

# Understanding HSC results



Your guide to understanding your  
Higher School Certificate results  
and what they represent

If you have satisfied all the requirements, you will be awarded the Higher School Certificate and receive your HSC credentials in January.

Achieving the HSC is different from getting a driver licence or an ATAR. You do not receive a simple 'pass' or 'fail', or a single rank or mark overall.

Rather, you will receive HSC marks that reflect the level of **knowledge, skills and understanding** you have achieved after completing each of your HSC courses.



## Your HSC results

Your achievement in each course in the HSC is reported in relation to defined standards, ensuring you are rewarded for your performance with the mark you deserve, no matter how many other people performed at a similar, higher, or lower level. There is no pre-determined number of students in each mark range.

These achievement standards do not change each HSC year, making it possible to compare the performances of students in the same course across different years. Therefore, you know your HSC mark in a course has the same meaning as someone who achieved the same HSC mark last year for example.

Your HSC credentials will include your HSC testamur, Record of Achievement, and a Course Report for each course you studied. If you studied a Vocational Education and Training

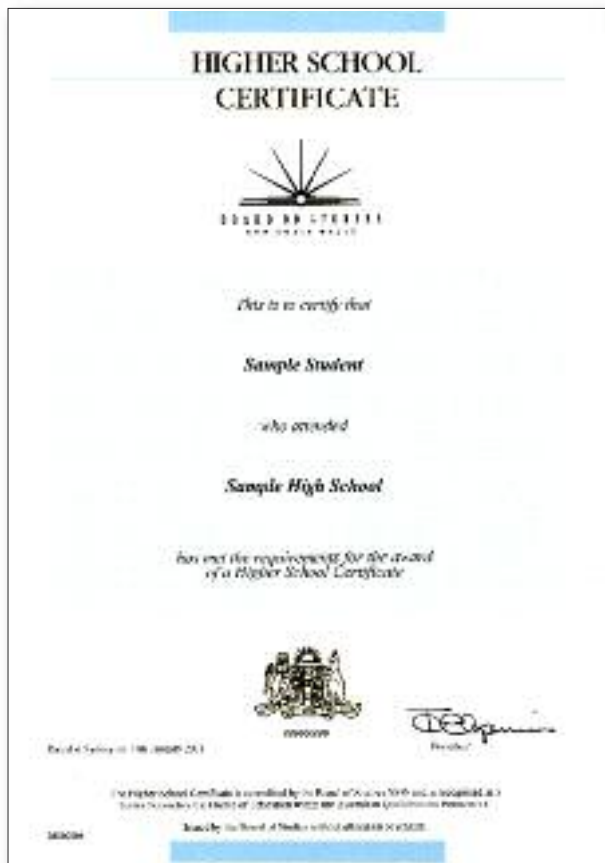
course, you may also receive an Australian Qualifications Framework VET certificate or VET Statement of Attainment.

Your HSC results will be reported on your Record of Achievement. In most courses, your result will consist of your Examination mark and your Assessment mark, which determines your HSC mark for each course you studied. Your HSC mark will align with a performance band describing the performance of a typical student in that mark range in the course.

You can see the performance band descriptions and Standards Packages for each HSC course on the Board's website for a better understanding of the level of performance required for each performance band. Standards Packages include actual student responses from different bands and are published for a variety of past examination questions.

### HSC testamur

The HSC testamur is the formal certificate you will receive once you have met all your HSC requirements.





**Examination mark**  
Shows your performance in the exam set and marked by the Board of Studies.



**Assessment mark**  
The marks you received for your assessment tasks set by and marked at school during the year.



**HSC mark**  
A 50:50 combination of your examination mark and assessment mark.



**Performance band**  
The performance band your HSC mark falls into.  
On your Course Report, each performance band has a corresponding description of a typical performance by a student within that HSC mark range. The higher your performance band, the better your performance in that course.

## How your results are determined

Several thousand experienced teachers from across the state are employed by the Board to mark the HSC written and practical exams. Students sit for more than 500,000 individual examinations each year, using almost two million writing booklets.

Your exam paper for a course will be split into sections and marked by many different markers using marking guidelines set by the exam committee. Your English exam, for example, will be marked by at least 12 different markers, each specialising in the question they are allocated. A Supervisor of Marking is appointed for every course, ensuring every student's performance, project or written exam response is

marked accurately and fairly. The final step to determining your examination mark is the alignment of exam results to the standards.

Your assessment mark represents the measurement of your performance in a wider range of outcomes than can be tested in a state-wide exam. Your school submits an assessment mark based to the Board based on your performance in assessment tasks such as tests, written or oral assignments and projects for example. The Board then adjusts the mark using a process called moderation. The purpose of moderation is to place the assessment marks awarded by all schools in each course on the same scale.

## HSC results services

For more information about understanding HSC results, including how to access them and explanations of the marking, moderation and alignment processes, visit the HSC results section of the Board's website [boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au](http://boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au)

### HSC Results Inquiry Centre

 **13 11 12**

A telephone hotline available to call after results are released if you have any questions.

The Board also offers the following HSC results services. It is important to note these services do not involve a re-mark of examination responses. Visit the Board's website for more details.

#### HSC Results Check

If you feel your examination mark is not as you expected, this service is an opportunity to confirm your marks were processed correctly for a fee.

#### HSC Raw Marks Report

You are able to request a report of the raw examination marks for each course you studied for a fee.

#### HSC Examination Responses

You are able to request a copy of your examination response for each of your courses with a written examination for a fee.

#### Replacement certificates

If your certificates are ever lost or destroyed, you can order a replacement for a fee.



## Other post-HSC services

#### Careers Advisory Service

Free phone service offered by the Department of Education and Communities available after results are released in December. The service provides students and their families or caregivers with up-to-date and relevant information about the range of available career and study options. For more information visit [cas.det.nsw.edu.au](http://cas.det.nsw.edu.au)

#### TAFE NSW

For courses, application and enrolment procedures or careers counsellor appointments call 131 601 or visit [tafensw.edu.au](http://tafensw.edu.au)

#### Universities Admissions Centre (UAC)

For more information about the ATAR and university admissions visit [uac.edu.au](http://uac.edu.au)

## AUSTRALIAN TERTIARY ADMISSION RANK (ATAR)

The HSC results are used by the Universities Admissions Centre (UAC) to calculate a rank order of students known as the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

The ATAR is not a mark, nor is it a summary of the HSC. It is a ranking system used to allocate university placements.

UAC releases the ATAR the day after the release of HSC results. UAC calculates the university admission rankings each year using your moderated assessment marks and total exam marks (both before alignment with the standards).

Notification of your ATAR is optional. Students undertaking the HSC may indicate that they do not wish to receive an ATAR. Many students who do not wish to gain entry to university do not request calculation of an ATAR.

To be eligible for an ATAR, students must satisfactorily complete at least 10 units of eligible Board Developed Courses for which formal examinations are conducted by the Board of Studies.

