

NAP IMPROVEMENTS FAQs

Why is NAPLAN being moved earlier in the year?

Moving NAPLAN into Term One means results and information will be available to jurisdictional TAAs earlier in the year so they can be used to inform teaching and learning programs.

NAPLAN dates are usually set several years in advance. When will schools find out the specific dates the tests will be held in 2023?

From 2023, NAPLAN will be held in Term One. The test window in 2023 will be Wednesday 15 March to Monday 27 March 2023. The dates for 2024 to 2027 are provided below.

Term One, NAPLAN test window dates 2023 to 2027

Year	Test window	
2023	15/03/2023	27/03/2023
2024	13/03/2024	25/03/2024
2025	12/03/2025	24/03/2025
2026	11/03/2026	23/03/2026
2027	10/03/2027	22/03/2027

Education and curriculum authorities will support schools in getting ready for this change and will provide schools with detailed information on key dates as part of transition support.

How will schools be supported to manage the additional workload at an already busy time?

Term One is a busy time for schools. Over the next year, education systems, with Test Administration Authorities (TAAs) and ACARA, will develop and provide transition support and information to ensure this change of timing is as easy as possible for schools and students.

ACARA have established a project team to commence the 2023 program and implementation planning with TAAs in parallel to conducting NAPLAN 2022. This will include redevelopment of the program plan, and development of communication collateral for the changed test window timing.

What are the opt-in tests and why are they available?

An important improvement to the National Assessment Program is that new assessments in the domains tested through the NAP Sample assessments program for Year 6 and Year 10 students will become available as opt-in assessments for any school or system that chooses to participate.

These assessments will provide additional information for schools that take up the opportunity, showing teachers how well students are acquiring essential knowledge and understanding in key areas of science, civics and citizenship, and digital literacy, including information about student performance in relation to national proficiency standards.

What will be the process for schools to participate in the opt-in tests?

Over the next year, ACARA will work with Education Services Australia and education systems to develop and implement the opt-in tests. Schools will be able to access the online assessments via a self-service portal. The 40-minute online assessments aim to provide schools with an understanding of where the school and students in Years 6 and 10 sit in relation to national means and proficiency standards for each of the 3 key areas of science, civics and citizenship, and digital literacy. Results will not be published. The assessments are designed to inform the development of teaching programs at the school level.

Will schools be able to opt-in to a single assessment or will they have to do all 3 – science, civics and citizenship, and digital literacy?

Schools and systems can choose any or all of the opt-in assessments, once they are all available as they are being phased in. They will be phased in over 3 years, starting with science in 2024, with civics and citizenship added in 2025, followed by digital literacy in 2026. From 2026, all 3 subject opt-in assessments will be available each year.

Schools and systems can opt in to as many or as few of the assessments as they like and for as many years as they wish to. For example, a school may opt in to undertake only the digital literacy tests in Year 6 every 2 years for a 6-year period, while another school may just do the science test in Year 10 for 5 years in a row.

Whole systems can opt in if the system authority so chooses, meaning that all schools in that system would have to participate. For example, a minister in any jurisdiction may choose to mandate participation for all government schools in particular tests, or a Catholic diocesan school authority could mandate participation for all schools in their system.

With the change in timing of the test, when will results be received?

Preliminary non-writing results may be returned to schools from the beginning of May 2023 onwards via the preliminary Student and School Summary Report (SSSR). Writing results will be returned later due to the additional time required to mark writing but are expected to be returned to testing authorities from June onwards in 2023. Individual student reports (ISRs) are printed after this date with the timing determined by testing authorities in states and territories.

In collaboration with states and territories, ACARA will look at ways to provide results even earlier in future years to schools and parents without compromising the accuracy and quality of the results. NAPLAN data goes through a comprehensive quality assurance and data analysis process to enable results to be reported on a set of NAPLAN scales that enables comparison of results across Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in the same domain.

Why won't writing results be available at the same time as results from other domains?

Additional time is required to mark writing. Marking in most domains, where the questions are multiple choice or short response, is automated. Writing is marked by human markers and so the assessments take longer to be marked.