



# **ASSESSMENT**

a Standards-referenced  
Approach

Resources for  
Staff Development

**July 2000**

*the New.*  
**Higher School  
Certificate**

## HOW TO USE THIS PACKAGE

The Board of Studies provides this package as an aid to schools in implementing assessment and reporting for the New HSC. Schools will be able to use this material in a number of settings: staff meetings, faculty meetings and parent information evenings.

The package contains four sections. Each can be delivered separately within a 20–30 minute period, allowing some time for discussion. Individual slides or groups of slides can form the basis of a discussion. The four sections address the four key questions on assessment and reporting in the New HSC:

1. *How is a standards-referenced approach used in the New HSC?*
2. *What principles guide assessment in the New HSC Examination?*
3. *How are these principles applied in the specimen papers?*
4. *What is required in school assessment programs?*

The package distributed to schools contains black-line masters of the overhead slides and comprehensive speaker's notes. The Board is also distributing this material through its Internet site ([www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au)). It is provided in Microsoft PowerPoint format (compatible with Office 97 version and later) for those schools that wish to use it as an electronic presentation. Schools may modify the package to suit their needs, but are requested not to change the content of individual slides as the text has been carefully reviewed to ensure the accuracy of the information.

Additional information can be gained from the following Board of Studies publications and other resources, also available from the Board's web site:

- ❖ *Assessment and Reporting Using Stage Outcomes*
- ❖ *Assessment, Examination and Certification Manual*
- ❖ *Assessment Support Document*
- ❖ Principles for Setting HSC Examinations in a Standards-referenced Framework
- ❖ Principles for Developing Marking Guidelines for the New HSC Examinations
- ❖ *Frequently Asked Questions*
- ❖ Specimen papers
- ❖ Marking guidelines

and from the following resources developed in conjunction with other education authorities:

- ❖ Local Interest Group (Assessment) Materials 1999
- ❖ Local Interest Group (Assessment) Materials 2000

[www.newhsc.schools.nsw.edu.au](http://www.newhsc.schools.nsw.edu.au)

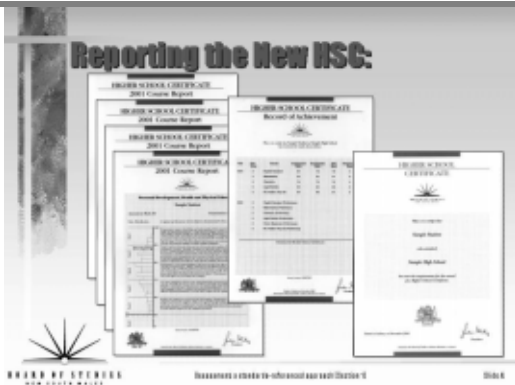
For further advice, contact your Board of Studies Liaison Officer (BOSLO) or the Office of the Board of Studies on 9367 8111.



SLIDE

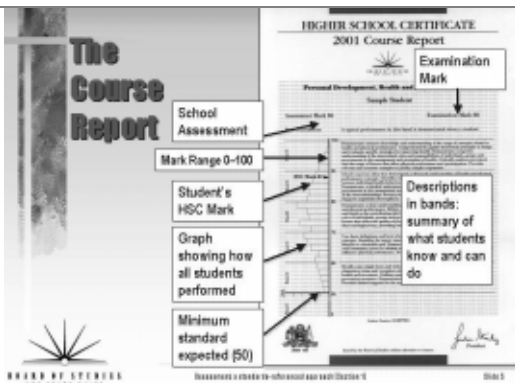
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- ◆ The package that students receive will contain more detailed information.
- ◆ As well as the ROA, Testamur and any VET credential, there will be a detailed Course Report that contains information about the standard that a student has reached, as well as information about the student's position in the course.

5.



- ◆ Key points to note in the Course Report:
  - The Moderated School Assessment Mark and the Examination Mark are both reported.
  - Reporting is still done over the full range of 0–100 for 2 Unit Courses.
  - The student's HSC Mark is the average of the Moderated Assessment Mark and Examination Mark. It is stated numerically and graphically so that the reader can place the student against the description of performance and the graphical display of position.
  - The minimum standard expected is 50. The Board of Studies expects most students to get above the minimum, but some will score below 50. Students who score below 50 will not have a description of their course performance, but will receive a mark and recognition of the completion of that course.
  - The Assessment Mark is moderated to ensure that students' results across the State can be compared accurately and fairly.
- ◆ By reporting student performance in terms of the standard achieved, the Course Report reflects the changes to the HSC.

6.



- ◆ Assessment in a standards-referenced model has these characteristics:
  - A syllabus that provides a clear sense of the syllabus standards through its aims, objectives, outcomes and content;
  - Tasks designed to produce an image of what students have achieved at that point in the teaching and learning process relative to the outcomes;
  - A report that gives marks referenced to pre-determined standards.
- ◆ The New HSC builds upon clear syllabus standards and includes standards of performance at different levels: the *Performance Descriptions*.

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**What Are Standards?**

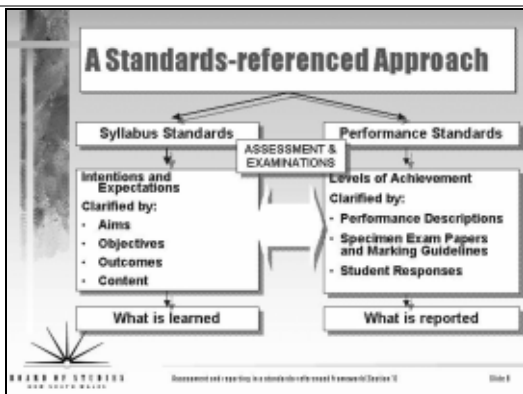
In the New HSC:

- The knowledge, skills and understanding expected to be learned by students  
"Syllabus standards"
- The level of achievement of the knowledge, skills and understanding  
"Performance standards"

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ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING USING STANDARDS-REFERENCED APPROACH (HSC) COURSE 2  
Slide 7

- ◆ Teaching and learning is based on the syllabus. The most important sources for the syllabus standards are the outcomes and content.
- ◆ Performance standards are derived from the outcomes, from explicit statements of student performance and from the professional judgement of teachers.
- ◆ Assessment provides a link between the two. Both syllabus and performance standards must be considered during the programming of the course.

8.



- ◆ The expected standards are defined by the curriculum, assessment and reporting components of the syllabus packages.
- ◆ The syllabus for each course describes what students are expected to learn in terms of aims, objectives, outcomes and content. Teachers should refer to the document *Assessment and Reporting Using Stage Outcomes* for further information on definitions of these terms.
- ◆ Performance standards are made more explicit in the performance descriptions, the specimen examination papers (available in hard copy and on the Board's web site) with their associated sample marking guidelines, and the increasing number of work samples that will be available after the 2001 HSC. Teachers will be more confident in describing their judgement of student work as time passes.
- ◆ The link between syllabus and performance standards is made through school assessment and the state-wide HSC exam.
  - Students undertake HSC assessment tasks that refer to syllabus outcomes, content, assessment components and component weightings.
  - Students present for external exams that are set by the Board of Studies and based on syllabus outcomes and content. External marking uses standards-referenced marking guidelines developed by examination.
- ◆ Because the syllabus standards and the performance standards are closely linked through the outcomes and content, they allow assessment to be better integrated with teaching and learning.

SLIDE

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9.

- ◆ The differences between the 2000 HSC and the 2001 HSC can be summarised under five headings:
  - Assessment –
    - Students were previously assessed against each other.
    - Assessment in the New HSC will be against known standards (though the Board will continue to report a position in the course).
  - The way marks are given meaning –
    - Before 2001, the mark indicated position relative to other students.
    - From 2001, the mark will be directly related to the Performance Description for that range of marks.
  - The interpretation of student achievement –
    - In the 2000 HSC, there is no definition of a minimum standard.
    - In the New HSC, 50 has been defined as a minimum standard. All students who can meet the Performance Standard described in Band 2 will be awarded 50 or more. Students in Band 1 will still receive a mark.
  - The manner in which marks are distributed – instead of a set distribution (where a certain percentage of candidates are awarded each mark), the mark is determined by a candidate’s performance against the known standards.
  - The number of students who can achieve the top band of performance –
    - Under norm-referencing, this was limited to a small percentage of the candidature.
    - The New HSC has no statistical limit on how many can achieve top marks.