



**Preliminary HSC
Assessment Information
2023**

Nature and Purpose of Assessment

Assessment is the broad name for the collection and evaluation of evidence of a student's learning. It is integral to teaching and learning and has multiple purposes. Assessment can enhance student engagement and motivation, particularly when it incorporates interaction with teachers, other students and a range of resources.

Preliminary Assessment

Preliminary HSC Assessment prepares students for the rigour and expectations of the HSC Assessment. At Santa Sophia Catholic College, students are held accountable for their own learning and, as such, are expected to meet due dates and task requirements for all courses.

The Preliminary assessments are designed following the guidelines of NESA and the HSC Assessment specifications. It will assist students to develop a relevant and rigorous study program that will prepare them for the HSC course and assessment work.

Students will complete no more than three formal assessment tasks for each subject. The results of these tasks will be reported at the end of the Preliminary Course and will assist the determination of each student's Preliminary Record of Student Achievement (RoSA).

Assessment:

- provides opportunities for teachers to gather evidence about student achievement in relation to syllabus outcomes
- enables students to demonstrate what they know and can do
- clarifies student understanding of concepts and promotes deeper understanding
- provides evidence that current understanding and skills are a suitable basis for future learning.
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Each assessment task:

- is based on syllabus outcomes
- is a valid instrument for what they are designed to assess
- includes criteria to clarify for students what aspects of learning are being assessed
- enables students to demonstrate their learning in a range of task types
- is reliable, measures what the task intends to assess, and provides accurate information on each student's achievement
- is free from bias and provides evidence that accurately represents a student's knowledge, understanding and skills
- enables students and teachers to use feedback effectively and reflect on the learning process
- is inclusive of, and accessible for, all students

- is part of an ongoing process where progress is monitored over time.

HSC Assessment

The following information is provided to set a context for Stage 6 Preliminary students as they work towards the HSC.

The HSC has two components:

1. The first is the examination mark gained by the student in the HSC examination for each course studied (Board Developed Courses only). This represents 50% of the final mark.
2. The second is the assessment mark awarded by the school to the student for each subject studied. This mark, once moderated, represents 50% of the final HSC mark. Their rank, relative to other students, is also reported.

At the end of the course the marks for each task are aggregated using appropriate weightings previously published in the Assessment Handbook to arrive at a final assessment mark for each student. These assessment marks, which are then submitted to NESA, provide a rank order of students and show relative differences between students' performances. This is best achieved when a sufficiently wide mark range is used in allocating the marks for the individual tasks.

Marks will continue to be used to measure and report student achievement in both the external examination and the school-based assessment at the HSC. Marks enable the characteristics that discriminate between different degrees of performance to be captured and used in reporting student performance in ways that are not possible if bands (or grades or levels) alone are used.

Standards Referenced Assessment

Standards Referenced Assessment refers to the process of collecting and interpreting information about students' learning. It uses syllabus outcomes as key reference points for decisions about students' progress and achievement.

Syllabus outcomes:

- indicate the knowledge, understanding and skills expected to be acquired by students as a result of effective teaching and learning
- are derived from the syllabus objectives
- present a sequence of learning and take into account prior and subsequent learning of students.

Syllabus outcomes are used by teachers to:

- plan and develop learning and assessment opportunities
- monitor student progress
- assess and measure student achievement against intended learning
- report student progress and achievement during, and at the end of each course.

Most Stage 6 courses use Standards Referenced Assessment, however VET courses also use Competency Based Assessment, which focus on particular skills. Students are assessed on whether they are competent or not yet competent in relation to that skill i.e. can they perform that skill or not at a particular point in time.

Grading Student Achievement

[Assessment at the end of a Year 11 course](#) should relate to the stated objectives and outcomes as described in the syllabus and reflect the NESA school-based assessment requirements as detailed in the Assessment and Reporting document.

NESA's grading system is intended to describe the student's achievement at the end of each Year 11 course.

Schools are required to award and submit A to E grades to NESA for all students completing any Year 11 Board Developed or Board Endorsed Course, except VET courses and Life Skills courses.

At the completion of the course, teachers make professional on-balance judgments on the basis of all available assessment information to decide which grade description best matches the standards their students have achieved. The grade awarded to each student at the completion of a Year 11 course indicates the student's overall achievement in relation to the [Common Grade Scale for Preliminary courses](#) and with reference to other material produced by NESA to support the consistent awarding of grades.

Students should be given the opportunity to demonstrate their maximum level of achievement relative to the Common Grade Scale for Preliminary courses.

When [marking formal assessment tasks](#) for multiple classes or across a cohort, common marking processes will be implemented.

For single-marked assessment tasks, consistency may be improved by one teacher marking the task, or part of the task, for the entire cohort.

Where there is more than one teacher responsible for the marking process, a shared understanding of the expectations and standards of the assessment task is required. This will support consistent assessment of student performance throughout the marking process. In some cases, double marking or panel marking may be appropriate.

Types of Courses

Board Developed Courses are developed by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). These courses are examined externally at the end of the HSC Course and can count towards the calculation of the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR). Board-developed courses can be classified as Category A and Category B. Category B courses at Santa Sophia Catholic College currently include Business Services.

Board Endorsed Courses have syllabuses endorsed by NESA to cater to areas of special interest not covered in the Board Developed courses. There is no examination for Board Endorsed Courses but they do count towards the Higher School Certificate and appear on the Record of Achievement. **Results in Board Endorsed Courses are not eligible for inclusion in the calculation of the ATAR.**

VET (Vocational Education and Training) Curriculum Frameworks can be studied as a Preliminary and/or HSC Course. Some VET courses, including Business Services, have an optional written examination for the HSC, which must be attempted if a student wishes the VET course to contribute to their ATAR. Only ONE VET course can contribute to the ATAR.

Extension Courses require students to work beyond the standard of the 2 Unit course. They are designed to challenge students who demonstrate excellence in the subject area and who wish to develop this in the HSC. Some of the extension courses are completely separate courses from the 2 Unit courses in the same subject eg. English. They have their own course requirements, outcomes and content material. Only students who are excelling in the 2 Unit courses should consider choosing an extension course. Extension courses are 1 Unit courses. It is inadvisable to select an extension course for the sole purpose of making up units in a learning package.

Requirements for the Award of the HSC

To be eligible for the award of the Higher School Certificate, students must:

- satisfactorily complete all courses, including the completion of practical, oral or project works required for specific courses and the assessment requirements for each course
- sit for and make a serious attempt at the Higher School Certificate examination
- complete All My Own Work

All courses offered for the Higher School Certificate have a unit value. Subjects may have a value of 2 units or 1 unit. In the HSC, each unit has a value of 50 marks. A 2 unit course has a value of 100 marks.

A student's program of study must have:

- a minimum of 12 units in the Preliminary HSC
- a minimum of 10 units in the HSC

Both the Preliminary HSC and the HSC program of study must include at least:

- 6 units from Board Developed Courses
- 2 units of a Board Developed Course in English
- three courses of 2 units value or greater
- four subjects

As a student in a Catholic school, you are required to study either a course of **Studies of Religion** or **Catholic Studies** as part of your HSC.

Requirements for the Awards of an ATAR

The Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) is a number between 0.00 and 99.95 that indicates a student's position relative to other students. Universities use the ATAR to help them to select students for their courses and admission to many tertiary courses can be based on your selection rank (your ATAR and any applicable adjustments). Most universities also use other criteria when selecting students (eg a personal statement, a questionnaire, a portfolio of work, an audition, an interview or a test).

Only Board Developed Courses can count towards the ATAR. Board Endorsed Courses and School Developed Courses **cannot** count.

For the purposes of calculating the ATAR, all Board Developed Courses are classified as "Category A" or "Category B".

Students may count NO MORE THAN 2 units of "Category B" subjects in their ATAR. NB: English Studies and Mathematics Standard 1 are classified as Category B courses.

Students can gain a completely valid HSC with more than 2 units of Category B subjects; the limitation applies simply to the calculation of the ATAR.

To be eligible for an ATAR, a student must satisfactorily complete 10 units of ATAR courses. These ATAR courses must include at least:

- at least 8 units from Category A courses
- no more than 2 units from Category B courses
- 2 units of English
- Three board-developed courses of 2 units or greater
- Four subjects

Course Assessment Requirements

The assessment program for each course involves the measurement of student achievement of the outcomes of the course. It is structured so that students can demonstrate a range of outcomes relative to the course objectives.

The NESA **Stage 6 Syllabus documents** state the components of the assessment in terms of groupings of syllabus objectives and the weightings to be attached to these components. These components and weightings are listed with each course's assessment schedule later in this document.

Preliminary Assessment dates set out later in this document are a **general indication of the schedule**. Students will be notified of the exact date of the assessment task **at least two weeks prior to that date**. A calendar of tasks will be kept by the college to ensure that assessment tasks are distributed as evenly as possible throughout the assessment period.

The Preliminary Assessment period can commence in Term 1 of the Preliminary Year and finish no later than the end of Term 3, of the Preliminary Year.

The HSC Assessment period can commence in Term 4 of the Preliminary Year and finish no later than the end of Term 3, of the HSC Year.

Satisfactory Course Completion

Students are expected to:

- attempt and complete all tasks to the best of their ability;
- read and understand the contents of this document and other documentation on the assessment provided;
- satisfactorily complete each course undertaken through:
 - ✓ *following the course developed or endorsed by NESA*
 - ✓ *diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks provided in the course by the school*
 - ✓ *achieving some or all of the outcomes of the course*

When a course is not studied satisfactorily, the subject will not be reported on the HSC Record of Achievement. Depending on the number of units that the student is studying this may mean that the student will not meet the requirements for satisfactory completion of the Higher School Certificate. If that course is English, the student will not receive a Higher School Certificate.

Parents/carers will be notified if their son/daughter has failed to complete an assessment task. Please note that the first warning letter outlines the date that the overdue task is due. A subsequent warning letter will stipulate that an interview with parents/caregivers is required.

Attendance

Whilst NESA does not mandate attendance requirements, the Principal may determine that, as a result of absence, the course completion criteria have not been met.

Students whose attendance is called into question will be required to prove to the Principal's satisfaction, following a review of their performance, that they are meeting the course completion criteria.

Principals must give students early written warning of the consequences of absences in terms of course completion criteria.

'N' (Non-Award) Determination

When a student does not meet the Course Completion Criteria for a Higher School Certificate course, the student will be given an 'N' (Non-Award) determination. This means that the course will not be listed on the student's Record of Achievement.

If at any time it appears that a student is at risk of being given an 'N' determination in any course, the College will warn the student as soon as possible and advise the parent/carer in writing. This warning will be given in time for the problem to be corrected. In the case that the student does not correct the problem outlined in the warning letter, the Principal will apply the 'N' determination for that particular course.

Satisfactory completion of a Preliminary course is a prerequisite for entry into the HSC course. Consequently, non completion of a Preliminary course may jeopardise a student's eligibility for the HSC.

Malpractice

Malpractice is any activity undertaken by a student that allows them to gain an unfair advantage over others. It includes, but is not limited to:

- copying someone else's work in part or in whole, and presenting it as their own
- using material directly from books, journals, CDs, or the internet without reference to the source
- building on the ideas of another person without reference to the source
- buying, stealing or borrowing another person's work and presenting it as their own
- submitting work to which another person such as a parent, coach or subject expert has contributed substantially
- using words, ideas, designs or the workmanship of others in practical and performance tasks without appropriate acknowledgement
- paying someone to write or prepare material
- breaching school examination rules
- using non-approved aides during an assessment task
- contriving false explanations to explain work not handed in by the due date
- assisting another student to engage in malpractice (this includes sharing their task with another student).

In instances of malpractice where a student is shown to have gained an unfair advantage, a zero mark will be given. If a student assists another student to gain an unfair advantage, each student will receive zero for that assessment task.

Instances of malpractice will be recorded in the College Malpractice Register and added to the NESA malpractice register by the Principal.

Note: It will be considered an UNFAIR ADVANTAGE if students are absent from scheduled classes and/or school activities such as sports carnivals etc to study/prepare for assessment tasks.

All My Own Work

The completion of the NESA *All My Own Work* modules is **compulsory** for students entering Stage 6. *All My Own Work* is a program designed to help HSC students follow the principles and practices of good scholarship. This includes understanding, valuing, and using ethical practices when locating and using the information as part of their studies. Students who have completed the program will also know about penalties for cheating and how to avoid malpractice when preparing their work for assessment. Students will complete the *All My Own Work* modules at school.

Absence from/Non Completion of an Assessment Task

Absence from an assessment task on a specific date or non-submission on the due date will mean that the students shall receive 'zero' for that task and will be required to make a serious attempt at the task at a date in the near future. Where a student fails to complete an assessment task through illness or misadventure, yet seeks a mark for the task, the student should complete and submit a [Special Consideration Application](#).

Students must be present for their timetabled lessons on the day of which the task is due. If a student does not attend those lessons or submit the task on the due date, documentation is required.

If the reason is deemed valid, then one of the following conditions will apply:

1. A substitute task may be undertaken
2. An extension of time may be granted (where possible, this should be requested before the due date)
3. An estimate will be awarded, but only in exceptional circumstances, and only if authorised by the Principal or Principal's delegate

The following will be considered a valid reason for the conditions listed above:

1. Illness or injury supported by a Medical Certificate obtained on the date of absence (a parent/carer note is not sufficient)
2. Death/funeral of a member of the student's family
3. Other exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Principal or Principal's delegate in consultation with the relevant Instructional Coach.

A [Special Consideration Application](#) must be submitted within 48 hours of the assigned due date. Where extensions of time are sought, a [Special Consideration Application](#) is to be submitted prior to the due date of the task, where possible.

If a student has approved leave, it is their responsibility to negotiate any assessment tasks with their teacher prior to leaving. This may involve an earlier due date or the need to apply for an extension. **Approved leave is not grounds for an appeal on return to school.**

Equipment failure is not grounds for Special Considerations under Misadventure provisions. (This includes information technology equipment). It is the student's responsibility to maintain their equipment and to ensure they back up their work.

It is the student's responsibility to obtain, complete and submit the [Special Consideration Application](#). The student must also email their teacher in advance, advising them of their date of return and will be expected to complete the assessment task on the day of their return to school.

Where a student's [Special Consideration Application](#) is declined, a zero mark will automatically be recorded. An [Assessment Appeal](#) may be lodged within 24 hours of the notification of the outcome of the Special Consideration Application.

Appeals Procedures

Marks Awarded for Individual Tasks

When a student disagrees with the outcome of an assessment, they have the right to appeal. Students

must first speak to the teacher who assessed the task. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the discussion, they may complete an [Assessment Appeal](#). The process of reconsideration will involve the teacher concerned and the Assistant Principal or Head of School for the School of Challenge. The student will be notified of the result of the appeal and if successful, the mark will be altered accordingly.

Appealing the result of a Special Consideration Application

When a student's [Special Consideration Application](#) is declined, a zero mark will automatically be recorded. An [Assessment Appeal](#) may be lodged within 24 hours of the notification of the outcome of the Special Consideration Application. The appeal will be examined by the College Principal or their delegate. The student will be notified of the result of the appeal in writing. If successful, the zero mark will be altered accordingly.

Appealing School Assessment Ranks

Please click [here](#) for information from NESA regarding the appeal process for school assessment ranks.

Invalid or Unreliable Tasks

In very rare circumstances, a task may not discriminate between the performance of students or the integrity of the task may be compromised. In such cases, an additional task could be given and the weighting of the original task reduced. Any additional task would only be given if authorised by the Principal or the Principal's Delegate.

Completion of Course Requirement in a VET Course or 'School of Now' Course

Assessment of VET courses

All Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses provide students with the opportunity to obtain a nationally recognised Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) qualification, whilst completing the HSC. This provides the student with dual accreditation.

VET courses are designed by industry and NESA to develop the skills and knowledge required to work in a particular industry.

VET courses are either Board Developed Curriculum Framework Courses or Board Endorsed VET Courses. VET courses are category B courses. ONLY 2 UNITS OF CATEGORY B SUBJECTS can count towards the ATAR.

Board Developed VET courses can contribute a maximum of 2 units towards the ATAR providing the student sits the optional HSC examination. Board Endorsed VET Courses do NOT contribute towards the ATAR and therefore, do not have a HSC examination. Most VET courses will contribute 2 units towards the Preliminary and/or HSC year, depending on the course.

Learning and assessment is very practical, and project-based to achieve course competencies. Assessment of competence occurs through observations, questions, and structured activities.

Competency-Based Assessment

VET courses are competency-based assessment meaning the student is either competent or not yet competent. A student's performance is judged against a prescribed Industry standard contained in each unit of competency, not against the performance of other students. This judgment is made based on a range of evidence, which may include simulated work environments, portfolios of evidence, observation, questioning and practical tasks. Students in VET courses will be continually assessed both formally and informally. Students who have not been deemed competent on their first submission, will have the opportunity to develop their skills, before resubmitting again. At the end of the course, students will be deemed 'not competent' if they have not reached the industry standard required. Students who have not achieved competency in all units, will receive a Statement of Attainment towards the qualification, instead of the full qualification.

Work Placement

Work placement is a mandatory HSC component of VET courses. Students must complete mandatory hours to meet NESA HSC requirements. Students who do not complete the mandatory work placement hours may jeopardise their eligibility to be awarded a Higher School Certificate.

Work Placement procedures

- VET teachers will visit students on work placement, and/or speak with their employer, as part of the work placement assessment.
- Being on work placement is not an excuse for missing or being late to hand in a 'take home' assessment task. Work placement dates are known well in advance, students need to ensure they have made any necessary arrangements to ensure their assessment tasks for other classes are submitted on the due date. Students must make alternative arrangements with their teacher if any 'in-class' assessment activities occur whilst they are on work placement. Students must also catch up on all work missed in their other classes.
- Students must complete and submit all paperwork regarding work placement ON TIME to confirm their place and avoid losing the placement to another student or school.
- Students can use their current casual employment for work placement if it is directly related to the subject. An 'Application for Recognition of Prior Learning' must be obtained from their VET teacher and completed by the student and their employer. The Leader of Learning VET will assess the application and students will be informed as to the success of their application.
- Absences from work placement MUST be reported to the employer, the Leader of Learning VET and to the school. In the case of illness, a medical certificate must be produced upon returning to school and any hours lost in the workplace will be made up at another time.
- Students must return their completed Work Placement Journal on their first day of return to school. Failure to return the report will place your HSC in jeopardy, as it is proof as to how many hours were completed.

VET Assessment Appeals Process (in addition to the school appeal process)

If you disagree with the outcome of an assessment because you believe that you have met the standards for performance (benchmarks), you have the right to appeal. You must ask for a review as soon as possible after receiving your result. You should take the following steps:

1. Speak to the teacher who assessed your work.

2. If you are not satisfied with your discussion with the teacher then make an appointment to speak to the VET Leader of Learning
3. The VET Leader of Learning will discuss your concerns with you.
4. A joint meeting will be arranged between you, the teacher and the Leader of Learning VET so that your concerns and those of the teacher can be addressed.
5. The result of this meeting may be:
 - a. A revised assessment by the teacher
 - b. A new assessment task for part of the disputed task
 - c. A full assessment task to be completed in place of the disputed task.
6. If you are still dissatisfied, you will need to speak to one of the Assistant Principals or the Head of School. You will need to complete the VET Assessment Appeal Submission form.

Disability Provisions

Disability examination provisions are granted to address the effects of an additional need on examination performance. Provisions may include Braille papers, large print papers, use of a writer, use of a reader, an extension of test time, rest breaks, use of a personal computer, establishment of a special test centre, separate supervision, permission to take medication, or other provisions deemed necessary. The college applies for disability provisions to NESA on behalf of the student and their parents. Applications will be acknowledged and principals, parents, students (via the Principal) and presiding officers will be advised of the decision. Applications must be submitted with evidence indicating the precise nature of the additional need and the consequent effect on examination performance. Please see the College's Diversity Leader (Mrs Melodie Coleman) for further information regarding disability provisions.

List of 2023 Preliminary Assessment Schedules

Santa Sophia Courses

- Ancient History
- Biology
- Business Studies
- Chemistry

- Community and Family Studies
- Dance
- Design and Technology
- Drama
- Economics
- Engineering Studies
- English Advanced
- English Standard
- English Studies
- Food Technology
- Geography
- Industrial Technology - Timber
- Investigating Science
- Legal Studies
- Mathematics Advanced
- Mathematics Extension 1
- Mathematics Standard
- Modern History
- Music 1
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education
- Physics
- Society and Culture
- Studies of Religion I
- Studies of Religion II
- Textiles and Design
- Visual Arts
- VET Business Services
- VET Financial Services
- VET Hospitality
- **CEDP School of Now (Assessment Schedule to be provided by CEDP School of Now)**
- English Extension I

[Link to Special Consideration Application and Assessment Appeal](#)

- [Special Consideration Application](#)
- [Assessment Appeal](#)

Links to 2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Assessment Schedules

[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Ancient History Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)

[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Biology Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)

[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Business Studies Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)

[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Chemistry Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)

[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Community and Family Studies Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)

[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Dance Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)

[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Drama Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)

[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Economics Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Engineering Studies Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary English Advanced Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary English Standard Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary English Studies Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Food Technology Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Geography Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Industrial Technology - Timber Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Investigating Science Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Legal Studies Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Mathematics Advanced Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Mathematics Extension 1 Unit 1 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Mathematics Standard Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Modern History Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Personal Development, Health & Physical Education Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Physics Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Society & Culture Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Studies of Religion I Unit 1 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Studies of Religion II Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Textiles and Design Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary Visual Arts Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)
[2023 Stage 6 Preliminary VET Business Services Unit 2 Assessment Schedule](#)