


# External assessment guide for Year 12 students 2025



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## External assessment and the QCE system

The Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) develops syllabuses for a wide range of senior subjects, including General subjects, Applied subjects and Short Courses.

How you are assessed depends on the type of subjects you choose. If you are studying QCAA General subjects, you will sit external assessments at the end of Year 12.

In the Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) system, final results for each General subject are based on your achievement in three internal assessments, which are set and marked by your school, and an external assessment.

External assessments are subject-specific written examinations that are:

- common to all schools
- summative — they count towards overall results for General subjects
- developed and marked by the QCAA using a common marking scheme.

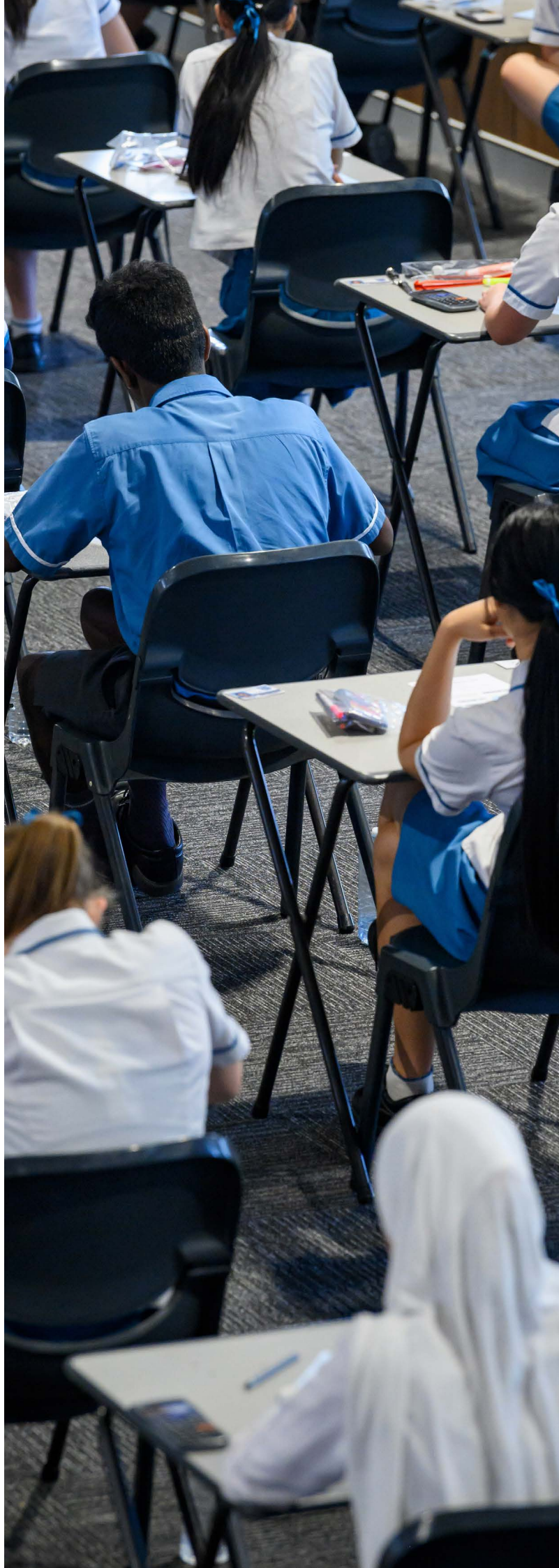
This guide gives you general information to help you prepare for external assessment. It includes tips and strategies for success, details about what to expect and links to important documents and resources.

## How are the exams developed and marked?

External assessments are developed by Queensland teachers, academics and QCAA staff. The process starts with an assessment plan for each subject that is checked against the syllabus. Writing teams then create questions and marking guides. Subject experts trial the exams to ensure quality and fairness. The papers are edited and illustrations and/or graphics are added if needed. Alternative formats are also created using large font, braille or electronic formats.

After multiple checks, exams are printed and securely delivered to schools. Completed papers are collected daily and scanned for online marking.

Over 3,000 Queensland teachers are trained to mark the exams. Marking takes about a month and is carefully monitored to ensure accuracy, with lead markers providing support and checking consistency. Feedback and data from each year help improve future exams.



## Who sits the external assessments?

Year 12 students sit external assessments for all General and General (Extension) subjects they study.

For most subjects, there is one assessment paper. In Mathematics and Science subjects, there are two papers — some assessments are held on the same day, others are held on consecutive days.

A small number of students who undertake the General (Senior External Examination (SEE)) program will also sit external assessments. The General SEE program is only for adult learners and Year 12 students who are unable to access particular senior subjects at their school. It also enables the QCAA to offer languages other than English subjects where there are likely to be small enrolments.

Applied subjects do not have external assessments.

## When are the external assessments held?

External assessments are held in Term 4 each year.

In 2025, the assessments run from Monday 27 October to Tuesday 18 November.

Two sessions will be held each day (AM and PM) and start times may vary slightly between schools. Your school will tell you the exact start time and location for each of your assessments.

You can view the external assessment timetable on the [QCAA website \(www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/external-assessment/timetable\)](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/external-assessment/timetable).

## Timetable clashes

The timetable is designed to minimise clashes, but they can happen.

The QCAA will identify any timetable clashes and will reschedule the assessment/s to another session.

Where there is a clash within a morning or afternoon session, you will be allocated to the alternative session on the same day.

If this occurs, you will need to sign an agreement that you will not engage in academic misconduct by discussing the test questions with students who have completed the test. The QCAA may conduct additional authenticity checks on your work if your assessment has been rescheduled.

## Where are the external assessments held?

Usually, you will sit external assessments at your school. In some cases, a variation to venue may be required if:

- your main learning provider
  - does not have a suitable external assessment venue
  - is a distance education provider
  - has students at multiple campuses
- you
  - are geographically isolated
  - are representing Australia or your state in an official capacity at a sporting, academic or cultural event
  - are currently living outside Queensland
  - have an illness or injury preventing you from attending your school.

Events such as family holidays, birthdays or weddings are not valid reasons to apply for a variation to venue.

In most cases where a variation to venue is required, your school or main learning provider will apply to the QCAA. If approved, you will need to show photo identification to the venue supervisor on the day of your assessment.

There are no costs associated with placement at Queensland secondary schools. Students and/or parents/carers are responsible for costs associated with alternative venues and the QCAA must be satisfied with the reason for the variation to venue and the nominated venue and supervisor. More information about variation to venue is available on the [QCAA website \(www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/external-assessment/variation-to-venue\)](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/external-assessment/variation-to-venue).

## What will be tested?

Depending on the subject, external assessments will test your knowledge of the subject matter from either Unit 4 or Units 3 and 4 of the syllabus. The format of the examination may also vary — it may include multiple choice questions, short response questions or an extended response task.

Each subject syllabus contains specific details about the external assessment, including what will be tested, the format of the assessment and the response length.

The syllabuses are available on the senior syllabuses page on the [QCAA website \(www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/senior-subjects/syllabuses\)](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/senior-subjects/syllabuses).





## What equipment will I need?

The equipment you need for each external assessment depends on the subject. As well as general items, you may need specific items such as calculators or electronic devices.

It is important you have everything you need for each assessment. Supervisors will check your equipment, including calculators, before you enter the examination room.

### General items approved for all assessments

You can bring the following items into all your examinations:

- ✓ black or blue pens (these should not be erasable)
- ✓ 2B pencils, sharpener and eraser (**Note:** A 2B pencil is required for multiple choice questions and drawing graphs or diagrams. Black or blue pens must be used for all other written responses.)
- ✓ highlighters — students should not highlight their responses but are free to highlight stimulus or questions when permitted by the exam supervisor
- ✓ a clear plastic ruler
- ✓ water in a clear unlabelled bottle
- ✓ asthma inhaler
- ✓ any AARA-approved item/s.

You may use a clear plastic container or ziplock bag to carry your equipment if needed.

### Items not permitted in the examination room

The items below are prohibited, except if specifically approved as access arrangements and reasonable adjustments (AARA) or listed as approved equipment for an assessment, e.g. for a subject that requires students to use a device:

- ✗ mobile phones
- ✗ smart watches and fitness trackers
- ✗ any other electronic device that stores, retrieves, displays or communicates digital information
- ✗ correction fluid or correction tape
- ✗ dictionaries
- ✗ erasable pens
- ✗ blank paper, notes, any printed/written material
- ✗ tissues\*.

\* Schools may supply tissues in assessment rooms, but students cannot bring them in.

## Subject-specific equipment

Depending on your subject, you may need specific equipment. The external assessment equipment list includes information about subject-specific equipment, including QCAA-approved calculators, student devices or other items you may need. It is available on the [QCAA website](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/external-assessment/administration) ([www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/external-assessment/administration](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/external-assessment/administration)).

## QCAA-approved calculators

Calculators are only permitted for some assessments. If you are sitting an assessment that requires a calculator, it must:

- meet the requirements set out in the scientific calculator list ([www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior-qce/common/snr\\_syll\\_ea\\_scientific\\_calculators\\_list.pdf](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior-qce/common/snr_syll_ea_scientific_calculators_list.pdf)) or graphics calculator list ([www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior-qce/common/snr\\_syll\\_ea\\_graphics\\_calculators\\_list.pdf](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior-qce/common/snr_syll_ea_graphics_calculators_list.pdf))
- be handheld and solar or battery powered
- be cleared of memory before the assessment.

For assessments that permit the use of a non-programmable calculator (Accounting, Economics, Geography, Legal Studies), the calculator must be handheld and solar or battery powered. Aerospace Systems students are allowed to bring a flight calculator into the assessment. Calculators must not allow access to the following functions: computer algebra system (CAS), spellchecker, dictionary, thesaurus or translator (see scientific calculator list).

## Student devices

Some assessments require you to use a student device, such as a battery-powered laptop or tablet to access a digital stimulus. Your school will advise you of the arrangements that apply to student devices for your assessments — you will either bring your own device or your school will provide one.

Depending on the subject, digital stimulus may include audio (MP3) and video (MP4) files. Your school will either give you an individual USB with the required audio or audiovisual file or access to a folder containing the file.

The external assessment equipment list includes information about subjects that require student devices or other items. It is available on the [QCAA website](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/external-assessment/administration) ([www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/external-assessment/administration](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/external-assessment/administration)).

AARA-approved devices can also be used.

## What you will need to access the digital stimulus

To access the digital stimulus, you will need:

- individual access to a student device (e.g. desktop computer, laptop) so you can listen to and/or view the files as many times as you choose throughout the assessment session
- the latest version of a media player that plays MP3 and MP4 files installed on the device you are using
- wired earphones/headphones consistent with the guidelines for academic integrity (wireless/Bluetooth-enabled earphones/headphones are not allowed).



## How to prepare

There are lots of things you can do to prepare for external assessment.

Your school will help you get ready, but it's also important to be proactive so you can manage your time and your study commitments, while also looking after your health and wellbeing.

## What your school will do to help you prepare

Your school will help you prepare for external assessments by teaching the subject matter in the syllabus.

The QCAA's past papers are available for schools and students to use. They allow schools to understand how the syllabus objectives will be assessed and will help you understand what to expect during the examinations.

Your school may use the past papers as mock examinations. This gives you the opportunity to revise and test your subject knowledge and helps you understand the types of questions you may be asked and how you will need to respond.

You can find the past papers listed in the resources section on each General syllabus page on the [QCAA website \(www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/senior-subjects/syllabuses\)](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/senior-subjects/syllabuses).





## What you can do to prepare

Preparation is key for external assessments. Being proactive puts you in control and will help you focus.

### Get organised:

Organising yourself and your study space will make it easier to stay on track when you're preparing for assessments.

Here are our top tips:

- ☐ check the external assessment timetable so you know when your assessments will be held — your school will set the start time within the prescribed window for your assessment. You must check your school timetable, as start and finish times may vary slightly
- ☐ develop a study timetable to help keep you on track — don't forget to schedule regular breaks and allow time for things you enjoy so you can maintain a healthy balance
- ☐ create a space where you can study that is free of distractions and has everything you need
- ☐ limit distractions such as social media
- ☐ consider forming a study group with classmates
- ☐ check the equipment list to make sure you have everything you need
- ☐ speak to your school if you think you need and are eligible for AARA.

### Get academic:

Creating and maintaining good study habits will make it easier for you to stay positive in the lead up to exams.

Here are our top tips:

- ☐ download the subject syllabus. You can find them on the General syllabus page on the QCAA website
- ☐ check the external assessment description in the syllabus — it gives you an overview of how you'll be assessed, what the objectives are and what you'll be required to do
- ☐ review the subject matter to be assessed and look over the assessment techniques
- ☐ view the past papers — they will give you extra insights about the type of questions you may be asked. You'll find them listed in the resources section on each General syllabus page on the QCAA website. Subject reports also contain insights about previous external assessments — they're designed for teachers, but students may find them useful. Past papers in alternative formats such as large print are also available.
- ☐ identify how much space the word limits take up in your handwriting and practise writing responses within the limits.

## Get advice from the experts

Looking after your health and wellbeing is important. The myQCE website includes lots of information and advice, as well as links to further resources about diet and nutrition, fitness and exercise, mental wellbeing, social and emotional support and youth services.

### Health and wellbeing tips with Dr Judith Locke

Our video series with clinical psychologist Dr Judith Locke gives you practical tips to take control of your study while also looking after yourself.

Judith has more than 20 years experience in teaching, training and psychology. Her work has featured in numerous newspapers, magazines and media outlets. She has also written two books — *The Bonsai Child* and *The Bonsai Student*.

There are seven short videos in the series:



#### Study balance

Did you know you can study too much? Get Judith's recipe for more effective study.



#### Procrastination

Do you struggle with procrastination? Hear Judith's simple hacks to help you focus.



#### Limiting distractions

Do you get distracted easily? Learn about Judith's tips to switch on to study.



#### Transforming information

Do you struggle to remember what you've studied? Discover Judith's strategies to make study stick.



#### Perfectionism

Is perfectionism holding you back? Listen to Judith's advice about staying open to opportunity.



#### Exam stress

Do exams make you freak out? Learn Judith's tip for de-stressing your brain.



#### Sleep

Are you losing sleep due to study? Watch Judith's experiment to see why sleep can help you study.

You'll find the videos on the [myQCE website \(https://myqce.qcaa.qld.edu.au/get-motivated/get-healthy-and-happy/health-and-wellbeing-with-dr-judith-locke\)](https://myqce.qcaa.qld.edu.au/get-motivated/get-healthy-and-happy/health-and-wellbeing-with-dr-judith-locke).

## Looking after your physical and mental wellbeing

Maintaining your health and fitness and looking after your mental wellbeing can make it easier to maintain a school–life balance. We’ve included our top 10 tips to get you started. More information is available on the myQCE website (<https://myqce.qcaa.qld.edu.au/get-motivated/get-healthy-and-happy>).

### Top 10 tips for health and fitness

- 1. Stay active**  
Aim for 30–60 minutes of activity every day.
- 2. Mix it up**  
Try different exercises or activities that you enjoy, so you work different parts of your body and don’t get bored.
- 3. Hydrate**  
Drink lots of water throughout the day. It’s good for your body and your mind.
- 4. Eat well**  
Enjoy lots of fruit and vegetables, lean protein, whole grains, dairy and healthy fats.
- 5. Eat regularly**  
Avoid skipping meals as it can impact your concentration.
- 6. Get your Zs in**  
Aim for eight hours sleep most nights. Try to get in a routine and avoid screen time directly before bed.
- 7. Stay safe**  
Whether you’re exercising or playing sport or learning to drive, you need to stay safe. Wear sunsafe and protective clothing if needed and pay attention to the road.
- 8. Avoid harmful substances**  
You know they’re bad for you and will impact on your health.
- 9. Get social**  
Take time to connect with friends and family.
- 10. Manage your mental wellbeing**  
Find ways for positive relaxation and to reduce stress.

### Top 10 tips for mental wellbeing

- 1. Make time**  
Dedicate some time each day to doing something you enjoy.
- 2. Get active**  
Exercise makes your brain release feel-good endorphins.
- 3. Connect with others**  
Spending time with others can energise you and means there’s always someone to listen if you’re struggling.
- 4. Use stress-management**  
Use strategies like breathing exercises, meditation or creative outlets to boost your mood.
- 5. Set goals**  
Setting small goals and sticking to them can give you a boost.
- 6. Balance your schedule**  
Build some ‘me time’ into your study schedule.
- 7. Limit social media**  
Try to switch off from time to time. While social media has loads of positives, it can impact your mental wellbeing.
- 8. Manage academic pressure**  
Organise yourself and your workload and remember your grades don’t define you.
- 9. Be grateful**  
Look at all of the positives in your life and make a list of things you have to be grateful for.
- 10. Educate yourself**  
Learn about dealing with stress and anxiety, mental wellbeing conditions and symptoms, and when you may need to get support.



## Smart study snacks

Good nutrition is important, not only for your body, but also your brain. For optimum health, the Australian dietary guidelines detail how many serves per day of these five food groups we need (<https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines/about-australian-dietary-guidelines>).



### Vegetables

Vegetables and legumes/beans



### Fruit

Fruit from the different fruit categories



### Grain

Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties



### Protein

Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds and legumes/beans



### Dairy

Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives (mostly reduced fat)

When it comes to study, **SBS Food** (<https://www.sbs.com.au/food/article/brain-food/617rnk8iu>) notes the below foods can enhance your focus, memory and brain function.

- Salmon or oily fish
- Blueberries
- Eggs
- Walnuts
- Spinach

Making a healthy snack is a great way to break up study sessions. Here are some ideas from the five food groups and brain foods to get you started. If you have food allergies or intolerances, you may need to swap some ingredients.

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### Toppings or fillings for toasted bread/bagel/sourdough/English muffins (wholegrain is best)

- Blueberries with low-fat cream cheese or cottage cheese
- Eggs — poached, boiled or scrambled with low-fat milk
- Avocado with lemon and pepper
- Peas, crushed with feta and mint
- Baked beans with wilted spinach
- Tinned salmon with avocado
- Tinned sardines with tomato
- Grilled cheese
- Shredded chicken, tomato and basil
- Banana with drizzled tahini and chopped walnuts
- Salmon with low-fat cream cheese or cottage cheese

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### Other snacks

- Hummus and carrot sticks
  - Tzatziki with cucumber sticks
  - Walnut/spinach dip with vegetable sticks
  - Yoghurt with blueberries
  - Oats with low-fat milk and banana
  - Apple wedges with almond butter
  - Celery sticks with almond butter or cottage cheese
  - Omelette with chopped spinach
  - Fresh fruit, poached fruit
  - A handful of raw walnuts or other mixed nuts
  - Fruit smoothie
  - Tinned tuna/salmon with wholegrain crackers or mixed into brown rice
  - Tofu and avocado dip
  - Tomato salsa with veggie sticks
  - White bean and feta dip
-

## Get advice from top achievers

Everyone is different — study strategies that work for some students may not work for others. Our top achieving students from 2024 share tips that helped them achieve their best, while maintaining a balanced outlook.

‘Don’t be afraid to ask your teachers for help. They’re your biggest cheerleaders and will always support you.’

Judy

‘Stay curious and ask questions. The more you explore, the more you grow. Embrace challenges, take risks and remember that learning is a process, not a destination.’

Louise

‘Ask lots of questions. There is no one in the classroom who knows the syllabus better than your teacher. But don’t just ask about the content — ask about the exams: how they’re written, how they’re marked.’

Lachlan

‘Start your assignment and exam study early, and use class time wisely. And don’t give up on your extracurriculars — often the students who do the best are involved in a lot of activities, and know how to manage their time.’

Joy

‘Prioritise your health, as it is a major contributor towards academic success. Eating, sleeping and exercising well speeds up your thinking a lot during exams!’

Heather

‘Maintain balance — I benefited greatly by having projects and creative hobbies alongside studying — sometimes it’s not procrastinating but a well needed break.’

Anita

‘Take care of yourself and don’t beat yourself up. Health and wellness come first, academic success comes second.’

Audrey

‘Consistency and discipline determine success. It is not how much effort you put in at the last minute.’

Max

‘Believe in yourself no matter how tough the challenges ahead may seem. Also learn to challenge your own thinking, and make decisions critically.’

Zhanrui

‘Always say to yourself “I’ve got it”.’

Alexander

‘Continually revise for the big exams. Summarise notes in your own words and constantly look through these to ensure constant revision.’

Darcy

‘Don’t be afraid of change — whether it’s a university course, career path, or even a study method. It is never too late to explore new opportunities.’

Sophia

‘Chart your own path. The little steps will lead you to your goals. Believe in yourself and embrace your inner fire.’

Harry

‘Studying content alone does not achieve top external marks. Look at the QCAA’s practice exams and marking guides.’

Beikun

‘Accept that you are not going to be able to do everything. Some days you may not be as productive as you hope and that is completely ok and healthy.’

Tiah

‘Share your skills with others. Not only does it feel good to help, but you further your own competence. It also broadens your network, and provides opportunities for you to learn from others in the future.’

Aidan

‘Manage your time effectively. We have so much time during the school day. Focusing in class instead of chatting with your mates can maximise your potential.’

Archie

‘Allocate your time properly. Some subjects are a lot more intensive than others.’

Aryan

‘Make sure you always ask why. Hard questions don’t test how well you know hard or random topics — they test how well you know your basic, core understanding of concepts.’

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# Strategies for success during the test

While preparation is key, it's also important to consider how you will manage your time when you're sitting the external assessments. The following five strategies can help you stay focused and achieve your best.

- 
- 1 Use the perusal/ planning time effectively**

This is where you should read and consider the assessment. During perusal time, you're not allowed to write on the test paper or the response book, or use a calculator. Perusal time is your chance to get an overview before you start, so look over the paper thoroughly and think about your approach.

Unlike perusal time, planning time allows you to consider the assessment and write a plan for how you will answer the questions. You can make notes, but you're not allowed to start writing in the response book. You will be given two pieces of planning paper to write on. Notes made during planning time are collected by your school, but are not marked or used as evidence of achievement.

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  - 2 Manage your time**

The time limit for each examination will be enforced, so you will need to plan your time and pace yourself. Set timeframes for each part of the assessment and try to stick to them. The assessment is designed to allow ample time for you to answer. If you are unsure about a question or believe there is an error in it, try to answer it as best you can before moving to the next question.

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  - 3 Think and plan before you respond**

Give yourself time to understand the meaning of each task or question and what it's asking you to do. Make sure you do everything that you're asked.

Your responses will be scanned for marking, so pay careful attention to instructions about writing spaces. Do not write in spaces or on pages that have an instruction like 'Do not write on this page'. These spaces are not scanned, so any work you do there will not be marked.

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  - 4 Use response spaces**

Response spaces are designed to fit the response length, but if you have large handwriting or make an error and need extra space, there are spare pages at the back of the question and response book. You can also ask the supervisor for an extra response book.

Some assessments require you to answer on a diagram, graph or map. If you make an error, a spare copy is available at the back of the response book. You can also ask the supervisor if you need another copy.

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  - 5 Review your work**

Allow some time to check your work and go back to any questions you were unsure about before the end of each assessment. If you have used additional response materials, you will need to attach a barcode (from your place card) to each response to make sure they are scanned and marked.

If your assessment contains multiple choice questions, follow these basic tips:

    - use a 2B pencil and colour bubbles fully
    - check you haven't coloured bubbles on the same line
    - check you haven't missed a line
    - change back to pen after you finish the multiple choice questions
    - make sure you've answered the questions in the response book (answers in the question book will not be marked).



## Why the assessment instructions matter

All assessment papers include general instructions. Some are common to all subjects and others may be different depending on the subject and what you will be asked to do. It's important to read the instructions carefully, so you don't lose marks unnecessarily.

There are valid reasons for the instructions — most relate to how the exam papers are scanned and then marked electronically.

Here are some examples of common instructions and why they are important.

Instruction	Why it's important
Answer the question/s in this response book / question and response book.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We only scan and mark the response book / question and response book and any additional response books used.</li> </ul>
Work in this book will not be marked.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Question books, stimulus books, multiple-choice question books are not scanned or marked.</li> </ul>
Planning paper will not be marked.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning paper is not scanned or marked.</li> <li>Responses should be written in the response book / question and response book or additional response book if you need extra space.</li> </ul>
Write using a black or blue pen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most exam responses are scanned in black and white, and the electronic copies are marked.</li> <li>Black and blue pens show up better on black and white scans so the markers can easily see your responses and allocate marks.</li> <li>Highlighter pens should not be used in the response book / question and response book because they will not show up in scans or may appear black.</li> <li>Erasable pens should not be used in the response book / question and response book because the heat from scanners can erase your work.</li> </ul>
Respond using black ink pen, black felt-tip pen, 2B pencil, and coloured pencils or pens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responses for some subjects can use coloured pens, pencils or felt-pens. These are scanned in colour, so the markers will be able to see your responses. Highlighter pens should not be used as they may not show up in scans.</li> </ul>
Respond in paragraphs consisting of full sentences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responding in full sentences/paragraphs gives you the best chance at receiving marks for the question.</li> <li>If time is running out, use more concise sentences.</li> </ul>
Do not write on this page. This page will not be marked.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Selected pages in question and response books are left blank due to how they are printed, or to keep information/questions together. These pages are clearly identified.</li> <li>It's essential you don't write on these pages as they are not scanned and will not be marked.</li> </ul>
Do not write outside this box.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responses written outside the box are not marked.</li> <li>If you need extra space for a response, use the additional pages at the back of the book or ask for an additional response book.</li> <li>Write the page number of your alternative/additional response, i.e. see page ...</li> <li>On the additional pages, write the question number you are responding to.</li> </ul>
If you need more space for a response, use the additional pages at the back of this book.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some students have larger handwriting or may make a mistake and want to correct it.</li> <li>You can use extra pages at the back of the response book or ask for an additional response book.</li> <li>It's important to show this clearly so the markers know you have made a mistake and don't want the original response marked, or that you have completed the response in a different part of the book. You need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cancel any incorrect response by ruling a single diagonal line through your work</li> <li>write the question number on the additional pages, so it is clear which question you are responding to</li> <li>write the page number of your alternative/additional response, i.e. see page ...</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Instruction	Why it's important
Respond in [language].	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Languages subjects often require you to respond in the subject language.</li> <li>• Some Languages subjects may also require you to respond to questions/sections in English.</li> <li>• Read the instructions carefully so you don't lose marks for answers that do not use the correct language.</li> </ul>
Respond in [number of] words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students should keep to the prescribed response length to ensure they answer the question clearly without wasting time or including unnecessary information.</li> <li>• If you exceed the length you might: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– run out of time for other questions</li> <li>– include unnecessary information or miss the focus of the question. This could confuse the marker and result in a lower mark.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Tips to help you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Plan before you write by listing your main points.</li> <li>– Answer what is being asked — don't go off topic.</li> <li>– Use clear, concise language.</li> <li>– Stick to one idea per paragraph.</li> <li>– Edit if needed — leave a minute or two and trim unnecessary words or sentences.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Important things to remember

- Stay positive — be well prepared and maintain a healthy attitude, so you can do your best work.
- Get plenty of rest the night before each assessment. Staying up late to study the night before an examination can make you tired and may affect your ability to concentrate.
- Double check when your assessments are and the equipment you will need.
- Check your transport arrangements so you can arrive well before the scheduled time.



## What to expect on examination days

The QCAA sets specific procedures for students, schools and supervisors to follow for each external assessment.

### Directions for students

You must observe the QCAA's student directions as well as your school's rules and those of any other external assessment venue you attend. If you breach any of the directions, your external assessment result may be withheld. It is important that you check the directions for students to make sure you know what is expected of you. The directions for students are available on the [QCAA website \(www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/external-assessment/administration\)](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/external-assessment/administration).





## Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

Students who have a disability or impairment, a medical condition or experience circumstances that may be a barrier to their performance in external assessment may be eligible for access arrangements and reasonable adjustments (AARA). These may include the following adjustments:

- extra time to complete the assessment
- rest breaks during the assessment
- alternative format of papers, e.g. enlarged font size or braille
- using a computer or assistive technology to read or respond to the assessment.

In most cases, your school or main learning provider will have already made AARA applications on your behalf.

Your teacher can provide you with an outcome letter from the QCAA. On the day of the assessment, you can choose to use all, part or none of the approved adjustments. Talk to your external assessment coordinator (EA coordinator) for more information.

## Illness and misadventure

If your ability to attend or participate in assessments is adversely affected by an illness or unexpected event (misadventure), your school may submit an illness and misadventure application on your behalf. This will only apply if the event:

- is unforeseen and beyond your control, e.g. death of a close family member
- is not of your own choosing or that of your parents/carers, e.g. not a family holiday
- has an adverse effect on your ability to attend or participate in the assessment.

You or your parent/carer should contact your school as soon as possible if you are unwell or experience circumstances that prevent you from attending the assessment. The EA coordinator will provide advice about the QCAA's illness and misadventure arrangements and will notify the principal.

If you attend assessment and feel that your performance was adversely affected by illness or misadventure, you should let the school (e.g. supervisor or EA coordinator) know as soon as possible. This should be before, during or immediately after the assessment session.

If unwell, students should seek medical advice and get a doctor's report to submit to the school. The school will then make an illness and misadventure application to the QCAA. To make an informed decision about an illness and misadventure application for medical reasons, the QCAA requires a report from an independent health professional that covers the 3 Ds:

- **Doctor** — it must be completed by a doctor (pharmacy or self-generated online reports are not sufficient)
- **Diagnosis** — it must confirm the illness or condition (a certificate noting simply that you have a medical condition and are 'unfit for duty' is not sufficient)
- **Dates** — it must confirm when you were sick and those dates should align with assessment included in the illness and misadventure application.

For non-medical applications, you will need written evidence from a relevant independent professional or an independent third party such as a social worker, member of the clergy, police officer, solicitor or funeral director. The person providing the documentation must not be a relative or have a close personal relationship with you. Contact your school's EA coordinator if you are unsure what documentation to provide in your circumstance.

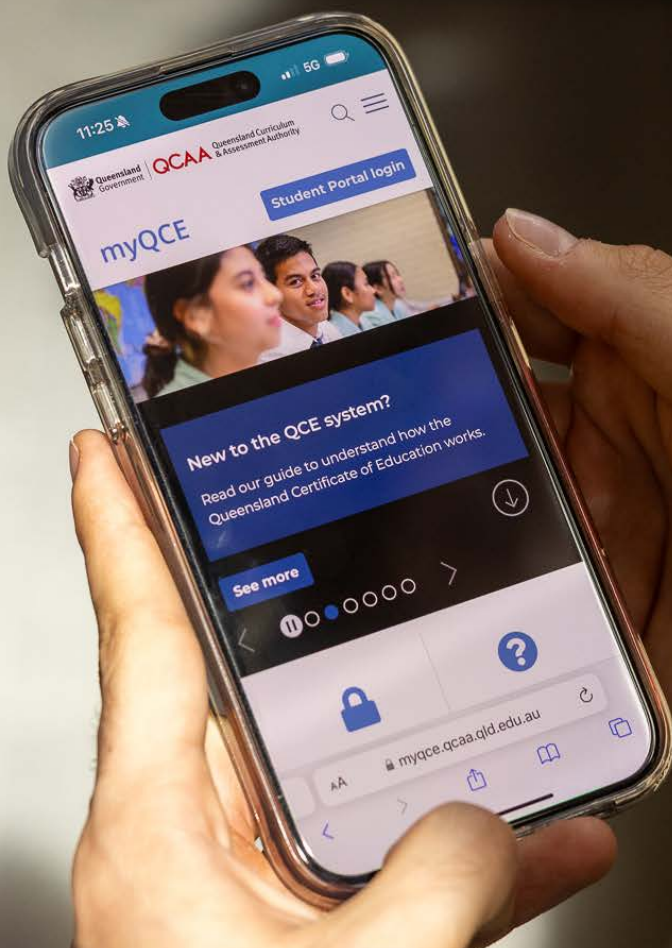
For more information about AARA or illness and misadventure, visit the [QCAA website \(www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/aara\)](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/aara).

# Academic misconduct

If you engage in academic misconduct in an external assessment, you may not receive your result for the assessment and have it contribute to your final result for the subject.

Academic misconduct includes a range of behaviours, including those listed in the table below.

Type of misconduct	Examples
Cheating while under supervised conditions	<p>A student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• begins to write during perusal time or continues to write after the instruction to stop writing is given</li> <li>• uses unauthorised equipment or materials</li> <li>• has any notation written on their body, clothing or any object brought into an assessment room</li> <li>• communicates with any person other than a supervisor during an examination, e.g. through speaking, signing, electronic device or other means, such as passing notes, making gestures or sharing equipment with another student.</li> </ul>
Collusion	<p>When:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• more than one student works to produce a response and that response is submitted as individual work by one or multiple students</li> <li>• a student assists another student to commit an act of academic misconduct</li> <li>• a student gives their assessment response to another student</li> <li>• a student receives another student's response to an assessment.</li> </ul>
Contract cheating	<p>A student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pays for a person or a service to complete a response to an assessment</li> <li>• sells or trades a response to an assessment.</li> </ul>
Copying work	<p>A student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• deliberately or knowingly makes it possible for another student to copy responses</li> <li>• looks at another student's work during a supervised assessment</li> <li>• copies another student's work during a supervised assessment.</li> </ul>
Disclosing or receiving information about an assessment	<p>A student or other person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gives or accesses unauthorised information that compromises the integrity of the assessment, such as stimulus or suggested answers/responses, before a response to an assessment is completed</li> <li>• makes any attempt to give or receive access to secure assessment materials.</li> </ul>
Fabricating	<p>A student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• invents or exaggerates data</li> <li>• lists incorrect or fictitious references.</li> </ul>
Impersonation	<p>A student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• arranges for another person to complete a response to an assessment in their place, e.g. impersonating the student in a performance or supervised assessment</li> <li>• completes a response to an assessment in place of another student.</li> </ul>
Misconduct during a supervised assessment	A student distracts and/or disrupts others in an assessment room.
Plagiarism or lack of referencing	A student completely or partially copies or alters another person's work without attribution (another person's work may include text, audio or audiovisual material, figures, tables, design, images, information or ideas).



## Results

### How will my assessments be marked?

Multiple choice response sheets are scanned electronically. You will receive one mark for each correct response. You will receive zero for each incorrect response and zero for items you do not attempt or where you have given more than one response. As you will not lose marks for incorrect multiple choice responses, it is recommended you attempt every question.

Extended-response tasks are marked independently by at least two different QCAA-trained markers. The markers will apply specific criteria to your writing, and their marking will be monitored to ensure fairness and consistency.

Short-response questions are also marked by QCAA-trained markers. They will make judgments about your work against a specific marking scheme, and their marking will be monitored as part of the QCAA's quality-control processes.

Your examination response papers will remain the property of the QCAA and will not be returned to you after the assessment.

### How does external assessment contribute to final results?

In most General subjects, external assessment contributes 25% towards your subject result. In Mathematics and Science subjects, it contributes 50%.

### How are final subject results calculated?

The results from your external assessments will give you a mark out of 25 or 50, depending on the subject. This result is then added to your three internal assessment results (for Units 3 and 4) to give a mark out of 100 and a grade of A to E for each subject.

The marks you received for your internal assessments are not affected by your external assessment result.

For more information about how results are calculated for General subjects, visit the [QCAA website \(www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/results/calculating-results-general-subjects\)](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/results/calculating-results-general-subjects).

## When and where can I view my results?

Your external assessment results and final subject results will be available in your learning account on Wednesday 17 December 2025, together with your Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) (if eligible).

You can access your learning account via the Student Portal on the myQCE website. You'll need your 10-digit Learner Unique Identifier (LUI) the first time you register for the Student Portal. Then you can log in with your email and nominated password. We recommend you use a personal (not school) email when you register so you can easily reset your account if you forget your password and can no longer access your school email.

For more information about your learning account and the Student Portal, visit the [myQCE website \(www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/results/calculating-results-general-subjects\)](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/results/calculating-results-general-subjects)

## Can I ask the QCAA to check my external assessment results?

If you believe there has been a marking error, you can apply to the QCAA to have your external assessment or Senior External Examination script re-examined. You will need to submit a reassessment form and the application fee (via the Verification and reassessment tab in your learning account in the Student Portal) by 16 January 2026.

The reassessment may decrease, confirm or increase your result. If the result changes, the QCAA will issue a new Senior Statement or Statement of Results, advise the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) of the new result and refund the application fee. If the QCAA decides to reduce the original result you may apply to the QCAA Chief Executive Officer for a review of the decision.

More information about results is available on the [QCAA website \(www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/results/checking-results\)](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/results/checking-results).

## What contributes to the ATAR

QTAC is responsible for calculating students' tertiary entrance ranks, known as Australian Tertiary Admission Ranks (ATARs).

The only information QTAC uses to calculate an ATAR is a student's final subject results. They are not supplied with individual external or internal assessment results.

An ATAR is calculated from either:

- a student's best five General subject results
- or
- a student's best results in a combination of four General subject results, plus one Applied subject result or completed VET qualification at Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate III level or above.

If a student is eligible for an ATAR in both categories, QTAC will use their higher ATAR.

To be eligible for an ATAR, students must satisfactorily complete a QCAA English subject. While students must meet this standard, it is not mandatory for the English result to be included in the ATAR calculation.

You can find more information about the ATAR on the [QTAC website \(www.qtac.edu.au/year-12-atar\)](http://www.qtac.edu.au/year-12-atar).



## More information

**[myqce.qcaa.qld.edu.au](https://myqce.qcaa.qld.edu.au)**

The myQCE website provides information about subjects and courses, assessment and results, study tips and more.

**[qcaa.qld.edu.au](https://qcaa.qld.edu.au)**

The QCAA website provides information about senior secondary curriculum and assessment, including syllabuses for QCAA subjects and courses.