

HSC Student Profile: Alix

Question 1

Please state your name.

Alix

Question 2

Which year did you complete your HSC?

2009

Question 3

Did you study any Year 12 HSC subjects (accelerated) in Year 11?
If yes, please list the subject(s).

No

Question 4

At which school did you complete Year 12?

Caringbah High School

Question 5

What scores did you obtain for each of your Year 12 studies?

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Assessment Mark</i>	<i>Examination Mark</i>	<i>HSC Mark</i>	<i>Performance Band</i>
<i>English advanced</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>91</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Mathematics</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Economics</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>93</i>	<i>93</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>PD/H/PE</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>English extension 1</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>E4</i>
<i>Maths extension 1</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>E4</i>

Question 6

What was your final ATAR?

98.8

Question 7

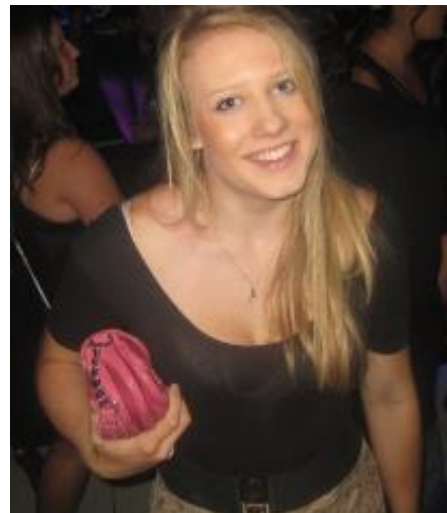
Which tertiary course did you enrol into?

Commerce/Law

Question 8

Which university/tertiary institution are you enrolled in/planning to attend?

The University of Sydney



The following questions relate to a typical week where there were no major examinations forthcoming:

Question 9

How many hours did you dedicate to study (outside school) across a typical week?

10 hours a week:

1-2 Monday to Thursday at night

Friday and Saturday off

3-4 hours Sunday

Question 10

What was your typical weekday routine?

8am wake

830am travel to school

9am School

315pm travel home from school

345pm home

345-430pm eat/relax

430pm travel to sport

5pm sport

7pm travel home from sport

7-9 dinner and TV/facebook

9-11pm study

12pm bed

Question 11

Where did you engage in the bulk of your study on a day to day basis?

(eg. bedroom, school library etc).

Home study

Question 12

How many hours did you dedicate to study across school holidays?

I was often travelling for sport/holiday during the school holidays, but when I was home I dedicated study days around my social plans. So I would do no study some days and on others up to 6 hours a day often working on the one task.

Question 13

Did you engage in any extra curricular activities across Year 12? If yes, please indicate the activities and how much time was dedicated to each activity.

Yes - netball and athletics took up a lot of my time. Training, competition & travel time took up around 10-12 hours each week. I also had a part-time retail job and did tutoring which took up 10 hours on average a week.

Question 14

How did you balance/organise your study with other commitments like work or sport or family?

*As I had a lot of other commitments (sport/work), I set aside blocks of time/full days to spend studying. I knew I only had those time period to complete all my work therefore I was determined to get it done.
Study planners also helped, to give me a visual idea of when assessments were due and when I had to set study time.*

The following questions relate to a typical week where there were major examinations forthcoming:

Question 15

How did you approach the task of preparing for the exam? (For example, would you start the process by writing notes? If so, which resources did you use to compile materials etc).

I read all materials I had been given including class notes, the textbook and sheets. Then I wrote notes based on the syllabus, primarily from the textbook. I consolidated these with sheet and class note information. Then, I memorised the notes by creating mnemonics and key trigger words.

Question 16

How many hours did you dedicate to study (outside of school) in the weeks leading up to the exams?

15-18 hours a week

Weekdays- 2 to 3 hours at night

Friday- off

Weekends- 6 hours a day, Saturday nights off

Question 17

What was your typical day to day routine when studying for the exams?

8am wake

830am travel to school

9am School

315pm travel home from school

345pm home

345-430pm eat/relax

430pm travel to sport

5pm sport

7pm travel home from sport

7-8 dinner and TV/facebook

8-11pm study

12pm bed

Question 18

Did you continue your extracurricular activities in the weeks leading up to the exams?

Yes, it offered a reward for a block of study and it was good to play sport to get my mind off studying.

Question 19

Which technique(s) did you use to learn materials "off by heart"? (eg. writing notes, re-writing, reading texts etc).

Reading the materials, writing summary notes, setting key words and then re-writing.

Question 20

When did you start preparing for your TRIAL exams?

3 weeks before

Question 21

How much study did you engage in between the TRIALS and the final HSC exams?

I stepped up the amount of study to 3 hours on weekdays and dedicated all of Sunday to study. I read wider materials to add to my notes, completed existing notes and finalised/memorised my essays.

Question 22

Do you feel that you invested enough time into study between the Trials and the final HSC exams?
Would you have benefited from additional study across this period?

Yes I felt a lot more prepared for the HSC than trial exams. At the trials, I felt as if I had run out of time and could have used more, although I felt much better heading into HSC. The time period in between trials and HSC enabled me to perfect everything I was unsure about and gave me a confidence I didn't have for the trials.

Question 23

Did your Year 12 peers at school invest in significant study in the lead up to the TRIALS?

Yes, although everyone was a little unprepared for trials.

Question 24

Did your Year 12 peers at school invest in significant study between the TRIALS and the final HSC exams?

Yes, we often studied in groups as well. A lot of study was done in class and at home in this period.

Question 25

Were the TRIAL exams an accurate reflection of the difficulty and style of questions encountered in the final HSC exams?

Yes, all of my subjects except English Advanced were an accurate reflection of the HSC. The HSC exam for English (Paper 1 and Paper 2) was not what I had expected, being completely different to that of all the years preceding 2009.

Question 26

Did you suffer from anxiety attacks or mind blocks in any of your exams? What did you do to alleviate or get through these situations?

Sometimes, when I did, I left the question and tried to forget about it. Then when I had time at the end, I came back to it. Deep breathing often helps. If I still couldn't work it out, I took a guess and didn't dwell on it, but thought about all the other questions I was confident with.

Questions Relating to the Subject You Have Been Asked to Write About

Question 1

Which subject does this report relate to?

Mathematics

Question 2

Based on your results and performance throughout the year, were you confident that you would obtain a Band 6 result? If not, what Band or overall mark were you anticipating/hoping to receive?

Yes I was confident that I could get a band 6.

Question 3

Which section/topic of the syllabus did you find most challenging?

Geometry and series

Question 4

How much time did you spend preparing/working on school assessments?

Leading up to an exam, I would dedicate blocks of 2-3 hours (to reflect HSC exam) to study. And I would do this every second day for the 10 days prior to an exam.

Question 5

What was the best source of help/information for your assessments? (Text book, teacher, friends, lectures, tutorial programs, private tutors, internet, own research etc).

I would resort to the textbook first, although sometimes it didn't explain the methods well enough for me to understand. Then I would speak to some friends and we would discuss the question. If that didn't work, my teacher was really approachable, and I would go up and see her.

Question 6

Did you regularly use a private tutor in this subject? If so, did you find this assistance beneficial?

Yes, once a week for an hour, although this focussed on Extension 1 maths which I had more difficulty with. It was beneficial to ask questions about concepts I didn't understand.

Question 7

Did you attend a tuition college/tutorial classes/lectures to assist in this subject? Did you find this assistance beneficial?

No

Question 8

If applicable, do you feel that you would have obtained the same score if you did not use tutors/coaches/lectures/tuition programs?

Tutoring may have made the smallest difference of only 1-2 marks.

Question 9

What was your best source of help across the year (teacher, tutor, lecture program etc)?

Teacher and past papers

Question 10

Did you do anything differently study wise in comparison to your peers at school?

Yes. My peers focussed on studying the textbook questions which were quite difficult. Instead, I turned my attention to past HSC exams and past trial papers and studied primarily off them.

Question 11

Do you feel that you had an advantage over other students in this subject? If so, what was this advantage?

Yes, I thought having a few close friends who were always happy to accept late night phone calls and discuss how to do questions was great. Even when a friend called me to ask me how to do something, it assisted me in refreshing my memory of the pre-understood concept.

Question 12

Compare the subjects for which you obtained your lowest and highest HSC Marks/Bands.

Detail what you did differently between the two subjects and if applicable, provide your opinion on why you obtained such different scores.

Highest: Mathematics

Lowest: English advanced

In mathematics, I had exposed myself to a wide range of question from the past HSC exams and was confident that I would have completed a similar question to each one in the HSC. However, my English preparation consisted of perfecting essays and memorising them. Due to an unexpected HSC, I could not apply these essays and had not previously adapted them to the wide range which I did in maths.

Question 13

As part of your HSC/TRIAL exam preparation for this subject, did you spend time writing up a comprehensive set of notes from which to learn? If yes, how many hours do you believe you invested into this task?

Notes weren't that useful for maths, although formulas are critical. Therefore, I had a complete set of formulas which I read over each night for 15 minutes.

Question 14

Did you purchase/acquire quality notes to assist in your examination preparation? If yes, did you find this acquisition beneficial? Why/why/not?

Yes, I purchased a set of past exam papers. These were highly beneficial, because they were categorised into subject. That meant I could spend a study block working on one topic and perfect it before I moved on.

Question 15

How many examination papers did you work through as part of your exam preparation?

I would not work through an exam in total, but use the index to find all questions relating to a particular topic (e.g. series) and then complete all past HSC questions on series from 1992 on. Then the next study block, I would do the same for a new topic (e.g. integration).

Question 16

Which exam papers did you work through?

(List the names of the entities/organisations that produced the exam papers).

Past Board of Studies HSC exam papers and past examinations from my school.

Question 17

Did you work through any exam papers under exam conditions? If yes, how many?

Yes, I did 3 past trial HSC exams in total from my school.

Question 18

How much time was invested into preparing for the TRIAL examination?

How much time was invested into preparing for the final HSC examination?

Which examination did you find more difficult and why?

*Around 15 hours for my trial exam and an additional 20 hours for my HSC.
I found both similar, although the HSC exam was harder though I was more prepared.*

Question 19

Had you previously covered all the questions/concepts that appeared in the exams or did the exam paper contain materials that you had never seen before? If so, did this make you panic in the exams?

Yes, except 5 marks on circle geometry. I was frustrated as it was only around question 3, although I moved on and didn't dwell on it.

Question 20

Did you complete every question in the TRIAL exam? If no, please estimate how much of the paper you did address.

Yes

Question 21

Did you complete every question in the final HSC exam? If no, please estimate how much of the paper you did address.

I could not attempt 3 marks of geometry.

Question 22

Did you use any special exam techniques when working through the actual exams?

I learnt the hard way in year 11 when I worked backward through my maths exam (and accidentally skipped a whole question). As maths papers get more difficult with each question- you should always start at the front to build up your confidence and get the easy marks. Then if you run out of time, you have only missed out on the harder questions where you may not have obtained full marks anyway.

Question 23

If applicable, what mistakes did you make when preparing for the TRIAL exams?
Did you do anything differently when preparing for the final HSC examinations?

The only mistake I made in the trial was not linking 2 questions. I couldn't work out one question and was told after the exam that the previous question had given you half the information. For the HSC I made sure that questions were linked.

Question 24

Which resources did you find most helpful when preparing for the exams?

Past HSC papers

Question 25

What advice would you provide to those students aiming for a Band 6 in this subject?

A band 6 is definitely achievable in mathematics through smart study. Make sure you have mastered all types of question in each topic and if you are unsure clarify with your teacher/peers. This will give you confidence to go in to the HSC exam, as you will start to realise the methods for each type of question that comes up again and again with different numbers.

General Advice

Question 1

What was the most difficult aspect of completing your HSC studies and how did you overcome this?

Balancing sport and study. I overcame this by setting study timetables around my commitments and committing to them when I got those chances.

Question 2

If you had your time over again, would you do anything differently across Year 11 and/or 12?
Why/Why Not?

Enjoy it even more! Your teachers are there to help so make sure you develop good relationships with them.

Question 3

Is there anything that you wish you had known about before entering the HSC?

Make sure you do all questions in separate writing booklets. In PD/H/PE I did sub-parts of a question (i & ii) in the same booklet and was informed after the exam that they had to be split as they are marked separately

Question 4

Are there any resources/services/products that would have assisted you in your studies had they been available?

No

Question 5

If you had one piece of advice to give future students, what would it be?

Don't stress if you are running out of time. Just think what would my time be best put towards and make it happen. Good luck and enjoy it- year 12 was the best year of my life!