

NORTHERN BEACHES SECONDARY COLLEGE

SENIOR STUDIES GUIDE 2026-2027

A guide to choosing subjects for Years 11 & 12 2026-2027





Northern Beaches Secondary College (NSBC) is an outstanding collaboration of five individual school campuses located on the Northern Beaches.



NBSC Balgowlah Boys Campus

A Year 7 to Year 12 boys' comprehensive campus



NBSC Cromer Campus

A Year 7 to Year 12 co-educational comprehensive campus



NBSC Freshwater Senior Campus

A Year 11 and Year 12 co-educational comprehensive campus



NBSC Mackellar Girls Campus

A Year 7 to Year 12 girls' comprehensive campus



NBSC Manly Campus

A Year 7 to Year 12 co-educational academically selective campus

Northern Beaches Secondary College offers students the opportunity to achieve excellent educational outcomes, participate in innovative educational environments and have unparalleled curriculum choice at the campus which best meets their learning needs. The values, aspirations and beliefs underpinning Excellence, Innovation and Choice are key drivers of college decision making and planning.

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Northern Beaches Secondary College is the largest public school in New South Wales.

Our five campuses together offer collective resources, teaching expertise, support and experience to enable all students to achieve excellence.

Every campus offers a shared senior curriculum, student leadership opportunities, extensive co-curricular activities and excellent facilities and resources. All campuses have highly qualified teaching staff, led by experienced school leadership teams who work together to make sure the best learning is being delivered for our students.

Please use this guide to explore the wide range of courses offered at our college. You can tailor your senior curriculum to suit your particular needs choosing from more than 100 HSC courses and courses offered at TAFE NSW.

Consider your passions and interests as you begin the process of choosing your HSC subjects. Take the time to have conversations with your support network who know you well including your classroom teachers, head teachers, careers advisors, year advisors, parents, counsellors, student support officers and deputy principals.

All the best for your future senior studies at Northern Beaches Secondary College.

Dane Ropa

College Principal

Northern Beaches Secondary College

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Please contact your Campus regarding dates for Year 10 into Year 11 subject selection

NBSC Balgowlah Boys Campus	9949 4200
NBSC Cromer Campus	9981 1155
NBSC Freshwater Senior	9905 2634
NBSC Mackellar Girls	9949 2083
NBSC Manly Campus	9905 3982

1 INTRODUCTION

The Northern Beaches Secondary College (NBSC) Senior Studies Guide has been produced to assist each student make the most appropriate and informed subject choices. The breadth of senior courses on offer across the five campuses enables students to tailor curriculum pathways to suit their individual needs. In addition, students are able to access a wide variety of specialist Northern Sydney Institute TAFE courses.

SCHOOL CONTRIBUTIONS

School contributions are managed at the campus that students are enrolling into. To discuss details regarding school contributions please contact the specific campus directly. Course fees are also listed for your information.

NBSC Balgowlah Boys Campus	9949 4200
NBSC Cromer Campus	9981 1155
NBSC Freshwater Senior Campus	9905 2634
NBSC Mackellar Girls Campus	9949 2083
NBSC Manly Campus	9905 3982

THE NSW EDUCATION STANDARDS AUTHORITY (NESA) RULES and REGULATIONS

For the full details on any of the Board's Year 12 rules and regulations, a student should refer to the NESA web site at <https://nsw.gov.au/NESA>

To be eligible for the HSC a student must:

- Hold a NSW ROSA or its equivalent or
- Gain other qualifications that satisfy NESA

To qualify for the HSC a student must:

- Study an approved pattern of Year 11 and 12 courses
- Have a satisfactory record of attendance and application in each course
- Satisfactorily undertake the school's assessment program in each course
- Complete a sufficient number of Year 11 and 12 courses within five examination years.

Year 11 Courses are those usually taken in Year 11 and do not have an external examination. Year 12 courses are usually taken in Year 12 and end with HSC examinations. The study of Year 12 courses commences in Term 4 of Year 11.

A student must complete the Year 11 course in a subject before undertaking the Year 12 course in that subject. In some circumstances both the Year 11 and 12 components of a subject can be studied in one year.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses are not classified as Year 11 or Year 12 and can be studied in either year.

1.1 COURSE PATTERNS

Courses are described in terms of "Units". A unit refers to a period of teaching totalling approximately two hours per week. Most courses are 2 units, i.e., approximately four hours per week. Extension courses of 1 unit value can be taken in a number of subject areas in both Year 11 and 12. Extension courses are designed to build on the content of the 2-unit course and require students to work beyond the 2-unit standard.

There are two main types of courses:

■ Board Developed Courses

These courses have a syllabus developed by the NESA. There is a syllabus for each course setting out the objectives, outcomes, structure and content. Courses are classified as Category A or Category B.

In most Board Developed courses, students throughout the state study the same syllabus and sit for an external examination at the end of the course. Most Board Developed Year 12 courses, including the VET Curriculum Framework courses contribute to the calculation of the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR). Students must sit for the optional examination in VET courses to include them in the calculation of the ATAR.

Life Skills courses are Board Developed courses that are specially designed to meet the needs of students within the context of an individual transition-planning process. They are not examined externally, and do not contribute to an ATAR.

■ Board Endorsed Courses

Most of these courses available have syllabuses designed by the NESA to cater for areas of special interest. They contribute to the HSC but do not contribute to the calculation of the ATAR. There are NO HSC exams for these courses.

1.2 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

To receive a Higher School Certificate, a student must satisfactorily complete at least:

- 12 units in a Year 11 study pattern
- 10 units in a Year 12 study pattern.

Please note: English is the only compulsory subject for the Higher School Certificate. Both the Year 11 course pattern and the Year 12 course pattern must include:

- At least six units of Board developed courses
- At least two units of a Board developed course in English
- At least three courses of two-unit value or greater
- At least four subjects

On satisfactory completion of Year 12, students will receive the following HSC credentials:

- The Higher School Certificate Testamur
- The Record of Achievement - The document listing the results of each Year 12 course satisfactorily completed, including Year 12-mark, performance bands and assessment marks
- AQF Certificate in VET courses.

1.3 ACCUMULATION OF THE HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE (PATHWAYS)

Students may accumulate an HSC over a five-year period. The five-year period will commence in the first year a student attempts HSC examinations or completes a Year 12 VET course. This is often referred to as 'pathways', that is: completing the HSC over more than 2 years.

Students accumulating an HSC will receive a Results Notice for each calendar year of study. The cumulative record will record all Year 11 and 12 courses satisfactorily completed including repeat attempts. The mark of the final attempt on a particular course is the mark counted in the ATAR.

1.4 ACCELERATION

Students may undertake Year 11 or Year 12 courses in advance of their usual cohort. Decisions about acceleration will be made by Campus Principals. Accelerants may be able to undertake additional units for the Year 12 or undertake further study at TAFE while still at school.

1.5 LIFE SKILLS COURSES

NESA has developed Life Skills courses for Stage 6 in each NESA area of learning. These courses have Board developed status and can be used along with other Board developed courses to meet requirements for the award of the Higher School Certificate. Each Life Skills course comprises a 2–Unit Year 11 course and a 2–Unit Year 12 course. There will not be an external examination for Life Skills courses. In general, students enrolling in Stage 6 Life Skills courses will have completed at least four courses based on Life Skills outcomes and content in Stage 5.

Students studying a Life Skills course have an individual transition planning process each year between Year 10 and Year 12. This enables parents and students to have the time to discuss and organise post school plans as well as allowing the student to pursue courses that reflect their interest areas or career goals.

Students must choose a total of six courses for Year 11 Life Skills in Year 11 and may continue these six courses into Year 12 or relinquish one course and undertake only five courses for the HSC Life Skills.

1.6 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET)

Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses teach industry specific skills that are relevant to future study and employment. These are competency based and allow a student to gain both the Year 12 and Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualifications. The AQF qualifications are recognised by industry and employers throughout Australia and give students advanced standing in related future study. Students are required to complete a minimum of 35 hours of mandatory work placement for each 2 units of a VET Curriculum Framework course studied.

The VET Curriculum Frameworks are based on Industry Training Packages. The courses from these Frameworks are Board developed and provided students study the 240-hour course and undertake the optional written examination, they may contribute to the ATAR. They are all Category B subjects. Northern Beaches Secondary College offers eight VET Framework courses. These VET courses require students to pay a course materials fee. Support services are available to assist with individual student's language, literacy, and numeracy needs.

Please refer to the VET Curriculum Framework Courses link on page 8 of this document.

For many years HSC students from campuses of NBSC have included in their program, courses that are studied at TAFE NSW (TVET). These VET courses are dual accredited, giving both HSC and AQF qualifications and advanced standing for further study at TAFE NSW or private registered providers.

Students may select courses from The Northern Sydney Institute (part of TAFE NSW). Courses are **usually delivered** at the Northern Beaches Campus (Brookvale).

All courses run in 4-hour sessions one afternoon a week. Students arrange their own transport to and from TAFE NSW classes. School bus passes cannot be used.

Disclaimer: TAFE courses offered are not guaranteed to run.

1.7 TAFE DELIVERED VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET)

Students in Year 11 and 12 have the option of studying VET courses at school or through TAFE NSW or other training providers. VET courses can only be delivered by registered training organisations (RTOs) that meet national standards and have the relevant qualification and units of competency on their scope of registration. VET is 'dual accredited'. Students receive recognition towards their school qualification (Record of School Achievement or Year 12), as well as a nationally recognised VET qualification (Certificate of Statement of Attainment). Students successfully completing a VET course will be entitled to credit transfer in other courses in a similar industry after leaving school by providing their qualifications to the Tertiary Institution.

All students studying a VET course must obtain a Unique Student Identifier (USI) and provide this to training provider at the commencement of the course.

Board developed Industry Curriculum Framework Courses include Automotive, Business Services, Construction, Electrotechnology, Entertainment Industry, Financial Services, Hospitality, Information and Digital Technology, Human Services, Metal & Engineering, Primary Industries, Retail Services & Tourism, Travel & Events. These courses are Category B courses, mostly count for 4 units of Year 12 credit, include 70 hours of mandatory Work Placement and have an optional Year 12 examination and only one course can be counted in the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

Board Endorsed Vocational Education Training courses are courses based on National Industry Training Packages that are endorsed by NESA for inclusion in the Higher School Certificate. These courses include Animal Studies, Beauty Therapy, Fashion Design, Hairdressing, Laboratory Skills, Plumbing, Sport and Recreation and many more. These courses mostly count for 4 unit of Year 12 credit, do not count towards the ATAR and do not have an optional Year 12 examination.

VET ASSESSMENT

- Assessment is competency based
- Assessment of relevant tasks counts towards AQF VET qualification component.

Example of TVET Curriculum Framework (NESA Developed) courses:

- Tourism
- Automotive Mechanical
- Electrotechnology
- Financial Services

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Example of TVET Curriculum Non-Framework (Board Developed) courses:

- Interior Design
- Beauty Services Make Up and Skincare
- Fitness
- Music Industry Introduction
- Early Childhood Education and Care
- Animal Studies
- Baking
- Hairdressing
- Design Fundamentals

Travel – Students studying TVET courses must organise their own transport arrangements to the TAFE NSW Campus and make their own way home at the conclusion of class.

1.8 RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

A student who has already completed all or part of a vocational course elsewhere, such as TAFE, may have their previous studies and results recognised. The student will not have to repeat that training and assessment. Additionally, if through previous work or life experiences a student has already developed high level skills in this course area, these may also be able to be recognised. The teacher or VET coordinator can provide more details of the recognition process.

1.9 ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

The HSC is based on a standards referenced approach. Student performance will be assessed and reported against standards of achievement established for each course. School based assessment tasks will constitute 50% of the Year 12 mark. The other 50% will come from the HSC examination.

The HSC mark for 2unit courses will be reported on a scale of 0 to A mark of 50 will represent the minimum standard expected. There will be five performance bands above 50 that correspond to different levels of achievement in knowledge, skills and understanding. The Band 6, from 90 to 100, will correspond to the highest level of achievement.

1.10 CROSS CAMPUS COURSE DELIVERY

NBSC students have a wide variety of courses and subject combinations from which to choose their senior studies program. Most students will study all their courses at one campus. However, because of the coordination of timetables across all campuses, it is possible to access some courses on other campuses of the NBSC. This enables students to have a much wider choice of subjects than is possible on any single site.

These 'shared' courses run each week in either:

- single blocks of time (4 hours) on Monday or Wednesday afternoon
- or two blocks of time on Tuesday and Thursday (mornings and afternoons)

Morning Cross Campus Classes run from approximately 8:00 – 9:30am. Afternoon Cross Campus Classes run from approximately 2:00 – 6:00pm. Students will know their conformed class times once they receive their timetable for the current year.

'Shared' courses are indicated in **BLOCKED** letters on the **NBSC Year 11 Curriculum Matrix**. This matrix shows all courses available at all campuses. The Year 11 Curriculum Matrix is included in the enrolment package.

Students who select courses delivered on more than one campus must consider their selection carefully as significantly more commitment is needed to study away from their home campus. Course fees may apply for materials used by students attending a 'shared' class. The fees are payable to the campus that is offering the course.

The NBSC will provide transport between campuses in the College minibus. Transport is not provided to and from the students' home address and their host campus.

1.11 HSC ADJUSTMENT FACTORS

If you are a student sitting the HSC in 2026 and will be receiving an ATAR you may be eligible for bonus ATAR points. Bonus ATAR points are awarded to students who perform well in HSC subjects that are relevant to the specific undergraduate degree program/s they wish to study at many universities. Not all university courses may be eligible for ATAR Adjustment Factors.

1.12 HSC MINIMUM STANDARDS

NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) has implemented the HSC minimum standard to help ensure that students have the key literacy and numeracy skills for life after school. Students in New South Wales will need to demonstrate a minimum standard of literacy and numeracy to receive the HSC credential. The HSC minimum standard is set at level 3 of the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF). These skills are essential for everyday tasks and learning after school such as writing a letter for a job application or understanding a mobile phone plan. The standard is assessed through online tests across three areas: reading, writing and numeracy. The minimum standard online tests are 45 minutes long and include a multiple-choice reading test, a multiple-choice numeracy test and a short writing test based on a choice between a visual or written prompt.

Students will have two opportunities per year to sit the minimum standard online tests in each area of Reading, Numeracy and Writing, in Year 10, 11 and 12. Students will also have up to 5 years from the time they start the HSC courses to sit the minimum standard online tests. The tests must be administered by schools via a lockdown browser.

1.13 WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

- Head teachers, course teachers and course coordinators on your campus for advice about the content of particular subjects.
- Careers Adviser on your campus for advice on careers, VET courses, TAFE NSW courses, and tertiary institution requirements.
- Deputy Principal responsible for curriculum on your campus regarding curriculum requirements, subject combinations and study on more than one campus.
- Your parents.

Further information can be found at the:

- NESA website at <https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/hsc/subject-selection>
- Universities Admission Centre (UAC) <https://www.uac.edu.au/future-applicants/year-10-students>

2 COURSE SUMMARY

BOARD Developed Courses – Please click below for course information.

English

English Advanced
English EAL/D
English Extension
English Standard
English Studies

Mathematics

Mathematics Standard
Mathematics Advanced
Mathematics Extension 1
Mathematics Extension 2

Science

Biology
Chemistry
Earth and Environmental Science
Investigating Science
Physics
Science Extension

Technological and Applied Studies

Design and Technology
Engineering Studies
Enterprise Computing
Food Technology
Industrial Technology
Software Engineering
Textiles and Design

Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE)

Ancient History
Business Studies
Economics
Geography
History Extension
Legal Studies
Modern History
Society and Culture

Creative Arts

Dance
Drama
Music 1
Music 2
Music Extension
Visual Arts

Health and Movement Science

Community and Family Studies
Health and Movement Science

Languages

Beginners courses
Continuers courses
In context courses
Literature courses
Extension

VET – School Delivered

Business Services
Construction
Entertainment
Hospitality – Food and Beverage
Hospitality - Cookery
Information and Digital Technology
Sport Coaching

BOARD Endorsed Courses

Computing Applications
Marine Studies
Photography, Video and digital imaging
Sport Lifestyle and Recreation Studies
Work Studies

*The fact that a course is listed here is not a commitment to run the course in a particular year.



