



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Verity Firth MP
Minister for Education and Training

11 October 2010

HSC exams for 2010 begin this week

A record 71,000 students begin their final NSW Higher School Certificate exams this week.

The Minister for Education and Training, Verity Firth, has wished all students the best of luck.

“To put things in context - if we gathered this year’s HSC students together the group would match the population of a big regional city like Coffs Harbour.

“Students have already obtained half of their HSC mark from their school based work.

“These final exams count for the other 50%, and are an opportunity for students to show how much they have learned.

“Students should give themselves the best chance to do as well as they can but they should keep their HSC experience in perspective - remember there are many pathways to university, training or a job.

“What’s exciting this year is that about one-third of HSC students will graduate with a dual qualification - their HSC credential and a nationally-recognised vocational certificate.”

Ms Firth said 2010 has seen NSW record strong growth in science course enrolments.

“For years NSW has bucked the national trend – a national trend that shows a decrease in secondary science enrolments.

“But 2010 has been a particularly good year for our State with every one of the five HSC science courses recording an increase in enrolments.

“Business Studies, which has been the third-largest HSC course for a decade now only leads its nearest rival, Biology, by one enrolment.

“The continued growth in science is great news at a time when industry forecasts show significant demand for health care workers over the next 20 years.

“The NSW Government has invested around \$145 million for 800 new science facilities at 159 schools - and it’s paying dividends.”

Business Studies and Classical Greek Continuers are the first exams on Thursday 14 October and Visual Arts written exam is the last on Wednesday 10 November. The ‘all-in’ mandatory English exams are on Friday 15 October and Monday 18 October.

“As always, there is a wide range of services available to help students with their studies. The HSC Advice Line opens tomorrow, offering expert advice on the most popular HSC courses,” Ms Firth said.

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Interesting 2010 HSC facts and figures

- There are a record 71 310 HSC enrolments this year.
- Students in at least six countries will sit this year's HSC exams.
- Three out of four Year 12 students (more than 53 600) have chosen to take Mathematics, making it by far the most popular elective subject.
- Business Studies is the third most popular subject (16 061), but has a new competitor for third place with Biology now at 16 060, up from 15 502 in 2009
- Every HSC science course grew this year. About 45 per cent of all HSC students study at least one science course.
- While still a small course, enrolments for Earth and Environmental Science (1471) have increased by 29 per cent since 2005, up from 1141. This increase might be associated with a growing ecological awareness among students.
- There are 9692 student artwork entries in the 2010 HSC Visual Arts course. Approximately 60% of the artworks are brought to Sydney to be marked, while the other 40% are marked in schools by markers travelling around NSW.
- Almost one third (31 per cent) of HSC candidates are enrolled in at least one technology course. Textiles and Design enrolments (2283) have risen by 35 per cent in the past 5 years, while student numbers for Engineering Studies (1841) have grown by 30 per cent in the same period.
- One in every three HSC students will leave school with a dual qualification – their HSC credential and a nationally recognised vocational education and training certificate.
- About 10 per cent of HSC candidates are enrolled in one or more Language courses.
- Some of the fastest growing language courses over the past five years are Vietnamese Continuers (75 per cent), French Beginners (43 per cent), Chinese Beginners (40 per cent), Spanish Beginners (35 per cent) and Japanese Beginners (22 per cent).
- Online resources include *Students Online*, <http://studentsonline.bos.nsw.edu.au/> which offers quick links to HSC syllabuses, past exam papers and answers to frequently asked questions.
- *How Your HSC Works*, <http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/yourhsc/> explains what goes on behind the scenes of the HSC.
- *HSC Online*, <http://hsc.csu.edu.au/> includes study strategies, advice on exam techniques and information on a number of HSC subjects.
- The HSC Advice Line can be accessed by calling 13 11 12: Monday – Thursday 4 pm – 10 pm, Saturday 10 am – 6 pm, and Sunday 10 am – 10 pm.