BOARD OF STUDIES
NEW SOUTH WALES

Assessment and Reporting in Extension Stage 6 courses

Arabic • Chinese • French • German • Indonesian • Italian • Japanese • Modern Greek • Spanish

Effective from	**2010 (HSC courses)**
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This document contains the Board of Studies' requirements for assessing and reporting achievement in Extension HSC courses in the above languages for the Higher School Certificate, and provides details of the HSC examination in those courses. From time to time changes are made to HSC assessment and examination requirements. Such changes will be made available through updates to this document. Please note that the version on the Board of Studies website is always the current version.

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Contents

Assessment in Stage 6
Reporting achievement at the HSC
Internal assessment
The HSC examination
Board requirements for the HSC internal assessment mark
Languages Extension HSC examination specifications
Summary of external and internal HSC assessment
Resources and advice

Assessment in Stage 6

Assessment is the process of gathering information and making judgements about student achievement for a variety of purposes. In the Preliminary and HSC courses those purposes include:

- assisting student learning
- evaluating and improving teaching and learning programs
- providing evidence of satisfactory achievement and completion in the course
- providing the Higher School Certificate results.

Assessment for Learning provides a useful approach for the delivery of the Languages Extension HSC courses. It provides opportunities in the context of everyday class activities for students to demonstrate their learning.

The approach is most effective when students:

- are involved in setting learning goals
- know and understand standards and expectations about what is expected and the standards of work
- receive feedback that helps them understand the next steps in their learning and plan how to undertake the next steps.

Reporting achievement at the HSC

The Higher School Certificate credentials received by students are used by the Board to report both the internal and external measures of achievement. Higher School Certificate results in Languages Extension comprise:

- **an assessment mark** derived from the mark submitted by the school and produced in accordance with the Board's requirements for the internal 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.

Student performance in an HSC course is reported against standards on a course report. The course report contains a performance scale for the course describing levels (bands) of achievement, an HSC mark located on the performance scale, an assessment mark and an

examination mark. The course report also shows, graphically, the statewide distribution of HSC marks of all students in the course.

The distribution of marks is determined by students' performances against the standards and not scaled to a predetermined pattern of marks.

The use of both internal assessment and external examinations of student achievement allows measurements and observations to be made at several points and in different ways throughout the HSC course. Taken together, the external examination and internal assessment provide a valid and reliable assessment of the achievement of the knowledge, understanding and skills described for each course.

The Board of Studies uses a standards-referenced approach to reporting student achievement in the Higher School Certificate. The standards in the HSC are:

- the knowledge, skills and understanding expected to be learnt by students – the syllabus standards
- the levels of achievement of the knowledge, skills and understanding – the performance standards.

Both the syllabus standards and the performance standards are based on the aims, objectives, outcomes and content of the course. Together they specify what is to be learnt and how well it is to be achieved. Teacher understanding of the standards comes from the aims, objectives, outcomes and content in the syllabus together with:

- the performance descriptions that summarise the different levels of performance
- HSC examination papers and marking guidelines
- samples of students' achievement, collected in the standards packages and published on the Board's Assessment Resource Centre website.

Internal assessment

This section should be read in conjunction with advice on internal assessment in the Board's Assessment Certification and Examination (ACE) Manual.

HSC course

The Board requires schools to submit an assessment mark for each HSC candidate in a Languages Extension course. The internal assessment mark submitted by the school provides a summation of each student's achievements measured at several points throughout the course. The marks submitted for each course group at a school should reflect the rank order of students, and must be on a scale sufficiently wide to reflect adequately the relative differences in student performances.

Internal assessment provides a measure of a student's achievement based on a wider range of syllabus content and outcomes than may be covered by the external examination alone. The assessment components and weightings to be applied ensure a common focus for internal assessment in the course across schools, while allowing for flexibility in the design of tasks. A variety of types of task should be used to give students the opportunity to demonstrate outcomes in different ways and to improve the validity and reliability of the assessment.

The standards-referenced approach to assessment for the HSC involves schools ensuring that:

- assessment tasks reflect the weightings and components specified in this document
- tasks are designed to focus on objectives and outcomes
- the types of assessment task are appropriate for the outcomes being assessed
- students are given the opportunity to demonstrate their level of achievement of the outcomes in a range of different task types
- the assessment criteria for each task are such that higher marks are gained by demonstration of better achievement in relation to the syllabus outcomes
- students know the assessment criteria before they begin a task
- marks earned on individual tasks are expressed on a scale sufficiently wide to reflect the relative differences in student performances.

Students should receive meaningful feedback about what they are able to do, and what they need to do in order to improve their level of performance.

The HSC examination

The external HSC examination provides a measure of student achievement in a range of syllabus outcomes that can be reliably measured in an examination setting. The external examination and its marking relate to syllabus standards by:

- providing clear links to syllabus outcomes
- enabling students to demonstrate the levels of achievement outlined in the course performance scale
- applying marking guidelines based on criteria that relate to the quality of the response
- aligning performance in the examination each year to the standards established for the course.

Board requirements for the HSC internal assessment mark

The Board requires that the assessment tasks used to determine the HSC internal assessment mark must comply with the components and weightings specified. The collection of information for the HSC internal assessment mark must not begin before the completion of the Preliminary course.

Schools are required to develop an HSC internal assessment program that:

- specifies the various assessment tasks and the weightings allocated to each task
- provides a schedule of the tasks designed for the whole course.

Note that school-based assessment marks submitted to the Board must NOT include:

- measures of objectives and outcomes that address values and attitudes. (However, as these objectives are important elements of any course, schools may decide to report on them separately to students and parents, perhaps using some form of descriptive statements.)
- measures that reflect student conduct.

See the Board's ACE Manual for further information.

Assessment components and weightings

HSC course
The mandatory components and weightings for the HSC course are set out below.

Component	Weighting
Analysis of written text that is in [Language] Objective 2	15
Response to written text Objective 2	10
Writing skills Objective 1	15
Speaking skills Objective 1	10
	50

Teachers may use their discretion in determining the manner in which they allocate tasks within the course content. The Board considers that 2 to 3 assessment tasks is sufficient.

Languages Extension HSC examination specifications

The examination will consist of a written paper worth 40 marks and an oral examination worth 10 marks.

Written Paper (40 marks)

Time allowed: 2 hours including 10 minutes reading time.

Monolingual and/or bilingual print dictionaries may be used.

The paper will consist of three sections.

Section I – Response to prescribed text (25 marks)

This section will consist of two parts.

Part A (15 marks)

- There will be approximately five short-answer questions related to an extract from the prescribed text.
- Questions will be phrased in English requiring a response in English.
- There will be a least one question worth from 5 to 7 marks.
- Candidates will be required to analyse and evaluate aspects of the prescribed text and to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of: language features; content; the social, political, cultural and/or literary context; how meaning is conveyed, and how the prescribed text relates to the prescribed issues.

Part B (10 marks)

- There will be one extended response question.
- The question will be phrased in English and [Language] requiring a response in [Language].
- The expected length of response will be approximately:
  - 200 words in Arabic, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Modern Greek and Spanish
  - 250 characters in Chinese
  - 400 *ji* in Japanese.
- The question will relate to an extract of up to:
  - 50 words in Arabic, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Modern Greek and Spanish
  - 60 characters in Chinese
  - 100 *ji* in Japanese.
- The extract will be different from the extract provided in Part A.
- Candidates will be required to respond to an aspect of the prescribed text by taking the role of a character, imagining a hypothetical situation, or writing a description of an event from a different perspective.
- The response will be in the form of a letter, diary entry, narrative account, or the script of a conversation, speech, monologue or interview.

Section II – Writing in [Language] (15 marks)

- There will be two extended response questions phrased in English and [Language] requiring a response in [Language].
- Candidates will be required to answer one question.
- Questions will relate to the prescribed issues, and will specify the audience, purpose and context of the response, and will require the same text type.
- Candidates will be required to write a short essay, article, script of a talk, formal letter or report in which they present and evaluate or justify a point of view.
- The expected length of response will be approximately:
  - 300 words in Arabic, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Modern Greek and Spanish
  - 350 characters in Chinese
  - 600 *ji* in Japanese.

Oral Examination (10 marks)

Time allowed: approximately 3 minutes plus 7 minutes preparation time.

- There will be two extended response questions phrased in English and [Language].
- Both questions will relate to the prescribed issues, and will require candidates to present and support a point of view in [Language].
- Candidates will be required to answer one question.
- The length of the response will be approximately 3 minutes.

Summary of external and internal HSC assessment

External examination	Mark
Written examination *Section I – Response to prescribed text* Part A Short-answer questions Part B One extended response question	 15 10
Section II – Writing in [Language] Candidates answer one extended response question	15
Oral examination	10
	50

Internal assessment	Weighting
Analysis of written text that is in [Language] Objective 2	15
Response to written text that is in [Language] Objective 2	10
Writing skills Objective 1	15
Speaking skills Objective 1	10
	50

Resources and advice

Further guidance and advice related to assessment and the HSC examination in Languages Extension can be found on the Board's website at www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus_hsc.