

Friday 28 April 2017

Our reference: D2017/34535

Dear Year 9 student

Re: The HSC minimum standard for literacy and numeracy

I wanted to assure each of you that you will have the opportunity to sit your HSC exams in 2020 regardless of your NAPLAN results this year. However, you will need to demonstrate a minimum standard of reading, writing and numeracy in order to be awarded your HSC certificate.

New online reading, writing and numeracy tests

You will have multiple opportunities to do this, by taking short online tests that specifically assess these skills. These online tests will take place online and at school. You will have two opportunities a year to pass them in Years 10, 11, and 12. You will also be able to take them for a few years after you leave school.

You don't have to pass all three tests at once. You and your teacher will decide when you are ready to attempt each test and if you pass a test you don't have to sit it again.

What does Year 9 have to do with the HSC minimum standard?

We know students learn at different rates. Your upcoming Year 9 NAPLAN tests are designed to provide you, your teachers and parents with valuable information about how your learning is progressing and if you need support.

If you do happen to achieve Band 8 or above NAPLAN results in all three areas this year, that means you are already achieving the minimum level of reading, writing and numeracy skills required to receive your HSC in 2020, so you won't have to do any of the online tests.

But the NSW Education Standards Authority expects that the majority of students will be sitting at least one of the online tests starting in Year 10.

So don't believe anyone who tells you that you can't get your HSC if you don't get Band 8s in NAPLAN this year. It's just not true. NAPLAN this year is just the first of a number of opportunities you will have to demonstrate the minimum standard.

Why has the minimum standard been introduced?

The HSC minimum standard is being introduced to help ensure that you leave school with basic literacy and numeracy skills for success in life, and that you will be able to communicate your ideas effectively in your HSC exams. Regardless of your plans beyond school, you will need adequate reading, writing and numeracy skills to make sure you can do things like:

- get a good deal on your mobile phone plan
- write a job application
- follow written instructions to operate equipment safely.

You can find more information available about this by:

- Visiting the NESA website for a video and flyers about the HSC minimum standard:
educationstandards.nsw.edu.au
- Trying some sample online reading, writing and numeracy test questions:
hsliteracynumeracy.nesa.nsw.edu.au

I wish you well as you master these and other important skills for your future.

Yours sincerely

David de Carvalho
Chief Executive Officer