Overview of the 2011 HSC and ATAR

71,159 students completed at least one HSC course
97% received an HSC
79% received an ATAR
96% of those receiving an ATAR only included 2011 courses
45% completed only 10 units
26% students enrolled in at least one VET course
13,812 students (74.6%) enrolled in at least one VET examination course
WHAT is the ATAR?

The Australian Tertiary Admission Rank -

- a **numerical measure** of a student’s overall academic achievement in the HSC in relation to that of other students. It’s about **POSITION**.

- a number between 0.00 and 99.95 (only ATARs above 30 are reported)

- intended for use by universities to **rank and select school leavers** for admission to university
ATAR eligibility

To be eligible for an ATAR a student must have satisfactorily completed at least 10 units of ATAR courses, including at least:

- eight units of Category A courses
- two units of English
- three courses of two units or greater
- four subjects
HSC (performance) / ATAR (position)

- HSC marks focus on **performance** – whether or not you have met a given standard
- The ATAR is about **position** – where you are ranked in relation to the course candidature

**The building blocks**
School assessment mark
HSC examination mark
Position
School Assessment Marks

- Each school submits marks for their students in all their courses (assessment marks)
  - schools are very good at putting their students in order – according to ability and achievement - in each course
  - but, schools differ in the tasks they set and the marks they allocate

So, the first step is to remove school differences by estimating what the assessment marks would have been if there was only one school.

This is called moderation.
Moderating school assessments

- Assessment marks are moderated against exam marks.
- Consider these HSC marks …

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>school assessments</th>
<th>exam marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Top mark</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle mark</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottom mark</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The school assessments are moderated so that they are spread across the same range as the exam marks in that course in that school. The positions of students in a school are not changed.
HSC - Reporting achievement against standards

- For each course there are six standards called performance bands (Band 6 – Band 1)
- These standards are described in words
- A group of experienced markers and examiners determine what examination mark corresponds to each of the band boundaries
- The percentage of students at each standard depends only on their performance
- This graph is used to now to calibrate the examination marks and school assessments to the course standards

This removes differences from year to year caused by one paper being more difficult than another
Performance v/s Position

- In the middle of an average group
- Below the middle of a group of better students
- Near the top of a weaker group
- Near the bottom of a very good group
The HSC report – it’s all about STANDARDS

You have two calibrated marks for each of your courses;
- school assessment mark
- examination mark.

Both of these reflect your performance in relation to the course standards.

These two marks are averaged – the result is your HSC mark

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>School mark</th>
<th>Exam mark</th>
<th>HSC mark</th>
<th>Standard achieved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Advanced</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The ATAR - it’s all about POSITION

- Your ATAR is a NUMBER that shows your position relative to other students.
- Ann’s overall academic performance was good enough to place her in the top 15% of her age group.

\[ \text{ATAR} = 85.00 \]

The ATAR is a number between 0.00 and 99.95. ATARs above 30 are reported in increments of 0.05.
Urban Myths

- It is better to choose “hard” courses.
- It is better to choose “easy” courses.
- The percentage of students in band 6 counts.
- It is impossible to get a high ATAR if you take a VET course, English Standard …

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>ATAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Standard</td>
<td>99.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Science</td>
<td>99.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality Exam</td>
<td>99.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How do you get a good ATAR?

By working hard . . . and doing well in all your courses
More questions?

www.uac.edu.au

look under publications
for annual reports and other material