ATAR & University Application

HSC Information Workshops 2016
Tonight’s Workshop

1. Calculating the ATAR
2. The road to university
What is the ATAR?

- Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank
- ATAR is a measure of rank
- Shows your relative position in the HSC
- Necessary to gain access to University
What contributes to the ATAR?

- Based on an aggregated, scaled total of your best 10 units, including:
  - Your best 2 units of English (not including English Studies)
  - followed by your next best 8 units
  - you can only count 1 Category B VET course
How is the ATAR calculated?

Step 1 - BOSTES determines your raw marks

Step 2 - UAC applies scaling to all courses

Step 3 - Your individual marks are scaled

Step 4 - Best 10 units are aggregated

Step 5 - Your position in the NSW cohort is calculated

Step 6 - ATAR is calculated
Step 1 - Raw marks from BOSTES

- The average of your exam marks and your moderated assessment marks are used to calculate
  - your performance in the HSC
  - your position in the NSW group (ATAR)

- Not possible to add your HSC marks to work out your ATAR… two very different processes.
Step 1a - Moderating Assessments

- **Why moderate Assessment marks?**
  - Moderation ensures parity and fairness of assessment marks across schools
  - BOSTES moderates school assessment marks based on HSC exam performance
Step 1a - Moderating Assessments

**SCHOOL 1**
School 1 sets easy assessment tasks, but the students DO NOT do as well in the HSC Exams.

- A: 90
- B: 75
- C: 65

**SCHOOL 2**
School 2 sets difficult tasks / or marks harder; the students do well in the HSC Exams.

- X: 80
- Y: 50
- Z: 40

Note that the ranking of students DOES NOT CHANGE.
Step 1a - Moderating Assessments

- **Moderation Process**
  - The top HSC Exam mark sets the limit for the top assessment mark
  - In moderating, assessment rank order stays the same
  - The relative gap between students stays the same

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>School Assessment mark</th>
<th>HSC Exam Mark</th>
<th>Moderated Assessment mark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93 (1)</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>88 (2,-5)</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 (3,-18)</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>65 (4,-5)</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>61 (5,-4)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59 (6,-2)</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>57 (7,-2)</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>52 (8,-5)</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>45 (9,-7)</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>32 (10,-13)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 2 & 3 - Scaling

- Scaling allows the UAC to compare very different subjects
- Scaled marks are very different to HSC Marks
  - HSC Marks = performance (race time)
  - Scaled Marks = position (place in race)

Sarah’s Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HSC MARKS</th>
<th>UAC MARKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ancient History</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Studies</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced English</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths 2U</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Step 2 & 3 - Scaling

- Calculated by statistical model that compares student course performances with performances in other courses.
- A coefficient for each course is calculated and then applied to each student’s HSC mark in the course.
- Students scale… subjects don’t scale
- more information on UAC website

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jonathan’s UAC Marks</th>
<th>Marcus’ UAC Marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Advanced English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced English</td>
<td>IPT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Science</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prim. Industries</td>
<td>Maths EXT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| ATAR = 92.05         | ATAR = 83.80      |
Step 4 - Aggregating units

- An aggregate score is calculated by combining your best 2 units of English with your other 8 best units.
- The aggregate is a score out of 500 and each unit is out of 50 marks.
Step 5 - Calculating Position

- Your age group position is then calculated
- Aggregate is used as the basis for ranking
- This step enables ATARs from different states to be compared

(76.9% of the 2014 ATAR cohort received an aggregate mark of 350 or less)
Step 6 - Calculating ATAR

- Students are then grouped at intervals of .05
- Positions start at .05 and end at 99.95
- This gives 2000 intervals with about 38 students in each interval (76,000 students sitting the HSC)
- If you score an ATAR of 75 you are in the top 25 percent of your age group
Misconceptions

Fact or Myth?

- to gain a high ATAR I need to study harder subjects such as Physics or Extension Mathematics

Myth

- It all depends on your position in each subject. If you finish at the top of your subjects your ATAR will be high.
Misconceptions

Fact or Myth?

- my subject with the lowest mark will not be counted towards my ATAR

Myth

- the subject with the lowest SCALED mark will not be counted. Nobody will know with certainty what the subject will be until ATARs are being calculated
- Many of our students only have 10 units anyway.
What does this all mean?

- **Balance your study.** No use in performing well in one subject and poorly in another. The ATAR is an accumulation of your best 10 units. Don’t write off a subject.

- **Scaling is beyond your control.** Focus on what you can control. Focus on developing your understanding and perfecting skills.

- **Work as a team,** particularly in preparation for the HSC because moderation favours the cohort that performs the best in the HSC Exams.
The Road to University

Step 1 - Prepare

Step 2 - Apply

Step 3 - Manage

Step 4 - Accept
Step 1 - Prepare

- To decide on courses, consider your interests, skills and aptitudes
- Talk to others - parents, teachers, Uni students at open days
- More than 1900 courses available through UAC
- Which Universities are feasible to attend?
- Open Days - attend them
- Additional selection criteria
- Course fees HECS-HELP?
- SCHOLARSHIPS
Step 2 - Apply

- Mid July: UAC Guide distributed
- Early August: Applications open
- End September: Applications close
- Mid December: HSC & ATAR results
- Early January: Change of preferences
- Mid January: Main round offers made

- Applications online: [www.uac.edu.au](http://www.uac.edu.au)
- Up to nine courses can be selected
Step 3 - Manage

- manage your application based on your ATAR and the cut-off for each course
- some courses have “bonus points” which enable a student to get into a course even if they are slightly below the cut-off for the course
- You can log onto the UAC website and change your courses... based on your ATAR
Step 4 - Accept

- You may receive an offer in the main round … you can accept this
- You may receive another offer in a final round. You can accept your original or this new offer.
- Accept and enrol by the dates indicated by the universities
- Bridging courses… deferring
- What if you don’t get in? You can change your courses… you can complete preparation courses so you can do the degree in the next year
For further information

Visit the UAC website www.uac.edu.au

Study the UAC guide

Visit the BOSTES website www.bostes.nsw.edu.au

Make an appointment to see the careers advisor Mrs Lemon