

NEW STAGE 6 SYLLABUSES AND ASSESSMENT FROM 2018



Which Stage 6 syllabuses have changed?

New syllabuses for Stage 6 (Years 11–12) English, Mathematics, Science and History have been developed using the established NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) syllabus development process. These syllabuses include Australian curriculum content and reflect the new directions of the *Stronger HSC Standards* reforms.

The *Stronger HSC Standards* reforms include:

- supporting the achievement of high minimum standards for all students
- ensuring the flexibility and versatility of the Higher School Certificate (HSC) to cater for the full range of students
- encouraging every student to achieve at their highest possible level
- a focus on the acquisition of deep knowledge, understanding and skills for students.

New Stage 6 syllabuses

English	Mathematics	Science	History
English Standard	Mathematics Standard	Biology	Ancient History
English Advanced	Mathematics Advanced	Chemistry	Modern History
English Extension	Mathematics Extension 1	Earth and Environmental Science	History Extension
English EAL/D	Mathematics Extension 2	Investigating Science	Ancient History Life Skills
English Studies	Mathematics Life Skills	Physics	Modern History Life Skills
English Life Skills		Science Life Skills	

What are the features of the new syllabuses?

Many features of current syllabuses have been retained. Some new features include:

- Australian curriculum content identified by codes
- opportunities for depth over breadth of learning, including new technologies and contemporary approaches to learning
- Learning across the curriculum content, including cross-curriculum priorities and general capabilities
- publication in an interactive online format
- an interactive glossary.

How do Stage 6 syllabuses cater for all students?

NSW Stage 6 syllabuses are inclusive of the learning needs of all students. The syllabuses accommodate teaching approaches that support student diversity, including students with special education needs, gifted and talented students and students learning English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D).

What are the changes to assessment?

The *Stronger HSC Standards* reforms provide new directions for assessment practices in all Stage 6 courses to:

- rebalance the emphasis on assessment to allow more time for teaching and learning
- maintain rigorous standards
- provide opportunities to assess students' depth of knowledge and their conceptual, analytical and problem-solving skills.

School-based assessment requirements for all Board Developed Courses (excluding VET, Life Skills and Content Endorsed Courses) will change from 2018.

These changes include:

- mandated components and weightings for Year 11 and Year 12
- capping the number of school-based assessment tasks to three in Year 11 and four in Year 12
- specified minimum and maximum weightings for formal tasks
- a variety of tasks to assess student knowledge, understanding and skills.

Students will continue to undertake:

- course-specific formal school-based assessment programs
- a range of assessment task types such as tests, written assignments, oral presentations, digital submissions, practical activities, fieldwork and projects
- course-specific external assessment, such as the HSC examinations or submitted works.

What is informal assessment?

Informal assessment includes activities undertaken and anecdotal evidence gathered throughout the teaching and learning process in a less prescribed manner than formal assessment. Informal assessment can provide evidence for teachers and inform feedback to students in relation to improving their learning. Informal assessment may include a range of strategies such as questioning, class discussion, observations and student self-evaluation.

What is formal assessment?

Formal assessment tasks are those which students undertake as part of the school-based assessment program, reflecting specific course requirements, components and weightings. School-based assessment provides opportunities to gather evidence about student achievement of syllabus outcomes in different ways to HSC examinations. Evidence gathered through formal assessment assists teachers to report on student achievement at a point in time, and is often used for grading or ranking purposes.

It is important that students are familiar with the course requirements and school policies and procedures for formal assessment.

How does the formal assessment program contribute to the Record of School Achievement (RoSA)?

For each student who completes a Stage 5 and Stage 6 course (except Life Skills and VET courses), the school awards a grade representing each student's achievement against statewide standards. The grade is submitted to NESA and recorded on the RoSA. The RoSA is a cumulative credential received by students who leave before the completion of HSC examinations. Students are able to access an eRecord of their grades at any time through their *Students Online* account.

How does the formal assessment program contribute to the HSC credential?

At the conclusion of the Year 12 course, the school will submit an assessment mark to NESA for each student's performance in a course. This mark is based on the formal school-based assessment program. The mark is adjusted (moderated) by NESA to produce the assessment mark that appears on HSC results. For each course, the final HSC mark is a 50:50 combination of the HSC examination and school-based assessment mark.

How are students undertaking Life Skills courses assessed?

Students undertaking Life Skills courses will study selected outcomes and content informed by a collaborative curriculum planning process. Assessment should provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge, understanding and skills to a range of situations or environments. Students undertaking Life Skills courses are not required to complete formal assessment tasks. Teachers are best able to determine the progress of the student.

Students may demonstrate achievement in relation to Life Skills outcomes independently, with adjustments or with support. The type of adjustments and support will vary according to the particular needs of the student and the requirements of the activity.

What credential will your child receive on completion of Stage 6?

If your child completes the Year 12 program, including course and assessment requirements, they will receive the Higher School Certificate. Typically, each course report contains:

- **an assessment mark** derived from the mark submitted by the school and produced in accordance with NESA requirements for the school-based assessment program
- **an examination mark** derived from the HSC external examination
- **an HSC mark**, which is the average of the assessment mark and the examination mark
- **a performance band**, determined by the HSC mark.

If your child satisfactorily completes a Life Skills course, the course is listed on the Record of Achievement (RoA) with the annotation *Refer to Profile of Student Achievement*. The Profile of Student Achievement provides details of the specific Life Skills syllabus outcomes achieved.

How can I access the Stage 6 syllabuses and assessment information?

Stage 6 syllabuses and assessment information for all courses are available on the NESA website.

How can you support your child in Stage 6?

At times your child may find the demands of Stage 6 challenging, and your support to keep them on track is important. As parents, you can support and encourage your child to maintain a healthy balanced life, build resilience and manage time effectively. Resilience is an important personal attribute and skill that your child will need, and further develop, throughout Stage 6 and future endeavours.

You can provide support by encouraging your child to:

- plan ahead and work through assessments progressively
- complete all tasks on time, or communicate with teachers about what to do if they cannot meet a deadline due to circumstances
- ask for more clarification about a task or the feedback they receive on a completed task and how they could improve their performance
- maintain printed and electronic copies of tasks, including backing up work in progress
- understand and value ethical practices when locating and using information as part of their studies and the importance of the *HSC: All My Own Work* program
- read the *HSC: Rules and Procedures*, published annually by NESA
- seek assistance and advice from teachers and other support people when needed.

What is the plan for implementation?

2017	2018		2019
	Term 1	Term 4	
Schools will continue to teach the current Stage 6 courses	<p>Schools will start teaching new Year 11 courses for English, Mathematics, Science and History</p> <p>Schools will start implementing new Year 11 school-based assessment requirements for all Board Developed Courses (excluding VET, Life Skills and Content Endorsed Courses)</p>	<p>Schools will start teaching new Year 12 courses for English, Mathematics, Science and History</p> <p>Schools will implement new Year 12 school-based assessment requirements for all Board Developed Courses (excluding VET, Life Skills and Content Endorsed Courses)</p> <p>Schools will implement new HSC examination specifications</p>	First HSC examinations for new English, Mathematics, Science and History courses