

MEDIA RELEASE

27 March 2026

NAPLAN TESTING CONCLUDES FOR 2026

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) has today (27 March 2026) confirmed that the testing for the 2026 NAPLAN assessments is now complete.

Around 4.5 million online tests were taken by about 1.3 million students in over 9,300 campuses and schools across Australia. These figures are a testament to the exceptional efforts of teachers and principals around the country to support our students to complete the assessments.

ACARA CEO, Stephen Gniel, said:

“A big thank you to the 1.3 million students who sat NAPLAN 2026 and to the teachers and principals who supported them to do their best and show their literacy and numeracy skills.

“When technical issues arise in schools or the wider community is impacted by extreme weather, this disrupts students and teachers. We need to recognise and acknowledge this up front and make sure that we don’t dismiss or diminish the impact. It is thanks to the amazing resilience and professionalism of our principals and teachers that our students across the country have completed their assessments.

“A big thank you also to all our state and territory test administration authorities who have been supporting schools and students through the disruptions, including the technical incident on day 1 for which we apologise once again.”

There were no further significant national issues reported since the incident on day 1 and all other NAPLAN testing was completed as usual.

NAPLAN is the only national assessment that helps teachers, parents and carers see how students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 are progressing in literacy and numeracy over time. The NAPLAN assessments are across four areas – writing, reading, conventions of language (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and numeracy – with tests taken in that specific order.

Following the technical disruption on day 1, ACARA worked closely with the test administration authorities to support schools and students impacted. Measures were in place to ensure students were not disadvantaged, with schools also being able to give students extra time to complete their tests due to the disruption.

The writing tests also include more than one writing prompt, so students who could not start their assessment on day 1 received a different prompt. This is the case every year, as there are schools who can’t schedule writing on day 1 for a variety of reasons.

ACARA is aware of concerns from schools, students, parents and carers about the potential impacts of the day 1 disruption on results.

Mr Gniel said:

“Now that the tests have been completed, we will be carefully reviewing the data from the assessments over the coming weeks, and working very closely with state and territory test administration authorities to consider any additional measures needed to ensure fair reporting of the results.”

Mr Gniel also said it was important for everyone to remember the purpose of the NAPLAN assessments.

“The conclusion of this year’s test window is a chance for us to take a step back and remind ourselves about the purpose of the NAPLAN assessments. This is the only national assessment we have that lets us see whether young Australians are developing critical literacy and numeracy skills using a national, objective scale.

“These are important assessments that help government and education authorities know how education approaches are working, identify where changes and support might be needed, and guide system-wide policy decisions.

“That’s why it’s not a pass or fail test. It’s a point-in-time test that helps us understand those strengths and areas for development.

“NAPLAN is one aspect of a school’s assessment program. It does not replace ongoing assessments made by our teachers about student performance, but it can provide important additional information about a student’s educational progress.”

In addition to the approximately 4.5 million online tests, thousands of Year 3 writing tests also took place on paper throughout the test period. Marking is now underway.

Preliminary results will be provided to schools in all domains except writing, which takes longer to mark, by the end of April 2026. Schools will receive their full results, including writing, from June 2026, after which parents and carers receive their child’s Individual Student Report early in Term 3. ACARA is expecting to publish the National Results in early August 2026.

For more information about NAPLAN, visit www.nap.edu.au/naplan.

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ACARA Media line: 0414 063 872 (no texts), email media.contact@acara.edu.au