

Media Release

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FAIRNESS AND INTEGRITY CORE TO NSW HSC

The Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) has released the 2014 data for four programs that support the fairness and integrity of the NSW Higher School Certificate:

- Disability provisions
- Illness/misadventure applications
- Maintaining integrity in HSC examinations
- Maintaining integrity in school assessments

President of BOSTES, Tom Alegounarias said the NSW HSC is internationally recognised for the quality of its syllabuses, teaching, and the fairness and integrity of the examinations and school assessments.

“To ensure the HSC’s fairness and integrity, BOSTES applies stringent processes when assessing disability provisions and illness/misadventure applications, and applying assessment and examination integrity rules,” Mr Alegounarias said.

“BOSTES encourages and supports all schools, parents and students to understand and consider whether a student requires disability provisions or illness/misadventure consideration.”

“BOSTES also engages directly with students to ensure they are fully aware of the *All My Own Work* requirements and the examination rules and procedures. This communication compliments the ongoing and comprehensive work by schools to address potential assessment and examination malpractice.

“BOSTES considers each application and incident on a case by case basis to ensure that all decisions are fair and transparent,” Mr Alegounarias said.

Disability provisions in the HSC give practical assistance to students who may otherwise be disadvantaged when undertaking their exams. Emergency provisions are also approved for late injuries such as a broken arm just prior to the examinations.

Disability provisions do not confer additional marks, and are not intended to confer any advantage. They allow students to participate in the examination process in the same way as their peers.

Illness/misadventure applications also do not confer any advantage. If an illness/misadventure application is upheld, BOSTES will consider other indicators of the students’ performance, such as school assessment marks, to ensure that the students are not disadvantaged by this occurrence.

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Examination integrity includes breaches of examination rules and malpractice by students undertaking HSC examinations or school assessment tasks. BOSTES and schools take incidents of malpractice seriously, and warn students that the consequences of malpractice can range from loss of some marks to their entire HSC.

Summary of 2014 statistics:

Disability provisions

- BOSTES received 6672 applications for disability provisions.
- 94% were either fully or partially approved.
- Almost 88% of all schools – and 87% of government schools – had at least one application for disability provisions. This is a small increase from 2013.

Illness/misadventure applications

- As Illness/misadventure applications are for occurrences of sickness or other unforeseen incidents, the numbers, types and schools vary from year to year.
- Some minor flooding and a cold snap affected a small number of students from the South Coast and the Blue Mountains

Assessment integrity

- All schools are required to maintain a register of malpractice (cheating) in school assessment tasks
- In 2014, 204 schools registered 630 offences involving 485 students
- The most frequent offence was plagiarism, for which 61% of offenders received zero marks, and 35% were given reduced marks

Examination integrity

- Incidents of cheating remain very small.
- This includes a very small number of students (21 from over 75,000) appearing before the Examination Rules Committee for breaching examination rules and 115 students where the school was unable to certify that the student's major project was all their own work or completed in the permitted time.

For more information visit:

<http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/disability-provisions/statistics.html>

http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/hsc_exams/illness-misadventure.html

http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/hsc_assessment_policies/honesty.html

http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/hsc_assessment_policies/malpractice.html

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