

THE ATAR AND SUBJECT SELECTION

ST EDWARDS COLLEGE
YEAR 10





WHAT IS UAC?

- UAC processes applications for:
 - University Entry
 - College Entry
 - Schools Recommendation Scheme (SRS)
 - Educational Access Schemes (EAS)
 - Equity Scholarships (ES)
- Calculates the ATAR for NSW HSC students.

The ATAR



HSC vs ATAR

- **Performance vs Position.**
- HSC marks are about a student's **performance** against the standards.
- ATAR is about a student's **position** against all other students in NSW.
- Good performance does not guarantee a high position.
- The only thing a student can control is their performance.

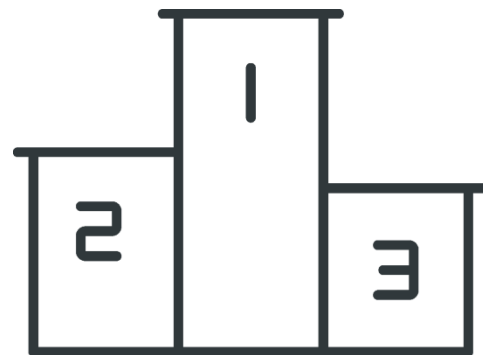
WHAT IS THE ATAR?

- The **Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR)** is...
 - A numerical measure of a student's overall academic achievement in the HSC in relation to that of other students.
 - A number between 0.00 and 99.95 (only ATARs above 30.00 are reported).
 - Intended for use by universities to rank and select school leavers for admission to university.

ATAR FACTS

Your ATAR:

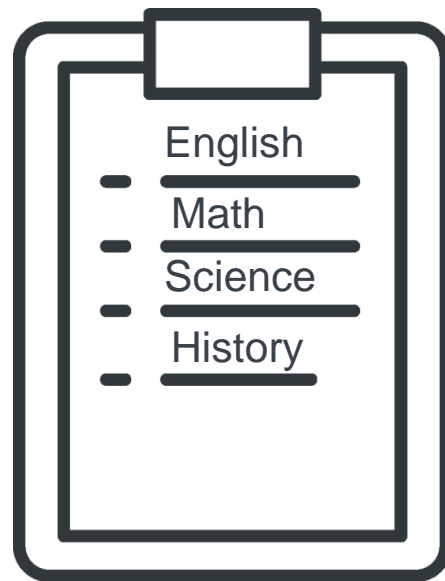
- Allows you to be compared with other students who have completed different combinations of HSC courses.
- Is a **RANK** not a mark out of 100.
- It's about **POSITION**.
- A number between 0.00 and 99.95.
- Used by universities to rank and select students



Like your **position**
in a race

ATAR ELIGIBILITY

- To get an **ATAR** you need at least **10 units** of Board Developed courses – these are HSC courses that are examined by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA).
- Your teachers will tell you which courses will count.
- Your ATAR is based on your best two units of English and the best eight units from your remaining courses.



THE ATAR AND SCALING

Scaling is the first step in calculating the ATAR.

- Different HSC courses have very different groups of students studying them.
- Marks need to be adjusted before they can be used to calculate an ATAR.
- So no student is neither advantaged or disadvantaged because of their subject choice
- Scaling calculates what your mark and your position would be if all courses were studied by all students.
- UAC doesn't scale courses, we scale the students academic abilities within the course.
- That's why some courses have higher scaled means than others.

THE ATAR AND SCALING

- The **scaled mean** of a course tells us about the **strength** of the competition.
- High scaled mean = high achievers
- Low scaled mean = varied abilities
- The scaled mean of a course doesn't automatically lead to a high or low ATAR.
- It doesn't matter what courses you study, you just have to do well!

Remember the ATAR is about POSITION!

2018 HSC

This tables show data for selected courses from the 2018 HSC.

Category A Subject	Median Band	Median Mark	HSC Mean	Scaled Mean	Max. ATAR
Aboriginal Studies	3	67	67.6	27.8	98.90
Business Studies	4	75	74.0	48.0	99.95
English Advanced	5	82	81.0	63.2	99.95
Visual Arts	5	80	80.2	44.2	99.80
Mathematics	5	80	78.6	62.4	99.95
Physics	4	75	73.6	61.0	99.95

Category B Subject	Median Band	Median Mark	HSC Mean	Scaled Mean	Max. ATAR
Hospitality	4	74	72.8	36.6	98.75

MEET FRED & LAURA

2018 – Median ATAR 69.65

		Fred		Laura	
Course	Median Mark	HSC mark	Percentile	HSC mark	Percentile
Biology	76	70	33	80	64
Business Studies	75	70	37	80	66
English Advanced	82	70	11	80	42
Mathematics	80	70	24	80	51
Modern History	77	70	30	80	62
Visual Arts	80	70	10	80	52
ATAR		57.55		77.95	

ATAR MYTHS

- It's a myth that choosing certain courses will automatically increase your ATAR.
- There is no magic formula for getting a good ATAR; it just depends on how well you've done in all your courses in comparison to other students.
- Studying courses that you are not good at or happy with may mean you won't do your best or achieve good marks.
- As long as you have chosen the courses you are good at and do well in, you will have the best chance of maximising your ATAR.

FACTS ABOUT THE ATAR

- You can get a good ATAR with any course you take even VET courses.
- The ATAR is only a RANK used for university entry.
- You have to do well in a course to get any benefit from scaling.
- You must get marks on or above the average to get an average ATAR or above.
- Average marks for the majority of courses are above 75.
- Courses don't scale you up or down.
- Your achievement in the course scales you up or down
- Scaling is placing you in order in all courses based on your academics ability.
- The ATAR is a rank that shows your overall academic ability amongst all other students in the state.

Subject selection is about choosing courses that you are good at, are interested in and that may help you succeed in tertiary studies.



SUBJECT SELECTION

STEP 1: Think about your future.

Consider:

- your interests
- your future career
- courses you show an aptitude in
- courses that will prepare you for success at uni and beyond.

INTEREST + ACHIEVEMENT = SUCCESS

YOUR FUTURE

Explore and research your FUTURE career and study options:

- What do you need to do to get where you want to go?
- What study areas and courses are on offer?
 - university, TAFE, college, work
- Which courses will help you reach your potential?
- What is your back-up plan?

SUBJECT SELECTION

STEP 2: Consider the HSC courses on offer at your school

Is the course:

- of interest to you?
- a good foundation for success at uni?
- an ATAR course?

And does it satisfy any uni course prerequisites?

COURSE PREREQUISITES

Prerequisites

- HSC courses you must have studied before a uni will offer you a place in the course.

Assumed knowledge

- HSC courses the uni assumes you have studied before you start the uni course.
- Not a requirement for entry, but set you up to succeed.

Recommended studies

- HSC courses the uni suggests will prepare you for core first-year courses.
- Not a requirement for entry, but helpful.

SUBJECT SELECTION

STEP 3: Course checklist

- ☐ I have researched future careers and relevant courses.
- ☐ I have considered my abilities and interests.
- ☐ I have checked course prerequisites and assumed knowledge.
- ☐ I am interested - and prepared to study hard - in the HSC courses I've chosen.
- ☐ I've got a back-up plan.
- ☐ I am eligible to get an ATAR.

Now you're ready to make an informed choice.

UAC RECOMMENDS

- Don't choose courses because of a perceived ATAR or scaling as this could set you up for failure.
- Take on the highest level of study you can as this will help you better understand the course content at university.
- Always have a back-up plan.
- In addition to the ATAR, be aware that many institutions have admission requirements such as prerequisites, assumed knowledge and recommended studies as well as additional selection criteria.
- Study hard and be happy with your decisions.

WHAT IF?

What if I don't meet the course prerequisites?

YOU HAVE OPTIONS

You can still get an offer to a similar course that has no course prerequisites.

You may need to catch up on background knowledge through:

- bridging courses
- extra subjects within the course structure.

Remember, you must be ATAR eligible regardless of the HSC courses you choose.

WHAT IF?

What if I don't get a high enough ATAR for entry into university?

GO TO YOUR PLAN B

- preparation courses at uni
- TAFE (TPC, Cert IV or Diploma)
- uni colleges
- private colleges.

Remember:

The ATAR is a rank not a mark

Choose courses you like and are good at

Explore all your option

Study hard



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