this year, as students across the state phoned in to seek assistance with their final examination preparations.

This was the third year the Advice Line operated and for the six weeks it was open, students took full advantage of the knowledge on offer.

With just over 63,000 students sitting this year's HSC examinations, 39,150 calls represent an average of almost two calls for every three students. 

Science Symposium Gets Teachers Talking

More than 150 teachers, parents and academics from across NSW attended the Board of Studies Years 11–12 Science Symposium at St Mary's Senior High School last month.

President of the Board of Studies, Mr Warren Grimshaw, said the symposium was to be a forum for discussion of the widest possible range of views relevant to the development of the Stage 6 Science courses.

The symposium was the first stage in the revision of the Stage 6 Science syllabuses and the Board of Studies will be seeking advice and consulting widely throughout all steps of the revision process.

Mr Ross Kingsland, the Manager of Educational Programs at the CSIRO, gave the first keynote address and spoke of the concern that Science students were not actively enjoying their courses and often saw little relevance in them. This set the scene for the debates that ensued during the two-day symposium.

Day 1 of the symposium included a series of presentations from experts in the fields of Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, Physics and Vocational Education. Presenters also canvassed the possible rationales for the new General Science course. The


input from speakers such as Emeritus Professor Peter Fensham, Monash University; Dr Bob Bucat, University of Western Australia; Associate Professor Graeme Russell, University of NSW; Dr Mary Peat, University of Sydney; Theresa Winchester-Seeto, Macquarie University; Mr Brian Ferry, University of Wollongong; and Dr Michael Matthews, University of NSW, stimulated debate about the principles upon which the new science courses could be based.

The second keynote address was given by Helen Macindoe from Bradfield College, and focused on the need to take account of Vocational Education when considering the development of the new Science courses.

Day Two provided delegates with the opportunity to comment on the range of issues that need to be taken into account in developing appropriate knowledge and understandings, skills and values, and attitudes for the new Stage 6 Science courses. The science workshops raised vigorous debate, clarified those areas where consensus existed and identified areas where further discussion is needed.

To canvass the widest possible range of views among the science community, the Board of Studies invited all groups involved in science and science education to nominate participants to attend the symposium. Delegates were drawn from professional, tertiary, science, teacher educator and teacher associations. This resulted in a group of enthusiastic and committed delegates from a diverse range of backgrounds, including a large number of teachers from country schools.

'It's exciting to participate in a forum that allows frank and open discussion and where we've been actively encouraged in new possibilities for the Stage 6 courses,' said Margaret Watts, Head Teacher at Endeavour High School.

In determining the future direction of the Science syllabus in Stage 6, the Board will consider the Syllabus Advisory Committee's detailed report from the symposium, including the various papers that were presented. The Board will also publish the symposium papers, which will include a summary of the discussions from each of the workshops. 



Participants at the Years 11–12 Science Symposium