



## School Certificate Science Test Scope Statement

The School Certificate Science Test from 2001 is to be based on the Stage 5 outcomes related to the objectives of the Stages 4 - 5 Science Syllabus (implemented in Years 7 and 9 in 2000 and Years 8 and 10 in 2001).

The syllabus describes core and optional content with the core content representing approximately 70% (or 140 indicative hours) of the Stage 5 course.

The Board of Studies is committed to providing a foundation that enables the development of the knowledge, understanding and skills that students will need as adults in society. In line with this commitment the School Certificate Science Test will focus on the core content of the Stage 5 syllabus. In addition, it will reflect knowledge, understanding and skills from the Stage 5 course that are essential in Science for further study and a range of possible vocational directions. The knowledge, understanding and skills developed in Stage 5 are underpinned by those developed in Stage 4.

The test does not attempt to determine attainment in terms of all aspects of the Stage 5 Science syllabus. Student achievement in relation to the full range of outcomes for the course will be assessed by schools through their own assessment programs, using the Course Performance Descriptors written for this purpose.

School-based grades and the Test marks (and bands) determined by the Board of Studies should be seen as separate measures, differing in scope. Schools will determine the grades to be awarded to their students, subject to the Board's monitoring procedures to ensure that the award of grades from school to school throughout the state is consistent, fair and equitable.

### **Nature and Scope of the test**

The focus of the test will be the knowledge, understanding and skills outcomes and their associated core content in the following areas:

- Prescribed Focus Areas: outcomes 5.1 – 5.5
- Domain – knowledge and understanding: outcomes 5.6 – 5.12
- Domain – skills: outcomes 5.13, 5.16 – 5.21

#### *Prescribed Focus Areas*

The test will draw from the outcomes and associated content across the five Prescribed Focus Areas.

Possible test items may relate to how scientific knowledge develops and affects social decisions, the nature and provisional character of scientific explanations and the relevance, usefulness and applicability of science to real world situations involving problems which can affect individuals, members of a local community or global citizens.

*Domain – knowledge and understanding*

The test will draw from the outcomes and associated core content of the Stage 5 Domain – knowledge and understanding. These core concepts enable students to make sense of aspects of the natural and made worlds and of new experiences.

Possible test items may relate to specific phenomena and/or events and understanding and application of that knowledge to a range of situations.

*Domain – skills*

The test will draw from the outcomes and associated core content of the Stage 5 Domain – skills outcomes 5.13, 5.16-21. These scientific skills are needed by students to collect and interpret evidence from the world around them and to draw valid conclusions based on that evidence and their scientific understanding.

Possible test items may relate to recognising scientifically investigable questions, identifying evidence needed in a scientific investigation, drawing or evaluating conclusions, communicating valid conclusions and demonstrating understanding of scientific concepts that underpin investigations.

The test is of one and a half hours total working time and consists of two equally weighted sections. Section 1 consists of multiple choice questions. Section 2 contains constrained response questions and short response questions. This section will allow more open-ended questions to be asked and will enable students to display their level of achievement of syllabus outcomes in the most appropriate way.



## **School Certificate Science**

### **Test Specifications**

The Science Test will be of one and a half hours duration plus 10 minutes reading time. It will consist of two sections.

#### **Section 1 (50 marks)**

All questions will be compulsory.

All questions will be of equal value.

This section will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions.

The multiple-choice questions are to be answered on the Section 1 Answer Sheet.

Questions may be based on stimulus material.

When stimulus material is used, one or more questions may draw on that material.

#### **Section 2 (50 marks)**

All questions will be compulsory.

This section will consist of Parts A – D.

Part A will consist of 10 constrained response questions.

Parts B – D will consist of, in total, 5 – 8 short response questions.

Short response questions may consist of several parts.

Questions may be based on stimulus material.

The constrained response questions are to be answered on the Section 2 – Part A Answer Sheet.

The short response questions are to be answered in the spaces provided in the test paper.