



Dear Year 12 Parents and Students,

The Trial HSC is typically the fourth and last HSC assessment task, but equally valuable is its place as a key practice experience for the final HSC exams in Term 4. The physical experience of the exam room and exam conditions, the longer lengths of the exams (reflecting the HSC), the study routine between each exam with no other classes on, and the important learning feedback from the teachers once the tests are marked are all part of preparing our students to be their best in the HSC itself. Also, unlike last year, 30% of Year 12 students who are outside of Sydney are not in lockdown and going to school normally every day, and will be gaining the advantages of sitting a proper Trial HSC.

For these reasons it is important for us to give our students the benefits of an HSC Trial if possible and with the right COVID-safe protocols. So as I confirmed with the students over Zoom last week, we have set the Trial exams for weeks 5 and 6 of term, when Year 12 are due to return onsite.

While we could have gambled on a Trial starting later in the term, it would then have clashed with the Drama and Music HSC performance exams and the submission dates for a number of HSC major works. It would have also given very little time for returning marked papers, along with the opportunity to revise and learn from the feedback.

What are we doing about COVID safety?

Firstly, running a two week schedule of exams has much less time onsite for students compared to six period days of normal classes (in normal sized classrooms). Most students will only need to come for five or six days out of the ten, and except for English and Maths extension all exams are finished in the morning. Students can arrive for their exam and leave the site immediately afterwards.

With no other school years onsite (and with the teachers at home) the site is large, empty and extensively cleaned. There are a team of cleaners working through the site each day and we will give special daily attention to the exam rooms. I think my office has the cleanest doorknob in Sydney at the moment.

We will room the main exam in our largest venue, the school hall. It has the surface area of 12 classrooms and (with its double height) the volume of 24 classrooms. Even during the English exams the individual student distancing will



be over ten square metres per student. The hall has upgraded general lighting, good ventilation, and up to six different doorways for staggered entering and exiting. We will also double the normal size of our disability provisions room giving a minimum spacing there of over eleven square metres per student.

Other Information And Questions

What content is being examined?

Content for the exam will only be material taught up to the end of Term 2, as would have been the case with the original Trial HSC.

What is the Schedule?

The exam schedule has been published on [this page of the Secondary Hub](#). We will also use this page to keep other information relevant to the Trial HSC exams.

What if we are locked back down?

Having set three dates now for the Trial HSC, if circumstances prevent the Trial happening again in Weeks 5 and 6, we will not attempt any further postponement of the date but will consider and implement alternatives in consultation with the heads of department.

Wearing masks?

The current requirement in Sydney is that all secondary students are required to wear masks at school, including indoors, unless a student has a medical exemption. Medical exemptions will need to be given by a healthcare professional and provided to the school.

Vaccinations and COVID Tests?

Even though there have been media reports of this, we have not received formal written direction that vaccinations or a negative COVID test are a condition of Year 12 students returning to school, including for students from locked down LGA's. We continue to monitor this area as there have been many unanswered questions since it was announced by the Premier. Note that currently there is no student vaccination program outside of the LGA's of concern.

What if I am unwell?

The normal HSC assessment task misadventure provisions apply for students who are unwell, have COVID-like symptoms, or are prevented from attending due to an instruction from NSW Health. Please obtain medical documentation as you would



for any other HSC assessment task. Normally we would try to provide a catchup time for most missed exams, though with very limited staff onsite we will have to assess each case as it comes.

Anxiety about returning?

I know some students are cautious about coming back to school, and as a person who has a reduced immunity due to having had a bone marrow transplant in my late 30's I can certainly empathise. I hope you will see from the outline above that having the Trial in these weeks when the site is clean, empty of all other students and most staff, and hosted in a huge venue with Year 12 able to come and go only during their exam times, gives you all the best opportunity for a "normal" Trial while managing the risk. Please speak to Mr Asher if you have concerns in this regard.

More Questions?

Mr Asher, Mr Richardson and myself have received a number of enquiries from Year 12 parents and students about the return to school. Rather than trying to reply individually all the time, we will send further group updates to you all as needed. Can I suggest that parents and students with questions continue to direct them through [Mr Asher](#).

We don't like sending continuous emails to parents and students, but in the case of Year 12 Mr Asher, Mr Richardson and/or myself may need to send more regular updates, as a new day can bring different regulations and more questions.

Regards,

Mr David Stonestreet
Deputy & Acting Principal