



Information sheet for parents and caregivers about the **Student report for the Essential Secondary Science Assessment**

The Essential Secondary Science Assessment (ESSA) is a statewide program that complements the school-based assessment and reporting programs of NSW schools. ESSA provides students, parents and teachers with information about the science knowledge and skills of Year 8 students. It is based on the Stage 4 outcomes of the *NSW Science Years 7–10 Syllabus*.

The ESSA test assesses what students know and can do in science; then students, parents and teachers can use the ESSA levels (described in the *ESSA Student report for parents and caregivers*) to plan learning programs and activities so that students keep moving forward in their science knowledge and skills.

What information is provided in the student report for ESSA?

The *Student report for parents and caregivers* provides detailed information about the performance of each student in the ESSA test. There is information about:

- the student's overall achievement in science
- the student's achievement in the two sections of the test. The first section contained three extended response tasks and the second section contained 75 multiple choice and short response items
- the student's achievement in strands that organise tested outcomes from the *NSW Science Years 7–10 Syllabus*. There are three strands:
 - **Knowing and understanding**
Students responded to items that specifically assessed their knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts. Some items tested Prescribed Focus Areas, such as the nature and practice of science and the impact of science on society, technology and the environment.
 - **Communicating scientifically**
Students analysed and responded to a variety of texts that are typical of those used in Year 7 and Year 8 science. Some items required critical thinking.
 - **Working scientifically**
Students had opportunities to demonstrate skills in critical thinking, making evidence-based conclusions and in planning, conducting and analysing investigations.

How to read the report

In the 'Summary of student results', the ESSA levels on each scale represent the standards of achievement in science. Level 1 is the lowest level. The levels are based on the requirements of the *NSW Science Years 7–10 Syllabus*. The thick black line on each scale shows how the student performed in that aspect of the test. The descriptions of each level, given in the report, can help students, parents and teachers to identify what students need to learn so that they can move to a higher level within each strand.

If you would like to discuss the student report or obtain more detailed information about your child's achievements in science, please contact the school. If you need an interpreter to assist you to make an appointment, call the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450 and they will phone the school for you. The school may arrange to have an on-site interpreter present at the meeting, if available. These services will be free of charge to you.