

NAPLAN Online fact sheet for parents and carers

From 2018 NAPLAN tests will begin changing from pencil and paper to online testing. The move to NAPLAN Online will bring new benefits for teachers and students.

Why are schools moving to NAPLAN Online?

Significant planning, research and trialling has been ongoing since 2012 to support the move to NAPLAN Online. Online testing creates new opportunities for teachers and students that are not possible with pencil and paper tests.

What are the benefits of NAPLAN Online?

- NAPLAN Online will provide better assessment, more precise results and faster turnaround of information.
- Most students find online assessment more engaging.
- NAPLAN Online will use tailored testing, which gives students questions better suited to their ability, resulting in more detailed individual assessment.
- By 2020, your child's results will be returned within weeks of the NAPLAN test, as opposed to months.
- Online assessment will reduce the time it takes to mark and provide feedback to schools and teachers.
- The precision and improved timing of the results will help teachers streamline their teaching more specifically to student needs.

Student engagement

In August and September 2017, around 2,800 NSW schools took part in the school readiness test (SRT). SRT was a 'practice run' for schools to assess their technical and administrative readiness for NAPLAN Online, and gave students an opportunity to become familiar with online testing.

Feedback from SRT shows that students are more engaged with NAPLAN Online than the current pencil and paper format:

- Of the 317,876 students who completed the test, 77% said they liked doing the test online.
- Of the 2,463 schools who completed the SRT survey:

- 90% said students were more engaged with the online combined numeracy and literacy test than the pen and paper version
- 79% said students were more engaged with the online writing test than the pen and paper version.

The NAPLAN Online website provides more information about the school readiness test: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/student-assessment/naplan-online/school-readiness-test>

For more information

More information about the NSW transition approach to NAPLAN Online, including answers to frequently asked questions, can be found on the NSW Department of Education NAPLAN Online website: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/student-assessment/naplan-online>

Parents wanting to familiarise themselves with the NAPLAN Online platform can visit ACARA's demonstration site, which includes sample online mini-tests for each NAPLAN year: <https://www.nap.edu.au/online-assessment/naplan-online/naplan-online-public-demonstration-site>

General questions around the NSW Department of Education's approach to the move to NAPLAN Online can be addressed to the NAPLAN Online transition team: NAPLANOnline@det.nsw.edu.au

Frequently asked questions

When will NSW schools transition to NAPLAN Online?

Education ministers have agreed to full participation in NAPLAN Online by 2020. In 2018, around 500 NSW schools will transition to NAPLAN Online.

Is NAPLAN Online compulsory?

NAPLAN Online will replace the current pencil and paper NAPLAN tests. When schools have transitioned to NAPLAN Online, all eligible students in Years 3, 5, 7 or 9 must participate, unless they are exempt or withdrawn from NAPLAN testing by parents or carers.

Will the Year 3 writing test be online?

No. At this stage, the Year 3 writing test will continue to be paper-based. All other Year 3 NAPLAN tests (numeracy, reading and language conventions) will be online.

Education ministers have requested more research about the benefits or disadvantages for Year 3 students composing text in an online environment before any future decision is made.

What is tailored testing?

NAPLAN Online uses tailored testing, where the test automatically adapts to a student's performance and asks questions that match their achievement level. This allows students to better demonstrate their knowledge and provides teachers and schools with more targeted and detailed information on students' performance. More information about tailored testing can be found on the NAPLAN Online website: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/student-assessment/naplan-online/whats-changing/tailored-tests>

How will NAPLAN Online tests be marked?

Automated marking is currently used in the pencil and paper NAPLAN test to mark numeracy, reading and conventions of language and will remain in use for NAPLAN Online.

Trained markers will mark student writing as is currently the case with pencil and paper tests. Automated essay scoring will not be used to mark NAPLAN Online writing tests.

Will students' personal information be safe?

Yes. Information about your child is treated confidentially and held securely to ensure that every student's right to privacy is maintained. The NAPLAN Online platform has been built with state-of-the-art security features that comply with national data security policies and data encryption standards.

How will parents receive their child's NAPLAN Online results?

Printed individual student reports will be sent to parents and carers by the NSW Education Standards Authority, as they currently are with pencil and paper NAPLAN tests. Once all NSW schools have transitioned to NAPLAN Online, all individual student reports will be returned to parents within weeks of the completion of the NAPLAN test window.

What if my child's school is not participating in NAPLAN Online in 2018?

Pencil and paper tests will be undertaken by schools that are not moving to NAPLAN Online in 2018. These will take place at the same time as NAPLAN Online, but within the current paper-based test window period of three days, as opposed to nine days for NAPLAN Online.

NAPLAN paper-based and online tests assess the same skills in literacy and numeracy taught through Australian curriculum content. Whether they complete the pencil and paper or online test, students will answer the same number of test questions and their results will be measured and reported against the one NAPLAN assessment scale.

Will NAPLAN Online be accessible to students with disability?

Yes, for most students. The accessibility adjustments provided in NAPLAN Online for students with disability will be equivalent to what is currently provided in pencil and paper NAPLAN tests in most instances.

ACARA will provide new adjustments for NAPLAN Online, such as alternative items for students with visual, hearing or motor disabilities. Students requiring braille, or print larger than what the NAPLAN Online platform or assistive technology can provide, will sit pencil and paper tests.

Do students need headphones or earphones to complete NAPLAN Online?

Yes. Headphones or earphones are required for each student to complete NAPLAN Online, as some questions include audio. For example, the spelling test includes audio delivery of words that students are required to type in.

Schools will be responsible for ensuring that all students have the appropriate headphones or earphones to complete NAPLAN Online.

Can students use their own devices to complete NAPLAN Online?

Yes, however it will be at the discretion of the individual school. Each device will require the installation of a locked down browser application, which prevents students from accessing unauthorised websites, applications and spellcheck features.

The ACARA website has more information on technical requirements for NAPLAN Online: <http://www.nap.edu.au/online-assessment/naplan-online/technical-requirements>

What happens if a computer experiences issues during a test session?

No student is disadvantaged if their device stops working during the NAPLAN Online test. In the case of interruptions, tests can be paused and resumed as required with no time lost. If a device stops working, all responses will be saved and the student can complete their test in a rescheduled test session.

Who is responsible for administering the NAPLAN tests?

The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) is the test administration authority responsible for the administration and delivery of NAPLAN tests in NSW, including pencil and paper test and NAPLAN Online.

Who is ACARA?

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is an independent statutory authority responsible for the development of national curriculum, and the administration of national assessments and associated reporting on schooling in Australia.