

## MEDIA RELEASE

10 March 2026

### SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS SET FOR 2026 NAPLAN TESTS

The annual NAPLAN assessments begin tomorrow (Wednesday 11 March 2026), with around 1.4 million students expected to take the tests in over 9,400 schools and campuses across Australia.

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.

Once again, students in Years 5, 7 and 9 will be completing a second NAPLAN cycle since the annual test changed to being held in March instead of May and since the introduction of the new proficiency levels. This will give teachers, schools, education authorities and governments more data on how these students are faring as they progress through their schooling.

For parents and carers, NAPLAN is an important tool that allows them to see how their child is progressing in literacy and numeracy against the national standard and compared with their peers throughout Australia. It also offers some key insights into where their child is on their own individual learning journey.

ACARA CEO Stephen Gniel said that there's no need for students to study for the NAPLAN tests.

"The best preparation that kids can do is make sure they go to school regularly. Be engaged every day in their classroom learning, listen to their teachers and do their best. Parents and carers know how important literacy and numeracy skills are, so they can give extra support at home. There's no need to study as it's not a pass or fail test. This is about knowing where each student is up to.

"It's also important to remember that NAPLAN is just one aspect of a school's assessment. It does not replace ongoing assessments made by teachers about student performance, but it can provide important additional information about a student's educational progress."

Schools and education authorities will again receive preliminary school and student results early in Term 2, around 4 weeks after the test period ends on 23 March 2026. This means teachers will have more time to review the results to inform their teaching and learning programs in the current school year.

Mr Gniel explained that NAPLAN is a large-scale operation with more than 4.5 million tests expected to be taken this year. ACARA has developed more than 2,500 different test questions, which will assess how Australian students are performing in reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling, and numeracy.

"As always, I'd like to give a big thank you to our wonderful teachers and schools across all jurisdictions and sectors for all their efforts to get ready for NAPLAN," Mr Gniel said.

ACARA has also worked with the Islamic Schools Association of Australia and other key stakeholders as the NAPLAN test window coincides with the Islamic holy month of Ramadan. Since this is unavoidable due to the nature of the assessment, measures are in place to ensure schools and teachers can support affected students.

“We’re encouraging schools to schedule their tests as soon as possible in the test window and to run NAPLAN tests first thing in the morning to ensure fasting students’ energy levels are at their highest. Parents and carers with any concerns should contact their child’s school directly to discuss their child’s observation of Ramadan and participation in NAPLAN,” said Mr Gniel.

Preliminary results will be provided to schools in all domains except writing, which takes longer to mark. Schools will receive their full results, including writing, from June 2026, after which parents and carers receive their child’s Individual Student Report at the start of 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](http://www.nap.edu.au/naplan).

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Media line: 0414 063 872, email [media.contact@acara.edu.au](mailto:media.contact@acara.edu.au)