

Higher School Certificate (HSC) minimum standard

Information for parents and carers

What is the HSC minimum standard?

The HSC minimum standard was created to help ensure that students have the key literacy and numeracy skills for life after school. Students in New South Wales will need to demonstrate a minimum standard of literacy and numeracy to receive the HSC credential from 2020.

The HSC minimum standard is set at level 3 of the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF). These skills are essential for everyday tasks and learning after school such as writing a letter for a job application or understanding a mobile phone plan.

The standard is assessed through online tests across three areas: reading, writing and numeracy.

The minimum standard online tests are 45 minutes long and include a multiple choice reading test, a multiple choice numeracy test and a short writing test based on a choice between a visual or written prompt.

Examples of the tests are available on the [NSW Education Standards Authority \(NESA\)](https://www.educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/) website. Practice tests are available for students to sit at school to help them become familiar with the online test structure and for schools to help determine student readiness to meet the minimum standard.

Who needs to complete HSC minimum standard online tests?

Students who complete the HSC in 2020:

To show a student meets the HSC minimum standard the student needs to have

- achieved Band 8 or above in reading in Year 9 NAPLAN in 2017 or achieved level 3 in the HSC minimum standard online reading test and
- achieved Band 8 or above in writing in Year 9 NAPLAN in 2017 or achieved level 3 in the HSC minimum standard online writing test and
- achieved Band 8 or above in numeracy in Year 9 NAPLAN in 2017 or achieved level 3 in the HSC minimum standard online numeracy test.

Students who complete the HSC in 2021 and beyond:

All students must sit the NESA HSC minimum standard online tests in reading, writing and numeracy.

When can students take the HSC minimum standard online tests?

Students will have four opportunities per year to sit the HSC minimum standard online tests in each area of reading, numeracy and writing, in Year 10, 11 and 12.

Students will also have up to 5 years from the time they start the HSC courses to sit the minimum standard online tests.

Disability provisions and exemptions:

Students with additional learning needs may be eligible for extra provisions for the minimum standard online tests or be exempt from meeting the HSC minimum standard in order to receive their HSC. Parents should contact the school to find out more information.

Life Skills courses are designed to provide an equitable pathway to the HSC. Students taking four or more Life Skills courses can be exempt from meeting the HSC minimum standard. Please contact your school for more information.

Telephone Interpreter Service

If you need an interpreter to assist you to contact the school, please call the Telephone Interpreter Service on 13 14 50 and ask for an interpreter in your language. Tell the operator the phone number you want to call and the operator will get an interpreter on the line to assist you with the conversation. You will not be charged for this service.

Further information

NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA)
<https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/hsc/hsc-minimum-standard>

Students who have not met the standard by 2020 may sit the tests during the first few years after school.