

# HSC past papers: the official sources, which years match, and how to use them

NESA publishes every HSC paper free on nsw.gov.au under HSC exam papers: one exam pack per subject per year (the paper, the marking guidelines with sample answers, the marking feedback on the written section), with an archive page for the previous syllabus.

| Subject                               | Current-syllabus packs     | Archive (previous syllabus; use by topic)    |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Mathematics Standard 1 and 2          | 2019 to 2025               | Mathematics General, 2014 to 2018            |
| Mathematics Advanced                  | 2020 to 2025 (2026 as sat) | Mathematics (2 unit), 2015 to 2019           |
| Mathematics Extension 1 and 2         | 2020 to 2025               | 2015 to 2019                                 |
| Physics, Chemistry, Biology           | 2019 to 2025               | 2014 to 2018 (different modules and options) |
| English Standard, Advanced, Extension | 2019 to 2025               | earlier years                                |

## What is in a pack

- [ ] The exam paper as sat, with the reference or data sheet at the back
- [ ] The marking guidelines: mark allocation and criteria for every question, with sample answers for the written ones ('not intended to be exemplary or even complete')
- [ ] The marking feedback: what better responses did and where candidates lost marks, for the written section; published a few weeks after the guidelines; the document that moves marks

## The four-pass method

| Pass          | When                             | What                                                                                                             |
|---------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Format     | Term 1 and 2                     | one paper per subject per term, open book, untimed, as topics are taught                                         |
| 2. Timed      | Term 3 holidays before the trial | one full paper a week per subject under exam conditions, marked the same day; the fix list is next week's study  |
| 3. Feedback   | after the trial                  | reread the marking feedback for every year against your trial answers; this is where written-response marks move |
| 4. Two a week | the last four weeks              | the last three years twice, the rest once, timed and marked; stop new papers three days before                   |

## Marking rules

- [ ] Mark to the criteria, not the sample answer; a correct final answer with no working scores what the guidelines say (often one of three)
- [ ] Record every paper: date, year, raw mark, three topics to fix, fixed before the next paper or not
- [ ] 2026 HSC: written exams 13 October to 5 November; results 16 December; 2027 rules and procedures already published

## My paper tracker

[illegible]

From

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