

# NAPLAN results

## Information for principals and teachers

# 2023

NAPLAN was undertaken by students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in March 2023. NAPLAN is the only national assessment that all Australian children undertake. Questions assess content linked to the Australian Curriculum in English and Mathematics. NAPLAN tests are one aspect of each school's assessment and reporting process and do not replace the extensive, ongoing assessments made by teachers about each student's performance.

### How has NAPLAN reporting changed in 2023?

Education ministers have agreed that NAPLAN test results will be reported using proficiency standards from this year. Together with the move to an earlier NAPLAN in March, these changes meet an initiative of the 2019 National School Reform Agreement.

The proficiency standards represent a challenging but reasonable expectation of student achievement at the time of testing to deliver better information for teachers, parents and carers. Achievement in NAPLAN is now reported against proficiency levels instead of the previous numerical NAPLAN bands.

Students' results will show how they performed in each of the NAPLAN assessment areas against 4 new proficiency levels:

- **Exceeding:** The student's result exceeds expectations at the time of testing.
- **Strong:** The student's result meets challenging but reasonable expectations at the time of testing.
- **Developing:** The student's result indicates that they are working towards expectations at the time of testing.
- **Needs additional support:** The student's result indicates that they are not achieving the learning outcomes expected at the time of testing. They are likely to need additional support to progress satisfactorily.

The proficiency standards are reported on a new NAPLAN measurement scale that makes better use of the online adaptive tests. This will be used in national reporting, as well as on the individual student reports received by parents and carers.

A new NAPLAN time series begins from 2023. Results from 2023 on cannot be compared to results from 2008 to 2022.

### How were the new standards and levels set?

The proficiency standards were set by expert panels of subject area specialist teachers. The panels classified NAPLAN questions into proficiency levels based on their judgement of what students in each level could achieve and the knowledge and skills that students would have been expected to have been taught in previous years. These judgements were mapped onto the NAPLAN measurement scales to set numerical cut-points between the levels.

These were subsequently validated by the expert teacher panels in the process of developing the proficiency level descriptions, which provide information about what students at each level can typically demonstrate in each NAPLAN domain. These descriptions have been written using the Australian Curriculum as a reference.

The cut-points for each proficiency level have been established in 2023 and will not change in future years. This will allow the monitoring of school-level performance over time.

The detailed information on the knowledge and skills being measured in each NAPLAN assessment is available at [www.nap.edu.au](http://www.nap.edu.au).

### How do the changes more clearly report student achievement?

The new proficiency levels better allow teachers to see a meaningful and clear measure of each student's achievement, and if a student is meeting expectations for their current stage of schooling.

For example, the Exceeding level is descriptive as to proficiency and clearly indicates a student has exceeded the expectations for their current stage of schooling. The previous bands required background knowledge on which bands related to the expectations at each year level tested.

## What is assessed in NAPLAN?

NAPLAN continues to assess student achievement in literacy and numeracy. Questions are based mostly on the literacy and numeracy knowledge and skills students have learnt from previous years of schooling.

A few questions assess additional content from the year of testing and the following year. These questions have been designed so that they can be answered using strategies students have learnt in previous years. This ensures students of all abilities can show what they are capable of.

## How can I use the results to inform my teaching programs?

NAPLAN results supplement the information teachers gain in the classroom about students' strengths and weaknesses and provide detail on the proportion of students who are meeting the expected level of achievement. The results should be read in conjunction with the proficiency level descriptions available at [www.nap.edu.au](http://www.nap.edu.au).

## Is Needs additional support the new National Minimum Standard?

The previous National Minimum Standard provided an approximate measure of which students needed additional support but identified too few of these students. It could also give the impression that a student had met learning expectations if they were above the National Minimum Standard. The new Needs additional support level is a better representation of students who need additional support.

## What should a student focus on to improve their skills?

Regardless of how a student performs, improvement is always possible and teachers can use the information available in the proficiency level descriptions, in combination with the information in NAPLAN reporting and their own knowledge of each student, to consider what needs to be done to support a student's progress.

## How do I track student performance?

A new results time series begins from 2023 which means results from 2023 on cannot be directly compared with results from 2008 to 2022.

A student's performance relative to that of other students can still be tracked on the Individual Student Report by comparing it against the national average and to where the student's result is relative to the range of achievement for the middle 60% of students. Schools can also track individual student results over time from 2023 by

comparing the numerical scores provided in school-level results from test administration authorities.

Class or school results can be tracked over time from 2023 by measuring the proportion of students who sit within each proficiency level over different years – as the cohort moves from Year 7 to Year 9, for example, or for successive cohorts at the same year level.

Teachers can also continue to see the performance of students in each year level at their school on My School through the above average progress data display. This shows the percentage of students at a school making above average progress compared to students of a similar background and who had the same starting score on their previous NAPLAN test. As this display is based on a comparison of relative performance, the comparison is valid on both old and new scales. This means the display does not need to be restarted with 2023 as a base year, and comparison with previous years can continue.

## Is it only students in the Needs additional support level who need specific support?

The Needs additional support proficiency level is intended to identify students who are at risk of not progressing satisfactorily at school. Students with results in other levels may also need support in particular areas. Those in the Developing level are likely to need more support than those in the Exceeding and Strong levels.

Teachers can use the information in these assessments together with their own knowledge of a student to identify if support is required for students in levels other than Needs additional support.

Schools can use information provided by the proficiency level descriptions and exemplar items to identify areas where support may be required.

## How does NAPLAN help my school?

NAPLAN helps:

- teachers to better identify students who need greater challenges or extra support
- schools to identify strengths and areas of need in teaching programs
- schools to set goals in literacy and numeracy
- school systems to review programs and support offered to schools.

NAPLAN also complements other school assessments and provides nationally comparable data to help governments evaluate how education programs are working and whether students are meeting important literacy and numeracy standards.