

*Faith    Wisdom    Character    Service*



# SHOALHAVEN ANGLICAN SCHOOL

## THE HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

An Information Package for Students

Preliminary Course 2010

HSC Course 2011

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## Information about the HSC

This is your introduction to the HSC and the many options now available. More information is contained in the Board of Studies publication.

- The Higher School Certificate recognises 13 years of schooling. In the interests of greater career choices and increased opportunities at university and TAFE, it offers you a full range of study areas matching individual abilities, interests and goals.
- The new Higher School Certificate builds on the best of the current Higher School Certificate. There are more 2-unit courses available and these courses incorporate the learning outcomes previously contained in the 2 unit and 3 unit courses.
- Courses will be linked to further education and training.
  - ◆ Extension courses (including undergraduate university courses) will enable students to undertake more in- depth study in areas of special interest.
  - ◆ Vocational Education and Training courses will count towards the HSC and will also lead to qualifications recognised across a range of industries.
- The HSC will include life skills courses for students with special education needs.
- The HSC will fairly assess each student's knowledge and skills.
- If you meet the minimum standard expected in a course you will receive a mark of 50. If you have a higher standard of performance you will receive a higher mark.
- For each course you will receive easy-to-understand reports which contain much more information. These reports provide clearer indications of what you have demonstrated you know, understand and can do in each course.
- Additional information about courses is available on the Board of Studies Website: <http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au>

## Board Developed Courses

These courses are developed by the Board of Studies. There is a syllabus for each course, which contains:

- The course objectives, structure, content and outcomes.
- Specific course requirements
- Assessment requirements
- Sample examination papers and marking guidelines
- The performance scale (except for Vocational and Training Courses)

All students entered for the HSC who are studying these courses follow these syllabuses. These courses are examined externally at the end of the HSC course and can count towards the calculation of the Universities Admission Index. (UAI)

## **What are Units?**

All courses offered for the Higher School Certificate have a unit value. Subjects may have a value of 1 unit or 2 units. Most courses are 2 unit. Each unit involves class time of approximately 2 hours per week (60 hours per year). In the HSC each unit has a value of 50 marks. Hence a 2-unit course has a value of 100 marks, and demands approximately 120 hours per year of class work.

The following is a guideline to help you understand the pattern of courses.

## **2 Unit Course**

- This is the basic structure for all courses. It has value of 100 marks.

## **Extension Course**

- Extension study is available in a number of subjects. Extension courses build on the content of the 2-unit course and carry an additional value of 1 unit. Requiring students to work beyond the standard of the 2-unit course, extension courses are available in English, Mathematics, History, Music, some Languages and Vocational Education. Undergraduate university courses will be available in some subjects.
- English and Mathematics Extension Courses are available at Preliminary and HSC levels. Students must study the preliminary extension course in these subjects before proceeding to the two HSC extension courses (Extension 1 and Extension 2). The Extension 2 course requires students to work beyond the standard of the Extension 1 course.
- HSC extension courses in subjects other than English and Mathematics are offered and examined in Year 12 only.

## **1 Unit Course**

- 1 unit equals approximately 2 hours of class time each week or 60 hours per year.
- Studies of Religion can be undertaken as either a 1 unit or a 2-unit course.
- There is a number of 1 unit Board Endorsed Courses. These courses do not count in the UAI.

## Requirements for the Award of the HSC

If you wish to be awarded the HSC:

- You must have satisfactorily completed courses that meet the pattern of study required by the Board of Studies for the award of the Higher School Certificate. This includes the completion of the practical, oral or project works required for specific courses and the assessment requirements for each course.
- You must have sat for and made a serious attempt at the Higher School Certificate examinations.
- You must study a minimum of 12 units in the Preliminary course and a minimum of 10 units in the HSC course. Both the Preliminary course and the HSC course must include the following:
  - At least 6 units from Board Developed Courses including at least 2 units of a Board Developed Course in English.
  - At least three courses of 2 units value or greater
  - At least four subjects.

At most 6 units of courses in Science can contribute to Higher School Certificate eligibility.

- The Board of Studies publication, studying for the New South Wales Higher School Certificate – An Information Booklet for Year 10 Students, contains all the HSC rules and requirements you will need to know.
- If you wish to receive the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) you must study a minimum of 10 Board Developed units in the HSC Course. The booklet, University Entry Requirements 2010 Year 10 Booklet, published by UAC, will contain important information about entry to university courses, course prerequisites and other information to assist your choice of HSC courses for study in Years 11 and 12 in preparation for university entry.
- If you do not wish to receive an ATAR, the rest of your courses may be made up from Board Endorsed Courses once you have studied six units from Board Developed Courses.

## Assessment and Reporting

- The HSC reports will provide you with detailed descriptions of the knowledge, skills and understanding you have attained in each subject.
- Teachers are being provided with a syllabus for each course. The packages include the syllabus content which teachers use to develop teaching programs, examination

specifications, sample examination papers, sample marking guidelines and a performance scale.

- The syllabuses, along with assessment and examination information and a performance scale that will be used to describe your level of achievement, give a clear idea of the standards that are expected.
- The HSC reports will provide a description of your achievements that is similar to the one you will receive in this year's School Certificate for the tests in English-literacy, Mathematics and Science.
- School-based assessment tasks will contribute to 50% of your HSC mark. Your school assessment mark will be based on your performance in assessment tasks you have undertaken during the course.
- The other 50% will come from the HSC examination.
- Your HSC mark for 2 unit courses will be reported on a scale of 0 to 100. A mark of 50 will represent the minimum standard expected. If you achieve the minimum standard expected in a course you will receive a mark of 50. There will be five performance bands above 50 that correspond to different levels of achievement in knowledge, skills and understanding. The band from 90 – 100 will correspond to the highest level of achievement.
- On satisfactory completion of your HSC you will receive a portfolio containing:

✓ **The HSC Testamur**

*The official certificate confirming your achievement of all requirements for the award.*

✓ **The Record of Achievement**

*This document lists the courses you have studied and reports the marks and bands you have achieved.*

✓ **Course Reports**

*For every HSC Board Developed Course you will receive a Course Report showing your marks, the Performance Scale and the band descriptions for that course. (A graph showing the statewide distribution of marks in the course is also shown.)*