

NAPLAN 17

Newsletter: July 2017

To keep teachers informed, please forward this newsletter to staff at your school.

NAPLAN 2017 — thank you from the QCAA

The 2017 NAPLAN tests have now been completed, and the various test-scoring processes are well underway. Our thanks to all schools, administrators and school staff who supported the test implementation and conducted the tests in Queensland schools with their usual high level of professionalism. With over 259 000 sets of testbooks distributed throughout Queensland, the 2017 round of NAPLAN tests was the largest conducted in this state.

Important dates

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| 7 July |
| All scoring processes complete. Data analysis underway. |
| Week of 10–14 July |
| Provisional NAPLAN data released to schools during this week. Note: These school and class reports provide raw scores only. |
| Early August |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ACARA release of the <i>NAPLAN National Summary Report for 2017</i>.• Images of students' writing test responses available in the NAPLAN portal (until 27 November). |
| 2–15 August |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivery period for individual student and school reports.• Class and school reports available on the NAPLAN portal, following release of the <i>NAPLAN National Summary Report for 2017</i>. |

Marking the writing test

Marking of the writing test is now complete. In 2017, persuasive prompts provided the stimuli for students in primary and secondary years.

School-release markers

In addition to the large number of day and evening markers, 10 teachers from regional schools joined the marking operation for a two-week period.

Because of strong interest in this program, further regional marker recruitment workshops for 2018 will be conducted in Term 3, 2017 on the following dates:

| District | Date | Time |
|-------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Cairns | Thursday 3 August | 8:30 am – 3:00 pm |
| Townsville | Thursday 17 August | 8:30 am – 3:00 pm |
| Rockhampton | Thursday 24 August | 8:30 am – 3:00 pm |
| Wide Bay | Thursday 31 August | 8:30 am – 3:00 pm |
| Toowoomba | Thursday 7 September | 8:30 am – 3:00 pm |

Schools in these districts will be emailed a flyer with further details early in Term 3, 2017. Intending participants will be invited to register through Marker Applications Online (MAO): www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/MAO/login.jsp.

MAO will be available from 7 July 2017.

What happens to a NAPLAN writing test?

This year, over a quarter of a million Queensland students completed a written test as part of the NAPLAN national testing program. Here we explore the pathway of a written test script, from inception to reporting.

Zak is a typical Year 5 student at a Queensland school. For the NAPLAN writing test, Zak is asked to



respond to a single stimulus page by completing a handwritten response in his NAPLAN testbook. Zak might feel a little nervous, but at his and most schools, time and teaching efforts have been spent to prepare him for this task. In fact, the written test aligns with his school's teaching program and, more broadly, the Australian Curriculum.

Following the usual processes undertaken by the school in accordance with the QCAA, which administers NAPLAN in Queensland on behalf of ACARA, Zak's completed written test script is then packaged, along with those of his fellow students. When returned all testbooks are scanned in readiness for the marking process.

Once Zak's written test is scanned, the electronic image is transferred to a marking operation conducted by the QCAA. In all, over 480 registered teachers are involved annually in this marking operation. Scanned scripts appear on computer screens, and professionally trained markers score each script in accordance with nationally determined rules and marking guidelines. All students in Australia, including Zak, have their scripts scored in this manner.

The marking operation is a huge undertaking to administer. At a student level, experienced teachers (all markers must complete training to an agreed standard) mark each student script carefully and equitably.

Up to 50 000 student scripts are marked twice to ensure scoring reliability. In addition, a series of scripts are provided daily to each marker across Australia for comparison and to make sure standards are met.

The QCAA also includes a referee marking check to further ensure that marking standards are upheld. In the marking operation, markers make every effort possible to read scripts (sometimes legibility requires an additional reading) and reward a student's writing effort in this test. Zak and his parents should feel assured that qualified teachers are marking his work fairly and thoroughly.



Zak's test script is made available to his school by early August, along with those of all other students in his class. When this happens, Zak has the ability to appeal his score by application through the QCAA NAPLAN portal.

At the end of the marking program, when scores and reports are released, trends in literacy are scrutinised and NAPLAN writing test data informs the strengths and weaknesses in teaching programs.

Zak, his parents, his school and his community can feel satisfied that every effort has been made to recognise his performance in this nationwide assessment.

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