



**St Paul's**  
Catholic College  
*Booragul*

# SUBJECT SELECTION

## YEAR 11 2021

**FREQUENTLY  
ASKED  
QUESTIONS**



# WHAT IS THE HSC?

The HSC is the highest educational achievement in secondary education in New South Wales. To be awarded your HSC you must complete Years 11 and 12, satisfy HSC course requirements, and sit for the state-wide exams.

The Record of School Achievement (RoSA) is a credential that shows your cumulative participation and achievement in courses up until you leave school, if you choose to do so after Year 10 but before completing your HSC.

Your HSC credentials will list your Year 11 grades, HSC assessment mark, HSC examination mark, HSC mark and Performance Band for each subject. If you leave school and receive a RoSA, what is listed depends on when you leave school. As a minimum, it will list your Year 10 grades.

## HOW DO I CHOOSE THE RIGHT HSC SUBJECTS?

Your aim is to attain the best HSC result you can. This means you should choose courses that you are good at, interested in and may use in the future.

Use this guide along with the subject selection handbook and advice from your teachers, Careers Adviser, Leaders of Pedagogy and the Assistant Principal Teaching & Learning, to help you make a decision about what courses you will take for Year 11.





## WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR SELECTING COURSES?

To achieve your HSC you must complete a minimum of:

- 12 units in Year 11
- 10 units in Year 12

A pattern of study must include 2 units of English and either 1 or 2 unit Studies of Religion or 1 or 2 unit Studies in Catholic Thought.

## WHAT ARE 'UNITS'?

All courses have a unit value and in year 11 you need to select 12 units, two of which need to be English.

Most courses are worth two units, although some courses, including HSC Extension courses, are worth one unit. You must satisfactorily complete a Year 11 course before you can continue studying that course for your HSC.

In both Year 11 and Year 12 your course selection must include:

- Two units of English
- At least six units of Board Developed Courses,
- At least three courses of two units or greater
- At least four subjects

## WHAT ARE BOARD DEVELOPED COURSES?

Board Developed courses are the large number of courses set and examined by NESA that can also contribute to the calculation of the ATAR.

Most Board Developed Courses have a compulsory examination for the HSC.

There are some exceptions:

- Category B subjects have an optional examination (see Category B subjects).
- Life Skills courses are Board Developed Courses but are not examined for the HSC and therefore, do not contribute towards the ATAR.



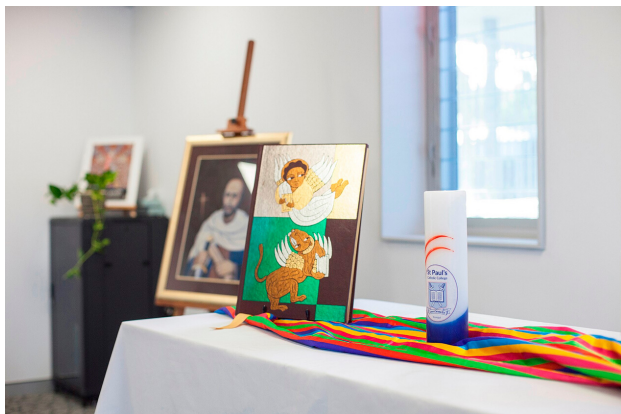
# WHAT ARE BOARD ENDORSED COURSES?

Board Endorsed courses are developed by schools, TAFE and universities. They count towards your HSC but do not have an HSC examination and do not contribute towards the calculation of your ATAR.

Board Endorsed Courses offered at St Paul's Catholic College include: Marine Studies; Sport, Lifestyle and Recreation; Early Childhood; Studies in Catholic Thought and some VET courses offered through TAFE.

# WHAT ARE CATEGORY A COURSES?

Category A courses may be included in the calculation of a student's Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR). The HSC examination is compulsory for the satisfactory completion of category A subjects.



# WHAT ARE VET COURSES?

Vocational Education and Training courses contribute towards your HSC and Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

VET credentials are recognised by industry and employers throughout Australia. Some of the Board Developed VET courses have an optional HSC exam so, if you choose to sit the exam, your results can also count towards your ATAR.

Students must complete a work placement to satisfactorily achieve the VET qualification.



# WHAT ARE CATEGORY B COURSES?

Category B subjects have an optional HSC examination and no more than 2 units may be included in the calculation of a student's ATAR and only if the student has completed the HSC examination for that subject. Category B subjects include VET/TAFE courses and have a compulsory work placement.

If students are interested in enrolling in VET and/or TAFE courses they are encouraged to speak with Mr McLoughlin before they preference their subjects.

# ARE THE HSC AND THE ATAR THE SAME THING?

This is perhaps the most commonly asked question and the simple answer is, no, the Higher School Certificate and the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank are very different.

The **HSC is the highest educational award** that can be achieved in secondary education in New South Wales. The attainment of the HSC is a significant achievement.

Performance in the HSC is based on the standard the student has attained. The HSC presents a profile of student achievement across a range of subjects representing a range of skills.

## DO I PICK SUBJECTS TO GET THE BEST ATAR I CAN?

No, you pick courses to get the best HSC you can.

This means students should pick courses that they are interested in and are good at. You can't 'game' the ATAR and, as mentioned, it is not the only way to gain entry into university.

The ATAR is a position based on scaling. Therefore the **ATAR it is a rank** and not a mark. While the HSC is a qualification achieved by secondary students in NSW, the ATAR is a national rank calculated by the Universities Admission Center.

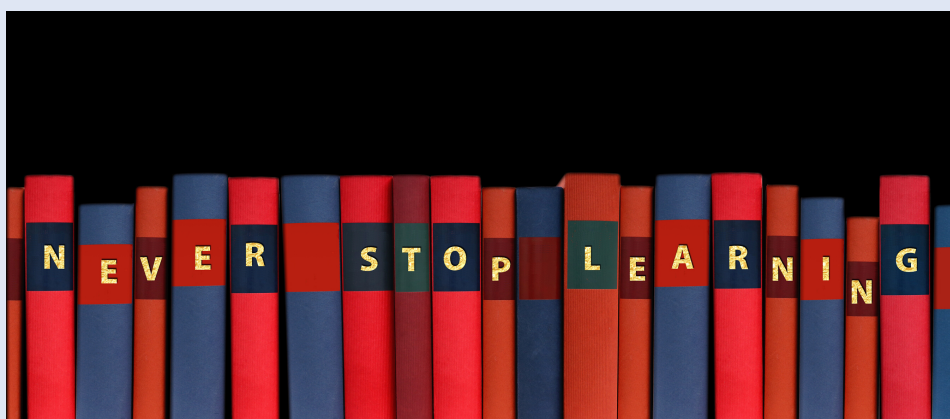
The ATAR can be used by students to gain entry into university, however, it is important for students to remember that there are many ways a student can gain entry into university.

When selecting courses, students are encouraged to consider what they enjoy and are good at, not what courses will get the best ATAR.

## WHAT IF I WANT TO FOLLOW A VOCATIONAL PATHWAY?

The HSC isn't just about university. Many students want to seek a vocational pathway and completing the HSC provides these students with a competitive edge.

Students who are seeking a vocational pathway can select category B courses and Board Endorsed Courses and still qualify for the HSC.





## WHAT ARE THE HSC MINIMUM STANDARDS?

Students need reading, writing and numeracy for everyday life after school. Students in NSW are supported to meet a minimum standard of literacy and numeracy to receive the HSC.

To show you meet the HSC minimum standard, you will need to show a minimum achievement in short online reading, writing and numeracy tests of skills for everyday life.

These tests are conducted in class during year 10. Most students achieve the HSC minimum standard after one or two attempts. Students who require additional support are identified early and interventions are put in place usually before Year 11.

Some students with disability and students studying Life Skills courses may be exempt from meeting the minimum standard to receive their HSC credential.

Together with the NSW Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, the HSC minimum standard is part of an effort to improve the literacy and numeracy outcomes for students.

## IT ISN'T JUST ABOUT THE COURSES

As a final note, it is important for students to understand that the HSC isn't just about what courses are studied and the marks students receive.

Year 11 and 12 is a formative time in student's lives and they are given increased choice and advocacy over their studies. Not only do students learn about the content of courses, they learn skills such as organisation, communication, collaboration, commitment and resilience.

Students are supported in their journey through senior studies by their subject teachers, Care Group teachers and Student Coordinator. Events such as retreats, sports carnivals and St Paul's Day create lasting memories for students and are an important part of student's contribution to the culture of St Paul's Catholic College. We are looking forward to partnering with students and their families as they journey through the final years of secondary school.

# WHAT ARE MY NEXT STEPS?

Thinking about your subjects for next year can be an overwhelming process as there are so many options and pathways available to you.

It is important that you discuss your choices with either your teachers, the Leaders of Pedagogy, Careers Adviser or the Assistant Principal Teaching & Learning.

The questions below can help you keep a record of your conversations and thoughts about your subjects. Your responses to these questions can be helpful as you decide on your pattern of study.

---

What subjects am I good at?

---

What subjects am I interested in?

---

At this stage of the year it isn't expected that students know what they want to do when they finish school.

However, some students do have an idea of a career they would like to pursue.

What types of careers interest you?

---

It is compulsory to study English in Year 11 and 12. Which English course are you considering studying next year?

Why have you selected this course?

---

Although it isn't compulsory for students to study Mathematics, it is encouraged.

If you were to consider studying mathematics, what course would you select?

---

There are many other courses to select from.

In the table below, List the courses that interest you and give reasons why this is something you think you would like to study.

Course	I am interested in this course because ...

---

What questions do I have?



# WHO DO I ASK FOR HELP?

The following people are available to answer your questions and provide you with advice:

Mrs Amber Carter - Assistant Principal Teaching & Learning  
amber.carter@mn.catholic.edu.au

Mr Craig McLoughlin - Careers Adviser and VET Coordinator  
craig.mcloughlin@mn.catholic.edu.au

Mrs Melissa Chapman/Mrs Nicole Deed - Leader of Pedagogy Religious Studies  
melissa.chapman@mn.catholic.edu.au  
nicole.deed@mn.catholic.edu.au

Mrs Sue Hatfield-Smith - Leader of Pedagogy English (acting)  
suzanne.hatfield-smith@mn.catholic.edu.au

Mrs Cheryl Wills - Leader of Pedagogy Mathematics  
cheryl.wills@mn.catholic.edu.au

Mrs Belinda Flood - Leader of Pedagogy HSIE  
belinda.flood@mn.catholic.edu.au

Mrs Michelle Lund - Leader of Pedagogy Science  
michelle.lund@mn.catholic.edu.au

Mrs Alice Grant - Leader of Pedagogy TAS  
alice.grant@mn.catholic.edu.au

Mr Bradley Melville - Leader of Pedagogy PDHPE  
bradley.melville@mn.catholic.edu.au

Mr Mark Newell - Leader of Pedagogy Science/Learning Technology Coordinator  
mark.newell@mn.catholic.edu.au