



# **2025**

## **NWS Preliminary & HSC Information Booklet**



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## Introduction

Since 2014 Newcastle Waldorf School has been running a fully NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) registered and accredited HSC pathway, for both Year 11 and Year 12. Our HSC options fulfill our aim to bring a quality, balanced education to our senior students; engaging their hearts, minds and wills in purposeful activities. Our range of courses bring them opportunities to be inspired by cultural achievements and to follow their individual inspirations, and balance their academic challenges with creative and physical endeavours.

## ATAR and Non-ATAR Pathways

Our range of subjects fulfills NESA requirements for the achievement of an HSC, and students can choose **either** an Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR <https://www.uac.edu.au/future-applicants/atar>) or a non-ATAR pathway. Students who opt for a non-ATAR pathway will sit external exams for just 3 subjects (6 units) out of the minimum 10 unit requirement for an ATAR. For these students, University entrance (at the University of Newcastle and other universities) can be obtained through a combination of the HSC and the Schools Recommendation Scheme (SRS) or the presentation of a body of the student's work to a university panel. Alternative pathways into university are gaining popularity around the country. Universities are looking for young people who are ready for the requirements of first year university. Completing year 11 & 12 applying for the SRS (having the school rate their university readiness), and/or being able to communicate effectively with a university panel, serves this purpose for all courses with the exception of Law and some Medical degrees, however, these courses may be accessed through undertaking an additional STAT test, or through beginning studies in other Bachelor degrees and then transferring across in their second year of university with high grades.

## The Learning Culture of the Senior School

The learning culture of the senior school aligns with international Steiner Schools and aims to be supportive, encouraging, inclusive, holistic, and inspiring through:

- Steiner based teaching methodologies such as: a broad base of subjects, multidisciplinary studies, use of a phenomenological methods (observation-based instruction) and support for long-term breadth of thinking and well-being with artistic and musical activities as well as involvement in school outdoor nature events.
- Using the Independent Learning Model, particularly for any project based subject such as Visual Arts, Music, and Investigating Science, where the teacher facilitates, self-monitored progress, and independent research.
- All Class 11 students will cover four topics in the NESA-approved Preliminary Philosophy Course, which is a shared practise with other Steiner Senior Schools in NSW (Shearwater, Cape Byron, Linuwel and Aurora)



## Registered and Accredited ATAR and Non-ATAR Pathways

As a registered and accredited school we also use NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) Assessment Procedures, including course assessment schedules, a range of assessment task-types, external HSC exams for English, Mathematics, Music, Visual Arts and the Sciences, and the application of N-determinations for non-completion of assessment requirements.

## Patterns of Study and University Entrance

The pattern of Study offered by the school is a two-year program, but this can be extended to a three-year program for individuals (and some students have successfully made use of this opportunity).

Over two years students will complete 12 preliminary units (6 subjects of 120 hours each) and 10 HSC units (5 subjects of 120 hours each) to be eligible for the HSC (Higher School Certificate awarded by NESA).

Students who achieve an HSC that includes Year 12 NESA Endorsed Courses (such as Philosophy or SLR) do not qualify for an ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank), however there are a number of options for students seeking university entrance, which have been used successfully by our graduates. They include:

- SRS Schools Recommendation Scheme - Students' applications are supported by a recommendation from the school.
- Completing an additional STAT test (in the following year, see Glossary) to supplement the HSC result and generate an ATAR.
- Presenting a body of their work to a university. We have an agreement with Newcastle University to assist students through this application process.
- Completing additional units of NESA Developed HSC Courses (see list of NESA Developed Courses).
- Completing bridging courses offered by universities.

These options should be discussed with parents and teachers on an individual basis. Over the years all students wishing to enter a range of universities through a non-ATAR pathway with their HSC, tertiary courses have been successful. Courses our graduates have enrolled in include architecture, teaching/education, nursing, drama, music, music therapy, sciences, Visual Communication Design, IT, and other degrees.

ATAR Sample HSC Pathway	Non - ATAR Sample HSC Pathway
<b>Year 11</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preliminary Advanced English - 2 units</li> <li>• Preliminary Advanced Maths - 2 units</li> <li>• Preliminary Physics - 2 units</li> <li>• Preliminary Investigating Science - 2 units</li> <li>• Preliminary Music - 2 units</li> <li>• Preliminary Philosophy - 2 units*</li> </ul>	<b>Year 11</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preliminary Advanced English - 2 units</li> <li>• Preliminary Advanced Maths - 2 units</li> <li>• Preliminary Music - 2 units</li> <li>• Preliminary SLR - 2 units*</li> <li>• Preliminary Philosophy - 2 units*</li> </ul>
<b>Year 12</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HSC Advanced English - 2 units</li> <li>• HSC Advanced Maths - 2 units</li> <li>• HSC Physics - 2 units</li> <li>• HSC Investigating Science - 2 units</li> <li>• HSC Music - 2 units</li> </ul>	<b>Year 12</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HSC Advanced English - 2 units</li> <li>• HSC Advanced Maths - 2 units</li> <li>• HSC Music - 2 units</li> <li>• HSC SLR - 2 units*</li> <li>• HSC Philosophy - 2 units*</li> </ul>
<p>*The subjects given in blue text are NESA Endorsed Courses – see page 6.</p>	



## Commitment to Extra Curricula Activities

Our Year 11 and 12 students are an asset to the cultural and social aspects of our school community and their contribution has a huge impact on the younger students. We expect our senior students to attend all our timetabled extracurricular activities including any Indigenous Culture opportunities, morning music groups, project opportunities, in-school festivals, camps and excursions. We consider a student's enrolment in our senior program to include their firm commitment to these school activities.

### *Overseas and Australian Trips*

In 2022 the students went to Tasmania to carve Huon Pine and were highly appreciated for their artistic commitment by the locals. Before Covid we had been conducting overseas trips every second year including Carrara (Italy) trip in 2012, 2014 and 2016. Students travelled to England and Paris (2018). The Wayfarers (inter-Steiner school choir) took students to Japan and Taiwan in 2014 and made a return visit to our school in 2015. These trips are self-funded and negotiated with families and students.

### *Drama*

Preliminary Drama as a subject choice was available at NWS for the first time in 2021 with 5 students enrolling. The school's past collaboration with Prospero Players has involved teachers, parents and students from Years 10 to 12, to produce plays for the public. Productions include opportunities for students to contribute and/or collaborate on original music, artistic set and costume design, lighting, script editing, movement choreography and speech work. Successful productions enacted in our school hall have included *The Tempest* in April 2015, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 2017, *As You Like It* in 2019 and *The Crucible* in 2021.

### *Music*

Morning Choir and orchestral groups are one of the school's unique strengths. Singing supports the students' overall wellbeing and physiological development. Senior students can take leadership roles in orchestra and chamber music groups and may contribute to the choice of repertoire and the direction of the ensembles. We present musical performances from our Year 9-12 students for the school community each year and we regularly have Class 12 Music students in the Band 6 range.

Along with our talented individual instrument teachers, students also have the opportunity to work with eminent visiting artists. Visiting artists in past years have included Tony Backhouse, Rachel Hoare, Judy Clingan, The Wayfarers and Francine Bell (for the choir) and Timothy Constable, Fode Mane and Chinta Reiss (drumming), also Monique Claire (cellist) and Jess Randall (violin).

### *Youth Conferences*

Our Year 10 & 11 students attended the first Steiner Education Australia National Youth Conference in Samford Valley in 2019 (photo of our students with new friends after the 2019 concert). It was a highly successful experience for all the students involved and we intend to participate in all future conferences of this kind. There was an Odyssey themed youth conference in September 2023 and a Philosophy Camp at Mullimbimby in April of 2024.



## Subjects

### *NESA Developed Courses*

These subjects have internal and external assessment and contribute marks towards an HSC and an ATAR. We include aspects of Steiner School pedagogy and content to enrich their delivery, and give students the opportunity to present their creative work to the School Community towards the end of the year.

- **2 Unit English (Advanced or Standard plus extension)** *All students must do an English course.*
- **2 Unit Mathematics (Advanced or Standard plus extension)** – *Maths is an optional choice for students.*
- **2 Unit Visual Arts** *Visual Arts course is an optional choice for students.*
- **2 Unit Music 1** – *Music as a subject is an optional choice for students.*
- **2 Unit Biology (or Investigating Science, or Environmental Science, or Physics depending on class preferences)** – *Science subjects are an optional choice for students and we are able to offer Physics and one other Science course – other science courses are also available through a distance education provider.*
- **2 Unit Drama** – *Drama is an optional choice for students and a minimum of four students are required to form a class.*

Extension subjects are an extra 60 hours and contribute an extra 1 unit.

### *NESA Endorsed Courses (non-ATAR):*

- **2 Unit (or 1 Unit) Philosophy** – *In line with other NSW Steiner Schools who run Philosophy, all Year 11 students will do this course in 2025 (it does not affect the attainment of an ATAR as it is a preliminary subject).*
- **2 Unit Sport, Lifestyle and Recreation** – *This is an optional choice for students.*

These subjects are assessed entirely within the school and count towards an HSC. They are explained in detail below.

### *Additional Courses:*

#### **Camden Haven Distance Education (DE) and OTEN/TAFE and TVet or EVet –**

Students at NWS can only enrol in ONE Distance Education, TVET or TAFE subject. Please note parents/carers need to pay the DE or TAFE fees on top of their school fees. These subjects often count towards an HSC and an ATAR (please check this for each subject). There are a range of subjects available through distance education that can be approved on an individual basis by the high school teachers. Distance Education providers such as Camden Haven offer Science subjects, Modern History, Languages and other subjects such as Agriculture, Design & Technology, Textiles and Design, Aboriginal Studies, Community and Family Studies. TAFE courses include subjects such as Construction and Screen and Media.

<https://camdenhave-h.schools.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/doe/sws/schools/c/camdenhave-h/distance-education/2024SingleCourseInformationBooklet.pdf>

<https://www.tafensw.edu.au/study/types-courses/tvet>

## NESA Endorsed Subjects in Detail

### Philosophy

The Lorien Novalis School originally developed this course and our teachers have assisted in updating two of the modules. The Philosophy Course is now used by most Steiner schools in NSW who offer senior studies (over 100 students in NSW are enrolled each year). The course covers many of the significant Steiner School Year 11 & 12 Main Lessons. The topics are wide ranging and relevant, covering aspects of Science, Music, Drama, Geometry, Nature Studies, Agriculture, History, Ideology, Literature and Art, with cultural and artistic insight. NESA approves the course content, outcomes and assessment procedures every five years. The following topics are a selection of those offered at NWS.

#### Power of Wonder

This is an introductory module addressing questions on the nature and relevance of philosophical enquiry, including the Socratic method and key philosophical movements and debates in history. Students will investigate significant philosophers across the ages and the importance of critical and imaginative thinking today. **Task – Students in groups write a screen play with a modern setting which used Socratic dialogue and debate.**

#### The Journey of Parsifal, Paths of Light, Riddles of the Soul

Parsifal helps students shape their world as well as helps them to understand how narratives shape culture, history and human behaviour. Students approach the world using an increased capacity to map their inner landscape and values, with a view to meeting the larger questions posed by the world in which they live.

#### Beyond Good and Evil

This unit addresses the modern questions of choice and consequences, of moral and ethical discourse, through engagement with the origin, history and tradition of the devil's books and the Dr Faustus narratives. **Task – Short responses and a creative composition tackling the legal perspectives on criminal responsibility.**

#### Clash of Ideologies

This is a study of revolution and evolution. The module explores world conflicts, the effects of Communism, Nazism and Democratisation, and how new world orders have given rise to new tensions. Students also look at the powerful work of resistance movements during times of totalitarianism. **Task – Short responses taking on the perspectives of both resistance movements and political leaders in the WW2 era.**

#### Zeitgeist (Spirit of our Time)

The concept of Zeitgeist, proponents of the idea and its historical context are explored by engaging students in a journey into the making of the present day world. Students will survey the development of human consciousness, including values, attitudes and perspectives, from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries into the present new millennium. **Task – Class collaborates to create relevant debate topics and conducts a structured debate.**

#### Forms of Space and Time - Projective Geometry

Students will develop an appreciation and understanding of the human experiences and changing thoughts of time and space investigating the deep artistry of nature. Students develop a portfolio of completed diagrams and writings, which explore the impressive range of geometric shapes found in the natural world. **Task – Portfolio of Completed Projective Geometry Constructions and commentaries.**

#### Spiritual Currents in World History

Here students can find the common threads as well as the differences which arise in the spiritual currents found throughout world history,





by studying the origins, the founders, their lives, their spiritual message and code of ethics, visiting sites and observing the evolution of the original message in the light of the present. **Task – Portfolio of research into world religions.**

### **The Universal Language of Music**

Students can investigate some exploratory questions relating to music which compare and contrast music unique to a culture with music as a universal language that transcends cultural boundaries. Students will have a wide range of experiences to develop a broad understanding, but they will choose one of three main questions as their focus including: **The Music of the Spheres; Music and Spirituality; Music, Expression and Emotions:** What can be expressed through music, where do composers find inspiration, and how and why does music affect us so deeply?

### **Global Issues in Agriculture and Farming**

This is a unique opportunity for students to gain practical experience in the increasingly important field of organic agricultural methods including an introduction to biodynamics. Class activities will include field studies visiting working farms and talks with active farmers and gardeners. Through these experiences students will increase their positive values and attitudes towards many aspects of the environment. We foresee possible collaboration with other Steiner schools for some of these experiences. **Task – Journal of ideas, interview notes, and design of a sustainable garden.**

### **Sport, Lifestyle and Recreation**

Please note this course is only available to students on approval. It will be available in 2025.

This course provides students with opportunities to engage in a range of physical activities. In the eight selected modules covered over the two years, students will have some choice in selecting activities that meet the module requirements. For example, in 'Individual Games and Sports Applications' students could choose mountain bike riding or rock climbing among a range of options. Team activities can be selected and organised around the needs and capacities of each cohort. The course consists of both practical and theory components with some modules being slightly more theory focused than others. There is however, the expectation that all modules and course work is comprised of elements of written, verbal and skills based knowledge and understanding, demonstrated through a range of assessment tasks.

The modules in the course are:

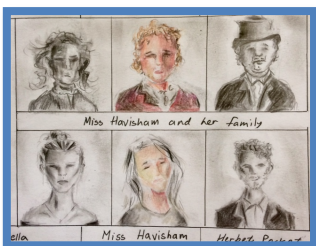
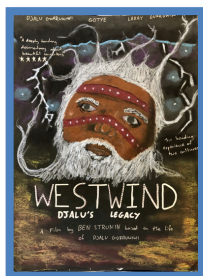
- Aquatics
- Games and Sports Applications II (non-contact or sports where teams are separated by a net)
- Outdoor Recreation (hiking and camping based skills)
- Athletics
- Individual games and Sports
- First Aid and Lifesaving
- Games and Sports Applications I (sports where teams occupy same space)
- Healthy Lifestyles (a study and implementation of needs based activity programs) English and optional Extensions



## NESA Developed Subjects

### Preliminary Advanced/Standard English

Students can start in the Preliminary Advanced Course and may then elect to change in Year 12 to the HSC Standard English Course. Students will study a variety of important developmental texts, covering a range of themes reflecting the



diverse social context of their times as well as the authors' insights into future developments.

Through the way these texts are studied, the students will not only learn to value the power and depth of effective communication but will become familiar with the leading questions of different eras and the evolutionary relationship between them.

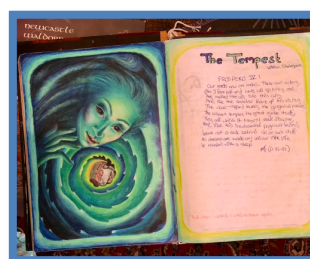
- COMMON MODULE: READING TO WRITE (Advanced and Standard)  
Great Expectations (Fiction)  
Westwind Djarlu's Legacy (Film)
- MODULE A (Advanced): NARRATIVES THAT SHAPE OUR WORLD (Poetry, and Nonfiction)
- MODULE B: CRITICAL STUDY OF LITERATURE Much Ado About Nothing (Shakespearean drama)

### HSC (Advanced English)

These studies include five texts from the NESA list. Students will study a variety of text types in depth with specific areas of focus. Texts for 2025:

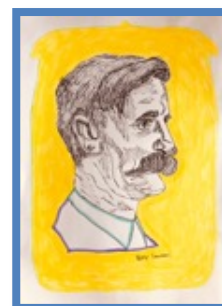
- COMMON MODULE: TEXTS AND HUMAN EXPERIENCES (Advanced and Standard) The Crucible, Arthur Miller (Drama)
- MODULE A: TEXTUAL CONVERSATIONS The Tempest, William Shakespeare & Hag-Seed, Margaret Atwood, (Shakespearean drama and Prose-fiction)
- MODULE B: CRITICAL STUDY OF LITERATURE - Poems by T. S. Eliot

- MODULE C: THE CRAFT OF WRITING Short texts such as: The Ghost of Firozsa Baag, Rohinton Misty (Prose), 'The Lady of Shallot', Alfred Lord Tennyson (Poetry); Metamorphosis, Franz Kafka (Prose Fiction)



### HSC (Standard English)

- COMMON MODULE: TEXTS AND HUMAN EXPERIENCES (Advanced and Standard) The Crucible, Arthur Miller (Drama) and ONE related text
- MODULE A: Henry Lawson Short Stories (fiction),
- MODULE B: Nasht, Simon, Frank Hurley: The Man Who Made History (Nonfiction, film or media)
- MODULE C: The Craft of Writing Short texts such as: Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening, Robert Frost (Poetry)



### English Extension 1 and 2 (please note that Extension English will not offered in 2025 if Drama is the preferred subject)

Preliminary Extension English 1 explores one module: Text, Culture and Value. This involves investigating ways of reading. In this unit, students learn how and why texts are appropriated into a range of contexts, develop skills in independent investigation and in extended compositions. Prelim Ext is a requisite for HSC Ext 1 and 2. HSC English Extension 1 focuses specifically on a chosen module and requires refining of the above skills and knowledge. HSC English Extension 2 requires a Major Work to be composed in the genre of the student's choice. It is only for those willing to dedicate ongoing and rigorous independent study into their project and to refine their work for sophistication and clarity. *Please note these courses are only available to students on approval.*



## 2U Mathematics, and optional Extension Mathematics

Mathematics, taught using first-principals methodology, has an incredibly powerful impact on students' developing minds, creating abilities to think clearly and laterally while synthesising and connecting in a relevant manner the huge quantities of information we absorb during our lives. Mathematics teaches us as much about logic as it does about numbers. It increases our problem-solving capacities in all areas of life. The [Standard Mathematics](#) Course involves more practical and everyday uses of Mathematics. In the more conceptual [Advanced Mathematics](#) course, students learn to use sophisticated multi-step reasoning, and to integrate ideas of calculus with strong algebraic, deductive and modelling skills to successfully solve difficult problems.

Students who choose the [Extension 1](#) option learn to synthesise mathematical techniques, results and ideas creatively across the Mathematics and Mathematics Extension 1 courses to solve difficult problems, and use sophisticated multi-step mathematical reasoning. They develop the further capacity to interpret and evaluate the solutions to problems and to translate efficiently between practical problems and their mathematical model. Students choosing [Extension 1 and 2 Mathematics](#) need to be able to commit themselves to consistent ongoing study and revision.

*Please note these courses are only available to students on approval.*

## Visual Arts



The Preliminary and HSC Visual Arts course provides students with the opportunity to study the practice of a wide range of artists, both contemporary and more traditional in the theory course, with in-depth case studies undertaken in the HSC course that constitute the basis for the written exam. In the practical component, students work through a range of art making experiences in the Preliminary course covering broad topics within visual art theory, history and criticism that inform their art making and expand their understanding of the art world from different times, places and cultures with a focus on exploring different art making conventions. Students' art making culminates in a 'body of work' (BOW) for their year 12 Major Artwork. The major work sees students selecting themes and media of their choice and extending their skills and understanding of art concepts through an intensive creative process. The theory component of the course will continue to deepen their understanding of art practice both informing and inspiring their endeavours. Our expectation is that all Stage 6 students will complete the Visual Arts Course unless they are enrolling in a distance education or TAFE course.

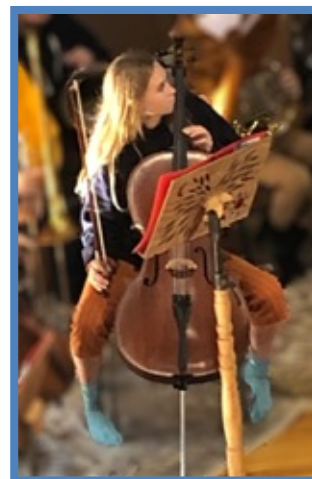
Possible media include:

- Painting, Drawing
- Printmaking
- Photography, Video and Film Making
- Sculpture in stone, wood, plaster, clay, metal, mixed media and founds objects
- Ceramics
- Textiles
- Documented forms that could include installation and site specific work



## Music 1

Music has been part of these students' lives since they started at the School. It is not surprising that we see the fruits of this education in year 11 and 12. Many students develop to be strong individual performers and composers of music at this age and the Music 1 course offers them the chance to explore the subject in more depth. We can spend time getting to know the nuts and bolts of music while exploring a wide variety of repertoire through performance, listening, composition and musicology. Students who choose chamber music options really value the depth of talent in the other students and teachers when it comes to realising their musical ideas. This course lays a solid foundation for those wishing to pursue a career in music and also provides some opportunities for students to start exploring individual and particular areas of interest.



In the HSC course, students study the concepts of music through the learning experiences of performance, composition, musicology and aural within the context of a range of styles, periods and genres. Students study three topics in the HSC course which are different or give greater depth from those studied in the Preliminary course. In addition to core studies in performance, composition, musicology and aural, students select three electives from any combination of performance, composition and musicology. These electives must represent each of the three topics studied in the course.

## Sciences

There are a number of Science courses available for students to study in Years 11 and 12. These include Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Earth and Environmental Science and Investigating Science. The school has offered Science in the senior school through a study of either Biology, Investigating Science and Physics, depending on the consensus of the student group. The school can offer both Physics and another science subject if there is sufficient interest from the class. The school also will continue to offer the opportunity for students to study the other Sciences by distance through Camden Haven High School (see page 12 for links).

The Investigating Science course is a relatively new course and the content studied is quite broad, including elements of Biology, Physics, Chemistry and Earth Science. The students are required to undertake a depth study of their own choice.

The science courses are 2 units each. In 2019 students opted for Biology, in 2021 students chose Physics, in 2020, 2022, 2031 and 2024 students chose Investigating Science.

## Drama

**The Preliminary course** content comprises an interaction between the components of Improvisation, Playbuilding and Acting, Elements of Production in Performance, and Theatrical Traditions and Performance Styles. Learning comes from practical experiences in each of these areas.

**HSC Topics:** Australian Drama and Theatre (Core); Studies in Drama and Theatre; Group Performance (Core content); Individual Project.

**Australian Drama and Theatre**, and Studies in Drama and Theatre involve the theoretical study through practical exploration of themes, issues, styles and movements of traditions of theatre, exploring relevant acting techniques, performance styles and spaces. Learning comes from practical experiences in each of these areas.

**Group Performance:** Three to six students create a piece of original theatre (8–12 minutes duration). It provides opportunity for each student to demonstrate his or her performance skills.

**Individual Project:** Students demonstrate their expertise in a particular area. They choose one project from: Critical Analysis; Design; Performance; Script-writing; Video Drama.





## Camden Haven Single Course Distance Education and TAFE NSW links

<https://camdenhave-h.schools.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/doe/sws/schools/c/camdenhave-h/distance-education/2024SingleCourseInformationBooklet.pdf>

<https://www.tafensw.edu.au/study/types-courses/tvet>

## Glossary of Terms

- An ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank) result can only be achieved by completing 10 units of NESA Developed or VET Courses. The external HSC exam results are combined to produce a ranked result out of 99.9. The ATAR result is the main method by which students attain University Entrance <https://www.uac.edu.au/future-applicants/atar>
- The HSC (Higher School Certificate) is a NESA qualification awarded by a registered and accredited Senior School. To achieve an HSC, a student needs to complete a minimum of 12 Preliminary units and 10 HSC units. At least 6 of these units of study in both Preliminary and HSC courses need to be NESA Developed.
- NESA Endorsed Courses (BEC) - these courses have been developed by individual organisations and approved for Year 11 & 12 delivery by the NESA of Studies. The courses are overseen by the NESA of Studies, but the assessments are conducted and marked internally by the school. These courses contribute towards the HSC, but NOT towards the achievement of an ATAR.
- NESA Developed Courses – These courses are developed by the NSW NESA of Studies. They have external exams which contribute towards an ATAR.
- STAT (Special Tertiary Admissions Test) is designed to assess a range of competencies considered important for success in tertiary studies. It is accepted by most Universities and held between May and June each year.